



BARNSTABLE COUNTY
BOARD OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONERS
P.O. Box 427
Barnstable, Massachusetts 02630
(508) 375-6648

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT DURING BOARD MEETINGS AND OTHER PUBLIC FORUMS

The Board of Regional Commissioners appreciates your attendance at our Board meetings and other public meetings. We value your input and look forward to hearing your input as part of the “Public Comments” segment of our regular meetings.

The following guidelines have been established for public comment, in order to ensure that meetings are efficient, productive, and comply with the Open Meeting Law as applicable:

1. Public participants may speak on any topic affecting Barnstable County residents during the “Public Comments” segment of the regular meeting.
2. Speakers should first identify themselves by stating their full name and town in which they reside.
3. Individual speakers will be allowed up to three (3) minutes each to speak. Should public comments in total reach 15 minutes in length, the Chair may, at their discretion, extend the public comment period or may request that the speaker(s) who still wish to provide comment return to a subsequent meeting.
4. No presentations will be allowed during the public comment period.
5. All comments must be directed at the Chair. If you believe that your topic requires more time, discussion or if you wish to make a more formal presentation than is allowed under these guidelines, please contact the County Administrator to request to be placed on a future agenda.
6. Public comment periods cannot be used as a candidate’s forum.
7. While the Board recognizes that members of the public may have questions they wish to address to the Board, the Open Meeting Law discourages public bodies from discussing topics not listed on a meeting agenda. Even when a matter is listed on the meeting agenda, that does not mean that the matter is subject to public debate. The public, therefore, should not expect the Board to respond to questions or statements made

during the public comment portion of the meeting. All questions directed to County Officials should be submitted in writing to the County Administrator.

8. All speakers are encouraged to present their remarks in an orderly and peaceable manner, without disruption to other speakers.
9. Comments or behaviors that are disruptive to the meeting will not be tolerated. If, after clear warning from the Chair, a person continues to disrupt the proceedings, the Chair may order the person to withdraw from the meeting and if the person does not withdraw, the Chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person from the meeting (M.G.L. ch 30A , § 20(g))

Disclaimer: Public Comment is not a time for debate or response to comments by the Board. Comments made during the Public Comment period do not reflect the views or positions of the Board. Because of constitutional principles, the Board does not have authority to prevent all speech that may be upsetting and/or offensive made during the Public Comment period.

The Barnstable County Board of Regional Commissioners appreciates your cooperation in honoring these guidelines.