

CONWAY TOWNSHIP POLICY No. 7

PUBLIC COMMENT AND CONDUCT POLICY

Conway Township Board recognizes its obligation to obtain and the benefits to be received from public comments on matters pending before the Board. To provide an orderly and efficient manner to obtain public comment and to provide the public with an opportunity to participate in public meetings, the Conway Township Board hereby adopts the following policy for public comment and conduct at public meetings:

1. Public comment is restricted to only those times designated for public comment on the agenda, unless permitted otherwise by the chairperson or a majority of the Board. All persons addressing the Board shall comment only after being recognized by the chairperson conducting the meeting.
2. No individual speaker shall be permitted to speak more than 3 minutes regardless of topic and no time may be transferred or assigned by others to the speaker as to extend the 3-minute time limit. At the discretion of the chairperson, a speaker may be allowed to comment further than the three-minute limit. Alternatively, the chairperson may direct the speaker to submit further comment to the Board in writing at a later date.
3. When recognized by the chairperson to speak, the individual recognized shall approach and speak from the podium or location designated by the chairperson and shall not deviate from the location. When the speaker is advised by the chairperson to stop speaking when time has expired, the speaker shall cease speaking and be seated.
4. Prior to addressing the Board, each speaker shall first state for the record the speaker's name and address, the subject on which the speaker will speak, and state whether the speaker represents an organization or other person, and identify such organization or person. All remarks shall be addressed to the Board as a whole and not to any member thereof specifically or any other member of the public. Public comment is not intended to require Board members or Township staff to provide any answer to the speaker. Discussions between speakers and members of the audience will not be permitted.
5. Only one speaker will be acknowledged at a time. In the event that a group of more than three persons supporting or opposing the same position desires to be heard, in the interest of time, a spokesperson may be designated to express the group's concern and the spokesperson may be allotted up to 10 minutes to speak.
6. Public comments must be presented in a respectful manner and participants shall conduct themselves in an orderly and civil manner. Comments or language of a lewd, insulting, or provocative nature shall not be permitted. No person shall disrupt the Board and/or partake in behavior that becomes hostile, argumentative or threatens the public or an individual's safety, or is disruptive to the meeting. No person shall utilize any profane or obscene speech or gesture.
7. Violation of any provision of this policy shall be deemed a breach of the peace and such person will be asked to leave. If the person being asked to leave does not voluntarily leave or cease the behavior, the person may be ejected, and law enforcement may be called to remove the person.
8. Any person shall have the right to tape record, videotape or broadcast the proceedings of the Township Board, but shall not utilize the electric outlets of the Township without prior permission of the Township Clerk. Any tape recording, video camera or other camera utilized by any such person, shall be kept at least ten feet from all members of the Board and shall not be placed behind them.

This policy may be adopted for use by other boards, commissions, and committees of the Township. This policy or a summary of it may be placed on the back of the meeting agenda or made available with the meeting agenda.

I, Elizabeth Whitt, Conway Township Clerk, hereby certify that this administrative Conway Township Policy No. 7 was approved by a regular meeting of the Conway Township Board on June 17, 2014, and further amended on March 21, 2023 at a regular meeting of the Board.

/s/  _____
Elizabeth Whitt
Conway Township Clerk