

Town of Guilford
223 Marble Road
Guilford, NY 13780

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PUBLIC COMMENT

Policy: It is the policy of the Town of Guilford to encourage citizens to contact the Town Supervisor, the Highway Superintendent, the Town Clerk, the Dog Control Officer, the Enforcement Officer, the Assessor, the Town Justices, Water Superintendents or members of the Town Board to redress specific issues, which involve the Town of Guilford.

Procedure: The procedures governing town meetings are outlined in Chapter 4 of the Town Law Manual published by the NYS Assoc. of Towns. These procedures are designed to provide guidance for elected officials and the public at town board meetings.

To comply with **Open Meetings Law (Town Law 63)**, the Guilford Town Board hereby establishes a **Public Comment Policy** to allow members of the public the opportunity to address the Town Board. In addition to public hearings, this time is set aside for the purpose of hearing comments and suggestions from citizens. All comments made during the Public Comment period shall be subject to the following procedures.

The Town Board may vote to suspend public comment if the following rules are ignored.

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1. A **30 minute Public Comment** period will be held during the regularly scheduled Town Board meeting each month.
2. It is requested that individuals or a representative for groups who wish to make a statement during the Public Comment period pick up a numbered card from the table by the door.
3. Speakers will have up to **5** minutes to make their statement.
4. In the event a group of persons supporting or opposing the same position wishes to speak, a spokesperson will be designated to express the group's concerns.
5. Speakers will be courteous in their language and presentation. If possible, it is requested that speakers stand when presenting and be seated when finished. Comments must be related to legitimate town business.
6. It is requested, but not required, that speakers will begin by stating their name, address and organization (if any). If you want your name included in the minutes, please begin by stating your name and/or the organization you represent.

7. Speakers will direct their statements to the Town Board as a whole and not to individual board members or the audience. Discussion or debate between speakers and members of the audience will not be allowed.
8. Any action items already on the agenda will be discussed as scheduled.
9. The Town Board will not likely take any action on the subject for which they have not had the opportunity to fully investigate and gather complete information.
10. Speakers **will not** direct comments to any individual or discuss any of the following:
 - a. Candidacy of any person seeking public office
 - b. Matters currently in litigation
 - c. Matters which are executive session items
 - d. Matters made confidential by law
11. The Town Board may provide additional Public Comment time at the end of the regular meeting.
12. A majority vote of the Town Board is required to suspend public comment.
13. If any provisions of this policy, at any time, conflicts with legal statute, the statute shall take precedence.

Adopted by the Guilford Town Board this 8th day of July, 2012.