

## **HELPFUL HINTS TO CITIZENS APPEARING BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**It is the goal of the Craven County Board of Commissioners to conduct the County's business in the most efficient manner, while remaining accessible and responsive to the needs of its citizens. For this reason, the following helpful hints to citizens are offered.**

### **Getting on the Commissioners' Agenda**

- Arrive prior to the meeting start time (6:00 p.m.) and sign onto the Speakers' Sign-in Sheet that is available just outside the meeting room at 5:30 p.m., including your address and the subject of your comments. There is a sign-up sheet for topics that are on that evening's agenda and another sign-up sheet for items unrelated to the agenda. Bear in mind that the purpose of "Petitions of Citizens" is for citizens to be heard. It is probable that the Board will only hear your concern when you appear. The Board may not be able to address your concern on the spot, and the Board of Commissioners may not be the proper place to lodge your concern. In this case, you will be referred, if possible.
- If a petitioner expects a large group of supporters at the meeting, it is helpful to inform the Clerk to the Board in advance.

### **Appearing before the Board of Commissioners**

- Each petitioner will be limited to three (3) minutes, so please organize your thoughts, and respect the time allotted.
- Please remember to address the Board, not the audience or the media. Do not ask them questions expecting a response. Your time is to inform them of your concern.
- The Board of Commissioners will take your petition into consideration and report back if necessary or refer to the appropriate authority.
- Please state your name and address clearly at the podium before beginning to speak.
- Any handouts are to be given to the Clerk to the Board prior to the meeting. Do not hand the Board any documents during your presentation.

## **Agenda Comments.**

Comments directly pertaining to items on the agenda of any regularly scheduled meeting of the Board shall be made during an agenda comment period occurring at the beginning of each regularly scheduled meeting. Comments during this period shall be limited to those comments directly pertaining to items on the agenda for such meeting.

Each speaker must address the Board as a whole (and not any individual Commissioner, County staff member or the audience) from the lectern and shall begin his or her remarks by giving his or her name and address and the topic about which they intend to speak. Each speaker will have three (3) minutes to make remarks, as measured by a timer operated by County staff. A speaker may not yield any of his or her time to another speaker.

Speakers must be courteous in their language and presentation and must abide by generally accepted standards of decorum. Speakers shall not make the same or repetitive comments, whether during a particular comment period or over the course of multiple comment periods. Speakers shall not attack or insult any person or group of people, and speakers shall not give belligerent or hostile comments during any comment period.

## **General Comments.**

Comments directly pertaining to policies or issues which are under the statutory or administrative authority of the Board shall be made during a general comment period occurring at the end of each regularly scheduled meeting. Comments during this period shall be limited to those comments directly pertaining to issues which are under the statutory or administrative authority of the Board.

Each speaker must address the Board as a whole (and not any individual Commissioner, County staff member or the audience) from the lectern and shall begin his or her remarks by giving his or her name and address and the topic about which they intend to speak. Each speaker will have three (3) minutes to make remarks, as measured by a timer operated by County staff. A speaker may not yield any of his or her time to another speaker.

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