

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS OF THE LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

(As Adopted by Resolution R-20-_____)

The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners serves as the governing body for Lancaster County. The County Board is charged with various legislative and administrative duties, including the management of county funds, maintenance of county property, adoption of the county budget, setting of tax levies and salaries of elected and appointed county officials, and the administration of various programs established by state law. Unless specified elsewhere, the following are guidelines for public participation at County Board meetings.

A. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Regular Tuesday Meeting

The regular meeting of the County Board is held each Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. in the County-City Building, on the first floor in the Chambers, Room 112. The meetings of the County Board are open to the public. Comments from members of the public are welcome and will be scheduled as follows:

Items on the Agenda:

Those wishing to speak on items specific to the agenda are asked to do so when that item is called by the County Clerk. The Board Chair will recognize and call forward those citizens who wish to speak. Each speaker is limited to five (5) minutes. The County Clerk will indicate when one (1) minute remains to allow for the summary of remarks. *Time limits may be extended or reasonably decreased at the discretion of the County Board Chair.*

Items not on the Agenda:

Those wishing to speak on items relating to other County business not on the agenda may speak during the Public Comment portion of the agenda. The Board Chair will recognize and call forward those citizens who wish to speak. Each speaker is limited to five (5) minutes. The County Clerk will indicate when one (1) minute remains to allow for the summary of remarks. *These time limits may be extended or reasonably decreased at the discretion of the County Board Chair.*

All citizens who speak are asked to print their name and address on the sign-up sheet located on the dais, stating verbally for the record their first and last names.

2. Thursday Staff Meeting

The County Board holds a staff meeting each Thursday morning at 8:30 a.m. in the County-City Building, on the first floor in Room 113. Staff meetings are open to the public. Public comments are not allowed at staff meetings except at the discretion of the County Board Chair.

3. Agendas

Agendas and supporting documentation for County Board meetings are public records and are kept on file in the Lancaster County Clerk's Office. Information regarding agendas may be obtained by calling the County Clerk's Office at 402-441-7481, through the County Clerk's website (www.lancaster.ne.gov/clerk), or by coming in person to the Clerk's office during normal business hours, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

4. **Public Hearings**

Public hearings are conducted by the County Board when required by law or when a public hearing will assist the County Board in the formation of sound public policy or the efficient administration of county government. Most public hearings held by the County Board are conducted during the Tuesday meetings. Items for which a public hearing will be conducted are set forth on the agenda under the Public Hearing section. Members of the public may give testimony to the County Board during a public hearing. Each person offering testimony will be asked to print their name and address on the sign-in sheet located on the dais and verbally state their first and last name for the record. The County Clerk will administer the oath before testimony begins.

The order of testimony shall be as follows:

1. Staff members handling the specific topic (if any)
2. Applicant (if any)
3. Proponents of the proposed action
4. Opponents of the proposed action
5. Testimony in a neutral capacity, including comments from staff members or individuals seeking information about the proposed action
6. Staff member assisting the County Board may make brief comments on the testimony and respond to questions; and
7. Rebuttal by the applicant (if applicable).

Staff member testimony is not limited to a specific amount of time; however, Staff shall provide its information as succinctly as possible. Applicant testimony is limited to thirty (30) minutes. Except for staff members and applicants, each speaker is limited to five (5) minutes. The County Clerk will indicate when one (1) minute remains to allow for the summary of remarks. *Time may be extended or reasonably decreased at the discretion of the County Board Chair.* Those testifying are encouraged to avoid giving repetitive or irrelevant testimony. The County Board Chair shall reserve the right to discontinue at any time repetitive or irrelevant testimony.

Those testifying should identify any organization or group they may be representing. Large groups in attendance which are supporting or opposing the same position with regard to the subject of a public hearing should choose one or two spokespersons to represent the group. The spokesperson(s) may ask the group to stand to give the County Board an idea of the number of persons sharing a similar viewpoint.

If you plan to read a prepared statement or reference/display other documents in your possession, a copy must be provided to the County Clerk at the public hearing for the official record. If you do not have an extra copy available at the time of the public hearing, the County Clerk will make a copy following your testimony.

EXHIBIT A

INTERPRETERS FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST. PLEASE CONTACT THE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE AT 402-441-7481 AT LEAST TWO DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING IF THIS ACCOMMODATION IS REQUIRED, OR IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER SPECIAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS REQUIRING ASSISTANCE.

SI NECESITA AYUDA CON EL IDIOMA ESPAÑOL, POR FAVOR HAGA ARREGLOS CON EL SECRETARIO DEL CONDADO DE LANCASTER EN UN PLAZO DE DOS DÍAS ANTES DE LA REUNIÓN PÚBLICA. EL NÚMERO DE TELÉFONO DEL SECRETARIO DEL CONDADO DE LANCASTER ES 402-441-7481. (IF YOU NEED SPANISH LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE, PLEASE MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE LANCASTER COUNTY CLERK WITHIN TWO DAYS OF THE PUBLIC MEETING. THE PHONE NUMBER FOR THE LANCASTER COUNTY CLERK IS 402-441-7481.)