



Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority

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Standard Procedures for Public Comment at CMCMUA Board Meetings

Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-1 et. Seq., and the Emergency Remote Meeting Protocol for Local Public Bodies, N.J.A.C. 5:39-1, the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority ("CMCMUA" and/or "Authority") offers the public the opportunity to comment twice during its Regular Board meetings, once for comments or questions on Regular Board meeting agenda items and another opportunity to allow members of the public to express themselves regarding matters pertaining to the CMCMUA.

In order to ensure that members of the public who wish to appear before the Authority Board of Commissioners may be heard, while at the same time preserving the proper efficient conduct of the meetings, pursuant to provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12, the Authority has adopted the standard procedures for public comment at Regular Board meetings as set forth below.

1. Notice of Meeting

- 1.1. The CMCMUA, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-18 and N.J.A.C. 5:39-1.5, will notify the public of the location of each meeting, the date, the time, and, if during a declared emergency, the telephonic and electronic means members of the public can participate in the Regular Board meetings. Notification for special meetings shall be provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.
- 1.2. The schedule of Regular Board Meetings will be placed in the official newspaper of the Authority, the Atlantic City Press, posted on the on the front door of the CMCMUA's Administration Building, and on the CMCMUA's website, www.cmcmua.com.

2. Guidelines for Public Participation at Regular Meetings

- 2.1. All CMCMUA Regular Board meetings, unless otherwise advertised, will be open to the public.
- 2.2. Seating will be available for the public on a first-come, first-served basis.

- 2.3. All attendees should be seated by the start of the meeting.
- 2.4. Members of the public will be able to enter the CMCMUA Administration Building Public Meeting Room until the seventy-five (75) person capacity of the Public Meeting Room is reached.
- 2.5. Public participation at Regular Board meetings is intended to allow individual members of the public to address the Board of Commissioners on issues of public concern, and not intended as a forum for extended conversation or two-way dialogue with the Board members or Authority officials.
- 2.6. Each member of the public who wishes to speak during a public comment period shall register to speak on a "first come, first serve" basis prior to the start of the Regular Board meeting on the form provided at the door of the Public Meeting Room. Registrations will also be accepted via email (info@cmcmua.com) by 4:00 p.m. the day prior to the Regular Board meeting.
- 2.7. Members of the public may submit public comments in written form addressed to the CMCMUA, 1523 Route 9 North, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210 attention of the Executive Director, may place written public comments in the drop box located at the above referenced address attention of the Executive Director, or may submit public comments by electronic email to the Executive Director at rizzutojv@cmcmua.com by 4:00 p.m. the day prior to the Regular Board meeting.
- 2.8. A speaker may not register to speak more than once during the same public comment period. Registration information shall include: the speaker's name, any organization affiliation (where applicable), municipality of residence, and the topic on which remarks will be given.
- 2.9. Speakers may provide related documents, printed comments, or materials upon signing in, or attached to the registration email.
- 2.10. An individual who registered to speak cannot give his/her time to another individual. Speakers must be present when their names are called.
- 2.11. If an Authority Regular Board meeting is being conducted remotely by telephonic and electronic means, prior to each public comment section of the Regular Board meeting agenda, the Board Chair will announce if members of the public participating in the Regular Board meeting either by telephonic or electronic means would like address the Board of Commissioners. Members of the public wanting to address the Board of Commissioners shall inform the Board Chair of their desire to address the Board of Commissioners during the public comment period. The Board Chair will assign a number to each speaker in the order in which they responded to the Board Chair's announcement.
- 2.12. Speakers will be acknowledged by the Board Chair to speak in the order in which their names appear on the registration sheet or as assigned by the Board Chair, if the Regular Board meeting is being conducted remotely.
- 2.13. Speakers will address the Board of Commissioners from the microphone placed in front of the dais if the Regular Board meeting is being conducted in person, by telephone, or

by posting their public comment, if participating in the Regular meeting by electronic means, in the chat function of the Authority's YouTube Livestream.

- 2.14. Speakers are asked to commence their remarks with their name and municipality of residence.
- 2.15. Each speaker will be allotted a maximum of four (4) minutes and should limit comments to matters of public concern pertaining to the Authority. Time limits for all speakers will be adhered to.
- 2.16. The Board Chair will direct the speaker to conclude their remarks once the speaker's time has expired.
- 2.17. There will be no sharing or granting of speaking time to others. Groups are asked to select a spokesperson to speak on their behalf.
- 2.18. Public participation at a Regular Board meeting will be limited to cumulative total of twenty (20) minutes. These time allotments may be extended for an additional twelve (12) minutes, by the Board Chair, at their discretion.
- 2.19. Public comments submitted before the remote Regular Board meeting through electronic mail or by written letter shall be read aloud from the beginning and addressed during the remote Regular Board meeting in a manner audible to all meeting participants and the public. The same allotment of time, a maximum of four (4) minutes, shall be placed on the reading of written comments. Each written comment shall be read from the beginning, until the four (4) minute time limit is reached.

3. Board of Commissioners Response to Public Comment

- 3.1. Board of Commissioners are not obligated to answer impromptu questions or address remarks from members of the public during the public comment period.
- 3.2. Speakers should expect the Board of Commissioners to refrain from engaging in a dialogue, except to the extent necessary to clarify the speaker's position.
- 3.3. The allotted time for speaking is the method to address the Board of Commissioners during the public comment period, therefore, the Board of Commissioners will not entertain questions or comments called out from the audience.
- 3.4. Absent exceptional circumstances, the Board of Commissioners will not take action on an item presented during public comment.
- 3.5. When appropriate, the Board Chair may respond to questions either at the end of the public comment session or may refer inquiries and items brought up during public comment to Authority staff for follow up.

4. Decorum

- 4.1. Speakers and members of the public should at all times maintain proper decorum and shall make their comments in a civil manner.

- 4.2. Personal attacks, obscenity, derogatory or slanderous remarks will not be tolerated.
- 4.3. The Board Chair is responsible for maintaining a respectful environment during public comment sections so that public comments can be heard and considered by the Board of Commissioners.
- 4.4. The Board Chair, therefore, may interrupt or terminate any individual's speaking privilege if the speaker's comments are excessively loud, disruptive, obscene, or otherwise in violation of applicable law.
- 4.5. Further, an individual may be cautioned that a personally directed statement may be slanderous or defaming and that the individual may be liable for his/her statement.
- 4.6. Examples of unacceptable behavior that will not be permitted include, but are not limited to, naming Authority employees and engaging in personal attacks, racial slurs, excessive loudness, calling out, yelling, generally disruptive behavior, attempting to disrupt meeting or inciting others to do so.
- 4.7. The Board Chair or General Counsel may interrupt any speaker or terminate any individual's speaking privilege if the speaker's comments are disruptive or obscene.
- 4.8. An individual may be cautioned that a personally directed statement may be slanderous or defaming and that the individual may be liable for his/her statements.
- 4.9. Disregard for the rules of decorum will not be tolerated.