

## **TOWN OF WALWORTH POLICY FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The Chairperson of the Board or Commission is authorized to set the agenda and therefore, shall have the sole discretion if Public Comments will be allowed during a meeting they chair. Including the length of time allowed to speak.

If Public Comment is on the agenda, it shall be allowed under this section of the agenda for the purpose of allowing the non-elected general public the opportunity to address the Board or Commission on any topic regarding Town government or Board or Commission; or matters over which the Board or Commission has authority to act.

Campaigning of any kind for elected office shall not be allowed during the Public Comment Period.

Individuals who wish to address the Board or Commission shall first state their name, address, and the topic of concern. The individual is allowed to speak on that topic for a maximum time period as stated on the agenda. The Board or Commission will only receive comments during Public Comment. Board or Commission members shall not respond to or debate matters raised during Public Comment.

The rules are as follows:

1. If a public hearing has been held on an agenda item, NO further public comments shall be allowed on the item.
2. No outbursts, applause or other noises of any kind are allowed during public hearings, public comment periods or meetings.
3. Public Comments shall be allowed at meetings of the Board or Commission if the Chairperson of said meeting wishes to allow them.
4. The general public is asked to allow Town residents/property owners to speak first.
5. If approved by the Chairperson, agendas will provide a Public Comment Period on the agenda addressing any topic once the person is recognized by the Chairperson or the speaker is recognized by the applicant and the chair.
6. Speakers may not give their time allotment to other people.
7. The following individual(s) can provide public comment prior to the general public :
  - Members of the Town of Walworth non-elected general public
  - Citizens residing in the Town of Walworth
  - Town of Walworth property owners
  - Town of Walworth business owners
  - After the above persons have been allowed to speak, any other person may be recognized by the Chairperson to speak.

8. An individual may make comment on any topic regarding Town government or matters over which the Board or Commission has authority to act except if a public hearing was held on the matter.

Comments shall not deal in personalities or personal attacks.

Comments and/or complaints on employees shall be directed to the Town Chairperson only and are not permitted in a public forum.

Campaigning for an elected office shall not be allowed.

9. The following behavior is prohibited.
- Personal attacks
  - Profanity
  - Obscenity
  - Applause, any noises, gestures or conduct disruptive to civil discourse.
10. The Chairperson shall silence any applause or outburst of emotion and keep order. Any person attempting to upset the decorum shall be asked to leave the premises, and in the event they do not do so, shall be ejected upon order of the Chairperson.
11. The rules of the Board or Commission is that members shall not respond to comments.
12. Any speaker being recognized by the Chairperson shall state their name and address and the topic of concern for public record. The speaker shall have a maximum time period as stated on the agenda, to address the members of the Board or Commission.
13. Please note that once the public hearing is adjourned and the Board or Commission begins discussion on an agenda item no further comment will be allowed from the public on that issue unless recognized by the chair.

This policy was voted on and adopted by the Town Board on 6<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2023.

TOWN OF WALWORTH,

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/s/  
Town Chairman: David J. Rowbotham

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/s/  
Town Supervisor No. 1: Steve Santeler

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/s/  
Town Supervisor No. 2: William Pearce

ATTEST:

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/s/  
Marie Baker, Clerk-Treasurer