

CRAVEN COUNTY BOARD FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**RESOLUTION FOR RULES GOVERNING
THE CONDUCT OF PUBLIC COMMENT AND PRESENTATIONS
DURING REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS**

WHEREAS, the Board finds that rules should be adopted to allow for more effective conduct of Public Comment and Presentations; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of the Craven County Department of Social Services does hereby adopt the attached rules governing the conduct of Public Comment and Presentations during regular Board meetings.

Adopted this 20th day of July, 2009.


Dorothea White, Chairman
Dorothea White, Chairman

RULES GOVERNING PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND PRESENTATIONS DURING REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS

1. A Public Comment Period shall be placed on the agenda of each regular Board meeting.
2. Each person desiring to speak during the Public Comment Period shall sign up to speak prior to the start of the meeting on the form provided by listing the speaker's name, address and the topic on which he or she will speak. The sign-up sheet will be available 15 minutes before the start of the regular Board meeting.
3. A total time of fifteen (15) minutes shall be set aside for public comment at the end of which those signed up to speak but not yet recognized may be requested to hold their comments until the next regular Public Comment Period during which they will be given priority for comment. The Board, in its discretion, may extend the time allotted for Public Comment.
4. Each speaker shall be allotted up to three (3) minutes to speak which shall be strictly observed unless otherwise extended at the discretion of the full Board. Speakers may speak only to the matter for which they signed up. No time will be yielded to a speaker by another speaker.
5. At the request of the Board, groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions may be asked to designate a spokesperson to speak. A designated spokesperson may be allotted up to 7 minutes. Additional time may be allowed at the discretion of the full Board.
6. A speaker shall state his or her name and address.
7. The Board should refrain from engaging in a dialogue with speakers except to the extent necessary to clarify the speaker's position. Public Comment is not intended to require the Board or Department staff to answer any impromptu question. The Chairman or other presiding officer may acknowledge to the speaker that the comments have been received as a matter of information. If the Board deems that the comment requires action, the topic may be referred to the appropriate Department staff person or Board Committee for review and recommendation. Rarely will action be taken at the meeting when the comment is presented.
8. Speakers shall at all times maintain proper decorum and shall make their comments in a civil manner. Personal attacks shall not be tolerated. No person shall be allowed to make obscene language, "fighting words" likely to incite violence from the individual(s) to whom the words are addressed, or other language which is disruptive to the orderly and fair progress of discussion at the meeting. Any Board member may object to such comments.

9. Speakers shall remain at their seat to make comments, and shall not approach the Board or Department staff without the express invitation of the Chairman or presiding officer.
10. Written comments and/or supporting documentation may be left with the Board Clerk.
11. Speakers will discuss issues germane to the Craven County Department of Social Services.
12. At any regular Board meeting where it appears that there may be more speakers than can be heard within the total time allotted for Public Expression, speakers who have not spoken during Public Comment in the preceding 12 months shall be given preference over speakers who have spoken in the preceding 12 months. **Or Speakers will be acknowledged by the Board in the order in which their names appear on the sign-up sheet.**
13. Speakers will not be allowed to circumvent these rules or the time limits set forth herein by requesting to be placed on the regular agenda.

PRESENTATIONS

16. On occasion, items of information pertaining to the health, safety, welfare, economic development or civic pride of the community are placed on the Agenda as "Presentations". Presentations may require Board action but are more often received as items of information, to provide recognition, or to celebrate community achievements.
17. Presentations meeting the above criteria that do not originate with Department staff may be placed on the Agenda only if sponsored by a member of the Board. In preparing the Agenda for each Board meeting, the Director shall secure such sponsorship for any Presentation originating outside the Director's chain of command and the sponsoring Board member's name shall appear in the meeting Agenda along with an exhibit item explaining the Presentation.