



# **COUNTY OF WARREN, VIRGINIA**

## **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' PUBLIC HEARING GUIDELINES (Adopted January 21, 2020)**

Prior to the start of any public hearing, the Board of Supervisors Chairman (Chairman) shall review the general guidelines for the conduct of the hearing (if the hearing is the first or only hearing of the meeting). The Chairman will emphasize that the public hearing is an opportunity for the public to discuss a matter that is before the Board for action. A public hearing is not a debate and all comments should be directed to the Board.

### **PUBLIC HEARING GUIDELINES**

- ❖ All individuals who wish to speak should register using a sheet made available by the Deputy Clerk prior to the opening of the public hearing. The signup sheet shall contain columns for speaker's name, address, and telephone number.
- ❖ The Chairman shall request that the appropriate County staff member generally describe the subject of the public hearing. Upon the conclusion of the introduction, the Chairman shall officially open the public hearing.
- ❖ Any applicant shall then be allowed a period of time to present detailed information about the issue or application. The time allotted for this presentation shall be determined by the Chairman.
- ❖ At the conclusion of the applicant's presentation, the members of the Board shall be allowed to ask questions of the applicant and staff so as to clarify anything that has been presented.
- ❖ When no further questions are needed, the public shall be invited to speak. Speakers shall be heard in the order in which they registered to do so.
- ❖ The Chairman shall ask the Deputy Clerk if anyone has signed up to speak and the Deputy Clerk will call the names of registrants until all have spoken.
- ❖ Additional individuals may register to speak until the conclusion of the hearing.
- ❖ Speakers should come to the podium to speak. Speakers are requested to speak into the microphone; giving their name and address before addressing the issue of the hearing.
- ❖ Speakers are requested to keep comments short and avoid repetition of what other speakers have said. The Chairman, at the request of a majority of the Board, may establish a time limit for each speaker. Individuals representing a group, recognized by the Chairman, shall be given up to 10 minutes to speak or such time limit as may be set in advance of the hearing by the Board.

- ❖ Each individual may speak once at the hearing.
- ❖ When all speakers who register to speak have spoken, the floor will be opened to anyone who has not registered.
- ❖ After everyone who wishes to speak has done so, the applicant will be granted a period of time to respond to what has been said by the public. The applicant will use this time only to address what has been said to this point.
- ❖ If, at any time during these proceedings, any member of the public has a question, it may be written and presented to the Board Deputy Clerk. When the applicant has completed the final presentation, the chair will read the questions and request response from the appropriate party.
- ❖ The Board will accept comments in writing until the close of the public hearing.
- ❖ When all of the above has transpired, the public hearing shall be closed.
- ❖ The Chairman, by approval of the Board, has the authority to vary the guidelines as may be necessary.

#### GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT FOR THE HEARING

- ❖ All comments will be directed to the Board of Supervisors and not to the audience.
- ❖ Be considerate of your fellow speakers. There should be no applause, booing or other audible disruption to the proceedings. Through a show of hands, the Chairman may ask for a show of support for comments made by speakers.
- ❖ Placards, posters and other means of visual display of comments will not be permitted in the Board meeting room. This does not include information or materials used as part of a factual presentation to the Board at the hearing.
- ❖ The Board will **not** tolerate personal attacks by anyone on **any** of the participants in the proceedings.
- ❖ Anyone who violates the guidelines of the public hearing may be asked to leave by the Chairman.
- ❖ Failure to leave the public hearing when asked to do so, because of violations of the guidelines of the public hearing, is in violation of Section 56-4 of Warren County Code and Section 18.2-415 of the Code of Virginia and is subject to a fine of up to \$2,500 and a jail sentence of up to 12 months, either or both.

We thank you for your participation in this public hearing. It is only through your active participation that the Board fully understands the sentiments of the public on matters that come before the Board.