

**PUBLIC COMMENTS RULES AND PROCEDURES
BERTIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners is committed to allowing members of the public an opportunity to offer comments and suggestions for the efficient and effective administration of government. In order to balance the need and desire for such citizen input with the necessity of disposing of its regular business in the course of the meeting, the Board does hereby establish the following Public Comment Procedures:

1. During the Board's regular meetings, Public Comments will be limited to two 15 minute periods— one at the beginning of the meeting, and another towards the conclusion of the meeting.
2. In regards to Public Hearings, persons who wish to address the Board during the Public Comment period of these meetings will register on the sign-up sheet located at the entrance of the meeting location. Sign-up sheets will be available thirty (30) minutes before the start of the hearing.
3. Each speaker will have three (3) minutes to make his/her remarks at both regular meetings and public hearings. A timekeeper will be designated by the Board Chair, who will begin timing the speaker and will announce "time" when the allotted time expires.
4. Speakers will be acknowledged by the Board Chair in the order in which their names appear on the sign-up sheet. Speakers will address the Board from the podium at the front of the room and begin their remarks by stating their name and address.
5. It is recommended that groups or delegations select their spokespersons in advance of the meeting.
6. Speakers will address all comments to the Board or County as a whole and not to one individual commissioner or to any individual County staff member. Discussion between speakers and members of the audience is not allowed.
7. Speakers will be courteous and respectful in their language and presentation and must refrain from personal attacks and the use of profanity. Willfully interrupting, disturbing or disrupting a meeting and then refusing to leave when directed to do so by the Chair is a criminal offense.
8. During regular meetings, citizens are allowed to speak during both public comments sections (therefore, receive a total of two (2) three-minute sessions), if needed, and if time allows.
9. Speakers who have prepared written remarks or supporting documents are encouraged to leave a copy of such remarks and documents with the Clerk to the Board prior to the start of the meeting.
10. At the end of a speaker's comments, any member of the Board may ask the speaker such questions or make such comments as they might deem appropriate.
11. At any time, the Board Chairman or designee may shorten or lengthen the Public Comment period based on the public's amount of interest to address the Board.
12. Copies of these Rules and Procedures will be available on the table located near the entrance of the meeting room as well as on line in the "Meetings" section of the website homepage located at www.co.bertie.nc.us.

Adopted by the Board of Commissioners this the ____ day of _____, 2016.

ATTEST:



Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board



John Trent, Chairman
Bertie County Board of Commissioners