

# **Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning and Policy Commission**

## **Public Meeting Guidelines**

**June 14, 2017**

**Adopted June 21, 2017**

**Revised July 5, 2017**

**Revised Version Adopted July 19, 2017**

1. The Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning and Policy Commission adopts the following public meeting guidelines.
2. The Commission Chair, or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair or Acting Chair (who shall be the Executive Director by designation of a majority of the Commission members) shall lead, conduct, oversee and manage meetings of the Commission.
3. Commission meetings will commence with the Pledge of Allegiance, which may be followed by a moment of silence if warranted.
4. The Commission shall record, in written form, all individuals present at a Commission meeting, including Commission members, staff and members of the general public.
5. After a Commission meeting has commenced, members of the public shall be offered an opportunity to address the Commission concerning any matter, except for those matters for which a public hearing is scheduled for which public comments will be during the public hearing. Members of the public will be granted a second opportunity to address the Commission concerning any matter (except for those matters for which a public hearing was held) prior to the meeting's adjournment, collectively the "Public Comment Period."

During the Public Comment Period, the following guidelines shall apply:

- a. Prospective speakers will be called upon to speak by the Chair in the order in which they request an opportunity to be heard. Speakers should not speak until called upon and recognized by the Chair.
- b. Speakers will be asked to provide their name and their organization affiliation, if any, and, if providing testimony during a hearing, will be sworn in by the court reporter.
- c. Speakers shall keep comments brief and shall refrain from personal attacks on individuals or organizations.

- d. Speakers shall refrain from providing commentary which duplicates or repeats prior testimony given by other speakers. If speakers are present from a particular organization or organizations, the Chair may ask that organization to designate a single spokesperson to provide commentary or testimony.
  - e. If large groups of people are present, the Commission may elect to utilize speaker cards and ask individual speakers to complete a card so that order and efficiency can be maintained. Completed speaker cards will be collected and speakers will be called upon to speak in the order in which the card is received. The Commission may also elect to impose a time limit, such as 3 minutes, in order to advance through the agenda as expeditiously as possible and to allow an opportunity for anyone who wishes to speak to be heard.
  - f. Speakers, absent Commission approval, shall speak only once on a particular agenda item or topic and shall address their comments to the Commission. Subsequent verbal comment or testimony, such as rebuttal of comments made by other speakers, applicants, Commission members or staff, is discouraged. Sidebar discussions and cross talk are also discouraged. Instead, speakers shall provide any additional comments in writing as soon as possible following the Commission meeting.
- 6. After the initial Public Comment Period, The Chair will call each item on the agenda, generally in the order in which it appears on the agenda.
  - 7. The Commission shall conduct its public business consistent with the Public Officers Law.
  - 8. Pursuant to Article 57 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law, all Commission members are empowered, have the authority and have the right to ask questions of and to request information from each other, staff and the general public. Each Commission member is also empowered to seek sufficient information, rationale, evidence and testimony to enable them to render a fully-informed decision on any matter before the Commission.
  - 9. All Commission meeting attendees and participants, including Commission members, Commission staff and members of the public, must conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous and considerate manner in both speech and action. This includes allowing others an opportunity to speak without interruption, interjection, outburst or criticism from others. Personal attacks and disruptions will not be tolerated. If such events occur, the Chair may admonish the offending individual and may ask the offending individual to cease and desist immediately. If the offending person persists in continuing such objectionable behavior, the Chair may halt the meeting and ask the offending individual to leave. If said individual refuses, law enforcement officers may be called to address the individual.