

PUBLIC COMMENT AND PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

Category: Recommended

The primary purpose of School Board meetings is to conduct the business of the Board as it relates to school policies, programs and operations. The Board encourages residents to attend Board meetings so that they may become acquainted with the operation and programs of the schools. All official meetings of the Board shall be open to the press and public. However, the Board reserves the right to meet and to adjourn or recess a meeting at any time. The Board also reserves the right to enter non-public session at any time, in accordance with the provisions RSA 91-A:3.

In order to assure that persons who wish to appear before the Board may be heard and, at the same time, assure that the Board may conduct its business and meetings properly and efficiently, the Board adopts as policy the following procedures and rules pertaining to public participation at Board meetings.

Rules of Order

1. The Board will provide an opportunity for members of the public to share comments at the beginning of each Board meeting. The duration of public comments may be limited by a majority vote of the Board after 30 minutes.
2. The Chair will recognize speakers on a first come basis.
3. In order to comply with the minute requirements of RSA 91-A:2, II, speakers shall identify themselves clearly for the record.
4. The Board Chair may terminate the speaker's privilege of address if the speaker does not follow the above rules of order.

Persons appearing before the Board are reminded that members of the Board are without authority to act independently as individuals in official matters. Thus, in most instances, any board response will be deferred pending consideration by the full Board.

With the aim of maintaining focus on the issues in discussion, it is desired that all speakers strive to adhere to ordinary norms of decorum and civility.

Legal References:

- RSA 91-A:2, Meetings Open to the Public*
- RSA 91-A:3, Non-Public Sessions*
- U.S. Const., 1st Amendment*

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