

Town of North Topsail Beach

Daniel Tuman, Mayor
Joann M. McDermon, Mayor Pro Tem
Aldermen:
Mike Benson
Tom Leonard
Richard Peters
Walter Yurek



Stuart Turille
Town Manager

Carin Z. Faulkner, MPA
Asst. Town Manager/Town Clerk

Nature's Tranquil Beauty

RESOLUTION 2017-45

A Resolution Adopting a Public Comment Policy for Board of Aldermen Meetings

WHEREAS, in 2005, the North Carolina General Assembly, through the passage of NCGS 160A-81.1, required that each municipality in North Carolina provide a period for public comment at least once per month at a regular meeting of the governing board; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly gave governing boards the authority to adopt rules governing the conduct of the public comment period; and

WHEREAS, the Town of North Topsail Beach recognizes the importance of receiving comments from the public since the purpose of the public comment period is to give the public an opportunity to express their views, comments or opinions to the Board and is a time for the governing board to listen to the public;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the North Topsail Beach Board of Aldermen that the following policy has been established to maintain order and decorum during the public comment period and to ensure fairness to each speaker by establishing rules in advance which will be applied equally to each speaker:

Public Comment Period Policy

(Public Comment Period is also known as Open Forum)

Two public comment periods shall be reserved as items of business on the agenda for the Board's regular meeting. The first comment period will take place prior to any action items on the agenda and its subject shall concern an item on the agenda. The second comment period can be any North Topsail Beach item of concern.

One comment period shall be reserved as an item of business on the agenda for Special Meetings of the Board when action is expected to be taken. The comment period will take place prior to any action items.

All comments to the Board during the public comment periods shall be subject to the following guidelines:

1. Prior to the start of the public comment periods, persons wishing to address the Board will register with the Town Clerk on a sign-up sheet. Prior to beginning the public comment periods, the Mayor will collect the sign-up sheet and recognize speakers in the order that they registered. Speakers will address the Board from the lectern and will be asked to provide their name and address for the record.

2. Each speaker shall be limited to a maximum time of three (3) minutes. Each speaker will only be allowed to speak once during each public comment period. The Town Clerk shall serve as time keeper and will promptly announce when the speakers time has expired.
3. No time may be yielded or transferred from one speaker to another. In order to avoid repetition and delay, groups of people supporting the same position are encouraged to designate a spokesperson for the group.
4. The Board will not take action on an item presented during the public comment session. Upon completion of the public comment sessions and when appropriate, the Board may refer inquiries made during the public comment session to the Town Manager or an appropriate staff member. If necessary, the item may be added to the agenda of a future meeting, thereby providing the staff an opportunity to research the item and provide data to the council for consideration and review. The Board (including Mayor) may respond to the comment for up to one minute. No citizen reply allowed. If no Board member would like to respond the Mayor will thank the citizen for his/her comment.
5. Speakers will address comments to the entire Board as a whole and not one individual member. Discussions between speakers and members of the audience will not be permitted during the public comment period.
6. Speakers who have prepared written remarks are encouraged to leave a copy of such remarks with the Town Clerk. Speakers who have materials that they want distributed to the council related to the item they plan to discuss during the public comment period, shall provide eight (8) copies of those documents to the Town Clerk prior to the start of the meeting. The Clerk shall distribute the copies to the Board, Attorney, and Town Manager and retain one copy for the record.
7. Speakers shall be courteous in their language and presentation. Profanity or other inappropriate language or gestures will not be tolerated.
8. In order to provide for the maintenance of order and decorum in the conduct of the meeting, the Mayor may declare "out-of-order" any person who fails to comply with this policy. The Mayor shall caution any such person to abide by the provisions of this policy. Refusal to do so shall be grounds for removal of the speaker from the meeting.

Adopted this the 6th day of December, 2017.

(Seal)

Daniel Tuman
Mayor

ATTEST:

Carin Z. Faulkner
Asst. Town Manager/Town Clerk