



TOWN OF ROCHESTER

50 Scenic Drive • P.O. Box 65
Accord, NY 12404

Rules of Procedure for Town Board Meetings & Public Hearings Adopted July 3, 1997

WHEREAS, Town Board Meetings and Public Hearings are important legislative sessions for the conduct of government business and as such these sessions cannot be disrupted and must be conducted with the highest level of decorum:

WHEREAS, this Board is desirous of implementing procedures to insure that meetings and public hearings are conducted without disruption:

IT IS RESOLVED, that the following procedures shall apply at meetings and public hearings held by this Board:

1. Pursuant to Town Law Section 63, the supervisor, when present, shall preside at the meetings of the town board. In the absence of the supervisor, the other members shall designate one of their members to act as temporary chairman.^[1] A majority of the board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a lesser number may adjourn. The vote upon every question shall be taken by ayes and noes, and the names of the members present and their votes shall be entered in the minutes. Every act, motion or resolution shall require for its adoption the affirmative vote of a majority of all the members of the town board.^[2]
2. No member of the public shall engage in any demonstrations, booing hand clapping or otherwise disrupt the formality of a town board meeting. Any person causing a disruption may be asked to leave.
3. No member of the public shall be permitted to address the town board unless recognized by the supervisor. In no event may any such person speak on occasion for more than three minutes. The supervisor, in his [or her] sole discretion, may allow additional speaking time.
4. Any persons speaking to the town board with the consent of the supervisor shall address their remarks to the town board, not to other members of the audience in the form of a debate.
5. Any persons recognized by the supervisor shall give their name[s] and address[es] and the nature of their business briefly.
6. No such person has the right to demand an answer to a specific question from a member of the board. All such questions shall be directed to the supervisor who may either answer them or refer the questions to the town attorney, if present, or to a town board member.
7. Members of the news media may have ten minutes at the conclusion of the meeting to ask questions concerning matters which came up at the meeting.
8. Audio or videotaping shall be permitted so long as such action is unobtrusive and nondisruptive. Moving about with or setting up a recording device during the meeting will be considered disruptive. If a person using a recording device is disruptive, they may be required to turn off the device.
9. Distributing of any materials to the general public during a meeting or public hearing without the permission of the town board is not permitted. Any person distributing materials to the general public without the town board's permission may be asked to leave.

¹ Section 42 states that if the town board has established the office of deputy supervisor and the office has been filled, then the deputy supervisor shall preside at town board meetings in the absence of the supervisor.”

² Town Law clarifies this as being members present, provided that a quorum is present. Members must be physically present in order to vote on any matter before the board; voting by proxy, telephone or affidavit is prohibited.