

RESOLUTION 2011-47

Guidelines for Public Comments during Commissioners' Meetings

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Ottawa County (Board), as a matter of policy, want to encourage the general public to attend and participate in the conduct of the Commissioner's meetings, and

WHEREAS, it is the intention of the Commissioners to allow the citizens of Ottawa County and other interested parties to raise new issues before the Board on matters affecting the County, and

WHEREAS, consequently, the Board will generally have on its Agendas for Regular Meetings (25 O. S. § 304 (3)) and some Special Meetings (25 O. S. § 304 (4)), an Agenda item for "Citizen's Participation or Public Comments", and

WHEREAS, it is necessary that the Board establish guidelines for public comments during Commissioners' Meetings.

THEREFORE, all such comments and participation are subject to the restrictions set forth in the following guidelines, and any violation of these guidelines will allow and warrant the Chairman of the Board to stop such violating comments. If the individual(s) persist in making such comments, despite having been told to desist, the individual(s) could be arrested and charged with Disturbing a Public Meeting, pursuant to 21 O. S. § 1361.

Citizen's Participation or Public Comments

1. All speakers must give their name (and spell same, if applicable) for purposes of the official minutes of the meeting at the very beginning of their presentation.
2. This Agenda item is not intended to simply provide free access to television or other media. All comments should be addressed to the Commissioners and those other officials present to support the Commissioners in the furtherance of County business, not others in attendance at the meeting.
3. This Agenda item is not intended for political platforms, or religious or commercial commentary.
4. All speakers are expected to conduct themselves in a civil manner. No name-calling, slanderous, demeaning, argumentative, defamatory, vulgar or profane language will be permitted.
5. It is not appropriate for speakers to announce meetings or special events, unless same directly relates to County issues or business.
6. Speakers will be allowed up to three minutes to express their issue, although the Chairman has the authority to reduce or extend this time frame.

Comments on Other Agenda Items

1. Public comments on any Agenda items other than Citizen's Participation or Public Comments shall only be allowed at the discretion of the Chairman. Do not interrupt the meeting. If you have a comment, signify by raising your hand and wait to be acknowledged by the Chairman. Any such comments that are allowed must be directly related to the specific Agenda item.
2. If such comments are allowed, all of the foregoing Guidelines relating to Citizen's Participation or Public Comment are applicable.

APPROVED in Regular Session this 3rd day of October, 2011.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OTTAWA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA**

Attest:

John Clarke, Chairman

Gary Wyrick, Member

County Clerk

Russell Earls, Vice-Chairman