

FOR YOUR  
INFORMATION

# PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS Village of St. Johnsville

## 1. PURPOSE

To allow comment on the operation of village government in a manner that is fair and orderly to all participants. Day, time, place and public notification of meetings and public hearings shall be in accordance with appropriate sections of the New York State Open Meetings Law and other applicable laws. This policy replaces the Agenda Access Policy previously adopted by the Board of Trustees.

## 2. TYPES OF PARTICIPATION

Comments from the Public  
Special Orders  
Presentation of Petitions

## 3. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

### REGULAR MEETINGS

A. There shall be two opportunities for public comment at each regular meeting of the Board of Trustees: the first after call to order and salute to the flag; the second following completion of "new business."

B. Comments from the public should be limited to those individuals interested in making a short statement to the Board. Speakers must state their name and address for the public record. At his/her option, the clerk of the meeting may ask individuals to sign their name and address to a sheet of paper so that they may be called on to speak in an orderly manner. The person who signs the sheet first will be called on to speak first, etc. Speakers need not be village residents to participate.

C. Individual speakers are limited to a maximum of five (5) minutes during each Public Comment Section. Unused time by one speaker cannot be yielded to another speaker.

D. Individuals are asked to limit their topics to those relating to village government. Speakers should note that the Board of Trustees may, but is not required to, respond to comments and questions of the speaker.

B. A topic requiring a lengthy statement or formal presentation should be scheduled as a special order.

F. Public Comment is scheduled only for regular meetings of the Board of Trustees. Should a member of the public wish to address the Board at another type of meeting, his/her request may be granted by the Board upon a positive vote by a majority of the Board's total membership. If said request is granted, the same time limit as above applies.

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

G. Public hearings on proposed local laws, the annual budget, increase in water or sewer rates, and other matters are scheduled from time to time. The public is encouraged to participate at these hearings.

H. Speakers must limit their statements to the specific topic for which the hearing has been called.

I. Speakers are limited to a maximum of ten (10) minutes each. Unused time by one speaker may not be yielded to another speaker.

## **4. SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE BOARD**

A. An individual or group may wish to make a lengthy statement or presentation to the Board of Trustees under a Special Order of the Board. To do this, a written request must be received by the Village Clerk at least one week before the scheduled meeting. The request must be made on the Agenda Inclusion Request Form approved by the Village Board as part of this policy.

B. Special Orders will be placed on the agenda immediately following the first opportunity for Public Comment. Should more than one group or individual request a Special Order for the same Board meeting, the group filing the request form first will make their presentation first.

C. Each special order is limited to a total of 30 minutes. Those speaking during a Special Order should not speak on this topic during the Public Comment section immediately preceding it.

D. The scheduling of special orders is limited only to regular meetings of the Board of Trustees.

## **5. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS**

Petitions to the village board should be submitted to the Clerk prior to the Board meeting or during the Public Comment or Special Orders sections of the agenda. Petitions submitted to the Village Board should contain the street address of each signer.

## **6. DECORUM**

All persons addressing the Board shall maintain an appropriate level of decorum during their presentation. All persons shall refrain from using foul language. At the discretion of the chair of the meeting, a person or persons may be removed from the meeting room for violation of appropriate decorum.

## **7. OTHER BOARDS, AGENCIES**

Other boards, agencies, and commissions of the village of St. Johnsville may, if they desire, set their own criteria for public participation. In the absence of any official policy on public participation by these entities, this policy, to the extent practical, will apply to all boards, agencies, and commissions of the village.

## **8. AMENDING THIS POLICY**

This policy may be amended by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees at any regular meeting. Resolution approving the amendment should note the effective date of the amendment. No amendment shall be made to this policy that would make it inconsistent with state law.