

## **Resolution:**

# **Rules of Conduct for Kingston Board of Water Commissioners Meetings**

**Date: January 14, 2015**

Whereas, the New York State Open Meeting Law (Article 7, Public Officers Law) gives members of the public the right to attend meetings of public bodies, and

Whereas, the Committee on Open Government has stated that any such rules could serve as a basis for preventing interruptions and that a board may regulate actions of the public attending meetings so as not to interfere with meetings or prevent others in attendance from observing or hearing the deliberative process, and

Whereas, the Board can reasonably limit the length and general nature of public comments to issues pending before the Board and so that it can consider various points of view, and proceed with its business

Whereas, the Board can set a specific time set in the agenda for public participation and comment.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Board of the Water Commissioners hereby adopts the following rules for public participation at meetings of the Board:

1. Except for public hearings duly designated as such by action of the Board, public participation at meetings of the Board shall be limited to 15 minutes of the public participation on the agenda items at the beginning of each Board meetings.
2. Public comment, whether during the public participation segment of the Board meeting or during a duly designated public hearing, shall be limited to three minutes per person. An individual's time may not be given or traded to other speakers or reserved for other portions of the meeting.
3. Any individual wishing to speak during the public participation segment or during a public hearing shall sign a list in advance of the meeting indicating a request to address the Board. When recognized by the Board President, the individual must stand and state his or her name and address, and, if appropriate, group affiliation, and must state the subject he or she will be addressing.
4. Comments must relate to the business of the Board.

5. The Board President shall act as timekeeper or shall designate another official or Department employee as timekeeper.
6. Speakers and audience members must observe proper decorum. Any statements made during the meeting by the members of the Board or members of the general public shall not involve personal, impertinent, or slanderous attacks on individuals, regardless of whether the individual so attacked is an elected official, appointed official or employee, or a member of the general public. The use of profane, vulgar, inflammatory, threatening, abusive, or disparaging language or racial or ethnic slurs shall not be tolerated.
7. The Board President shall control the meeting.
8. It is inappropriate to utilize a public meeting for the purpose of making political speeches, including threats of political action and the same will not be allowed.
9. Comments by speakers must be addressed to the Board. Attendees may not address the Board unless recognized by the Board President.
10. Discussion between speakers and attendees of the public meeting or hearing is prohibited.
11. Banners, flyers or other signs are not permitted in the meeting room. Distribution of flyers in the meeting room is also not permitted.
12. Any person who disregards the directives of the Board President in enforcing the rules or who generally conducts himself or herself so as to act in a boisterous or inappropriate manner while addressing the Board or otherwise disturbs the peace at a meeting will be barred from further participation and forfeit any balance of time remaining for his or her comments.
13. If a speaker who has violated these rules refuses to step down, the Board President may ask for the individual to be removed from the meeting room and charged with disorderly conduct as per the Penal law.
14. The above rules shall take effect immediately.