

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD, COMMITTEE & COMMISSION MEETINGS**

All regular and special meetings of Foxborough Boards, Committees and Commissions shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held as prescribed by Massachusetts Law. Any individual recording a meeting by audio or video, or intending to do so, must inform the Chair of the meeting prior; and the Chair will acknowledge such recording publicly. Foxboro Cable Access Television regularly televises and records Foxborough public meetings, and an announcement of this coverage is not required.

In order that all members of the Foxborough community who wish to speak before public meetings have a chance to be heard and to ensure the ability of the Board, Committee or Commission to conduct the Town's business in an orderly manner, the following policy guidelines are adopted consistent with state and federal laws:

1. At the start of each regularly scheduled public meeting, individuals or group representatives may address the Board during the Open Public Comment period, if one is posted on the agenda for the particular Board, Committee or Commission. The Open Public Comment period shall occur prior to discussion of Agenda items unless the Chair determines otherwise. The Chair shall determine the length of the public participation segment, and shall, otherwise, determine appropriate comment time limits and maintain decorum as he/she may deem appropriate to assure order and efficiency in the meeting.
2. During the Open Public Comment period, comments shall be limited to items that are not on the meeting agenda, but which are within the scope of the Board, Committee or Commission's authority/purview.
3. Speakers may be allowed up to five (5) minutes to present their comments unless the Chair determines otherwise.
4. Speakers must first be recognized by the Chair and state their name and address before commencing their comment. All remarks will be addressed through the Chair.
5. Groups wishing to present comments are expected to consolidate remarks to be presented by one speaker. Similarly, comments of a repetitive nature should be condensed and not delivered by multiple individuals.
6. Speakers are requested to present their remarks in a respectful manner. The Chair reserves the right to terminate or regulate speech which is disrespectful or which is not constitutionally protected because it is threatening, is likely to provoke a violent reaction, or is determined in accordance with prevailing legal standards to be defamatory and/or obscene speech. Comments will also be curtailed once the speaker exceeds the time limits established by this policy, or the Chair's discretionary directives, and/or to the extent they exceed the scope of the Board, Committee or Commission's authority.
7. Questions posed to the Board during the Open Public Comment period that cannot be answered during the meeting will, as the Chair may deem appropriate, be answered subsequent to the meeting in a timely manner.
8. In addition to the Open Public Comment period, the Chair may allow questions from the audience after presentations or discussions on those items listed on the agenda for that meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.

Policy adopted by the Foxborough Select Board on January 4, 2022