



## **Board Meeting Public Comment Policy**

### **Section I: Limit on Participation**

Audience participation at a Board meeting is limited to the public comment portion of the meeting designated for non-agenda items and to public comments on a listed agenda item. At all other times during a Board meeting, the audience shall not enter into discussion or debate on matters being considered by the Board, unless requested by the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson (referred herein as “presiding officer”).

### **Section II: Public Comment Non-Agenda Item**

At Regular Meetings the Board shall allot no more than 30 minutes to hear persons who desire to make comments to the Board regarding items not listed as agenda items.

No presentation shall exceed five (5) minutes. When multiple speakers indicate a desire to speak on the same issue, the presiding officer shall relate the Board’s desire that the speakers designate two or three people to speak for the group. Time for each presentation may be reduced if an unusually large number of people sign up to speak on the same topic. The presiding officer shall have the authority to extend the amount of time for public comment on non-agenda items.

Any person planning to address the Board on a non-agenda item shall complete the appropriate Board Public Comment Request Form, available at the Roanoke Housing Authority’s (RHA) Administrative Office or RHA’s website, and submit it to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the beginning of the meeting.

All Board Public Comment Request Forms must be hand-delivered, mailed or emailed to the following:

#### **Hand-Deliver or Mail**

Roanoke Housing Authority  
c/o Sharon Tolbert, CEO  
Board Public Comment Request  
931 Booker Street  
Auburn, AL 36832

#### **Email**

stolbert@auburnhousingauth.org  
In the subject type “Board Public Comment Request”.

### **Section III: Public Comment Agenda Items**

At Regular Meetings the Board shall allot no more than 30 minutes to hear persons who desire to make comments to the Board regarding an item listed on the agenda for the meeting.

No presentation shall exceed five (5) minutes. When multiple speakers indicate a desire to speak on the same issue, the presiding officer shall relate the Board’s desire that the speakers designate two or three people to speak for the group. Time for each presentation may be reduced if an unusually large number of people sign up to speak on the same topic. The presiding officer shall have the authority to extend the amount of time for public comment on agenda items.



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## **Section IV: Opening Statement**

The following statement shall be read by the presiding officer at the beginning of the public comment portion of the meeting.

1. We are now at the scheduled time on our agenda for public comment. The Board wishes to hear your thoughts and concerns. As per Board Meeting Public Comment Policy (Policy), all speakers must have submitted a Board Public Comment Request Form to the CEO at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the start of the meeting.
2. All registered speakers should have received a copy of the Policy regarding public comment including procedures for your presentation. The Board asks the audience to refrain from responding to the speaker's comments, including cheering and applauding, so that all Board members can focus their attention entirely on the speaker.
3. Although the Board may ask clarifying questions, please be reminded that the Board cannot respond directly to any comments made during the public comment period.
4. If we have individuals signed up to speak, each person will have five minutes for his or her public presentation.

## **Section V: Public Comment Procedures**

A speaker who signs up to address the Board, either on a non-agenda item or on an item listed on the agenda, shall:

1. Be acknowledged by the presiding officer before publicly speaking;
2. State his or her first and last name and the intended topic;
3. Address the Board only on matters relating to the RHA and be limited to the topic as indicated on the Board Public Comment Request Form;
4. Be limited to speaking for no more than five minutes;

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5. Have allotted time reduced if the presiding officer deems it necessary to accommodate a large number of speakers wishing to address the Board on the same topic;
6. Not accrue time from another speaker;
7. Not use profane or vulgar language during his or her presentation;
8. Refrain from making personal attacks against any person;
9. Remain in the area designated for speaking during his or her presentation;
10. Address the presiding officer and refrain from directing questions to individual Board members, the CEO, staff, attorney, or members of the audience.

The presiding officer shall have the authority to suspend the speaker's time if he or she does not comply with the listed procedures.

**Section VI: Board's Response**

Specific factual information or recitation of existing policy may be furnished in response to inquiries, but the Board shall not deliberate or decide regarding any subject that is not included on the agenda posted with notice of the meeting.

The presiding officer shall have the authority to request that the CEO ensure that the appropriate staff member follow up with the individual regarding the information or concern presented during public comment.

**Section VI: Complaints and Concerns**

The presiding officer or designee shall determine whether a person addressing the Board has attempted to solve a matter administratively through resolution channels established by RHA or its Management Agent's internal policies. If not, the person shall be referred to the appropriate policy (see list below) to seek resolution:

1. Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan
2. Project-Based Voucher Landlord Policy
3. Procurement Policy
4. Employee Handbook
5. Other relevant policies

**VII: Disruption**

The Board shall not tolerate disruption of the meeting by members of the audience. If, after at least one warning from the presiding officer, any person continues to disrupt the meeting by his or her words or actions, the presiding officer may request assistance from law enforcement officials to have the person removed from the meeting.