

RESOLUTION NO. 215 - 2014

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BUENA VISTA, COUNTY OF ATLANTIC,
STATE OF NEW JERSEY, ADOPTING A CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY
FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS

WHEREAS, the Township Committee is desirous in adopting a Code of Conduct Policy;
and,

WHEREAS, the Township Committee wishes to preserve an environment that is safe and
conducive to effectively representing and pursuing the public interest; and,

WHEREAS, the Policy adopted by said Resolution shall remain in effect until such time
the Policy is revoked and/or amended.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Code of Conduct for Public Meetings
is hereby adopted and shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

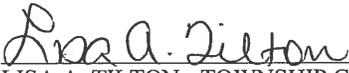
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF BUENA VISTA

BY: 
CHUCK CHIARELLO - MAYOR

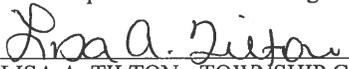
DATED: AUGUST 11, 2014

ADOPTED: AUGUST 11, 2014

ATTEST:


LISA A. TILTON - TOWNSHIP CLERK

I hereby certify the above to be a true copy of Resolution No. 215 - 2014 adopted by the
Township Committee at the Regular Meeting held on Monday, August 11, 2014.


LISA A. TILTON - TOWNSHIP CLERK

	Y	N	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
BARBER	—	✓	—	—
KELLY	1✓	—	—	—
MARTINELLI	✓	—	—	—
WILLIAMS	2✓	—	—	—
CHIARELLO	✓	—	—	—

Buena Vista Township Policy as Adopted by Resolution 215 of 2014

Code of Conduct for Public Meetings

Introduction

The efficient and dignified conduct of public business is the ultimate concern of the Township Committee, herein known as the "Committee". Accordingly, the Committee wishes to preserve an environment that is safe and conducive to effectively representing and pursuing the public interest. Every resident, business-owner and visitor has a right to access Township public meetings and to experience these meetings in a friendly, courteous, safe, and professional environment. Unfortunately, from time to time, individuals may act in a manner that is disruptive to the meeting environment which precludes the Township's ability to maintain order and decorum.

Scope of Application

This policy applies to person(s) attending public meetings.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define and establish boundaries associated with disruptive behavior that adversely impacts the Committees' ability to conduct public business as well as obstructing and/or interfering with the audience's ability to hear the business being conducted and outline a procedure to ensure civility, courtesy and respect remain at all times.

Public Meeting Decorum

These rules shall apply to all persons attending any public Township meeting, to include but are not limited to Township Committee meetings and meetings of the Township's other sub-committees or Boards. Behavior that is specifically defined as unacceptable includes:

- a) Conduct that is in violation of any ordinance, state or federal law;
- b) Persons in the audience will refrain from creating, provoking or participating in any type of disturbance involving unwelcome physical contact;
- c) Any person who makes personal, impertinent or slanderous remarks, or who becomes boisterous while addressing the Committee shall be ruled out of order and be asked to leave the meeting;
- d) Interruption of speakers, name calling or boisterous remarks;
- e) Acting or behaving in such an unreasonable manner so as to alarm, disturb or intimidate others and to provoke breach of peace;
- f) Any act designed to intimidate, threaten or harm persons or destroy property;
- g) Interruption of speakers or engaging in behavior that disrupts the meeting including but not limited to applause, cheers, jeers, etc.;
- h) Use of profanity, vulgar language or gestures;
- i) Use of language which insults or demeans any person or which, when directed at a public official or employee is not related to his or her official duties, however, citizens have the right to comment on the performance, conduct, and qualifications of public figures;
- j) Making non-germane or frivolous statements or addressing the Committee on issues that do not concern the services, policies or affairs of the Township;
- k) Marketing, promoting or soliciting business which interferes with the operation and conduct of the meeting and the citizens attending and participating;
- l) Campaigning for public office or any discussion of a sectarian or partisan nature;
- m) Appropriate attire, including shoes and shirts are required in the Committee Chambers and other meeting rooms at all times;
- n) Members of the audience shall not engage in audible conversations or which interrupts and prohibits individuals from hearing and/or participating in a public meeting, or disrupts the conduct of business by the public body;
- o) Standing in the back or sides isles of the meeting room as long as there are sufficient seats available (law enforcement and security personnel excluded);
- p) Persons in the audience shall not place their feet on the seats in front of them;
- q) The public may enter and leave the meeting room at any time, provided such entrance or exit is made quietly and in orderly fashion and not disruptive of the business being conducted;

- r) The operation of personal recording equipment is allowed at a public meeting. The operation and placement thereof shall not disturb the meeting;
- s) Persons in the audience will refrain from using cellular phones, pagers, or other devices while the meeting is in session;
- t) All persons entering the Township Committee meeting and Committee Rooms, including their bags, purses, briefcases and similar belongings, may be subject to search for weapons and other dangerous materials. Such persons found to possess item(s) that are prohibited or illegal shall be subject to immediate removal. Objects that are deemed a threat to persons at the meeting or the facility infrastructure are not allowed. The Sergeant-at-Arms is authorized to remove items and/or individuals from the Committee Rooms if a threat exists or is perceived to exist.
- u) For Security Purposes, all persons attending meetings shall have ten (10) minutes upon the adjournment of said meetings for that day, to gather their belongings and exit the building in order to ensure Township Staff ample time to close the facility. Any individual who upon request of Township Staff and/or Security Personnel, refuses to leave the building may be subject to penalties including but not limited to trespassing.

Addressing the Committee / Board

- a) If you are able, please make your comments from the freestanding microphone at the front of the room. If you are unable to do so, you may address the Committee / Board from your seat; however, please speak loudly so that the Committee / Board can hear you and the sound system can record properly;
- b) Provide your name and address at the beginning of your remarks for the formal record;
- c) All comments or questions shall be directed to the Mayor or Chair. Any further dialogue with specific members, staff or public must be approved by the Mayor or Chair.
- d) Meeting attendees will be given two (2) minutes, all inclusive to comment on any agenda item(s) without comment or question from the Committee, but only on items specified on the agenda listed for the current meeting. Attendees will be given four (4) minutes, all inclusive, including all dialogue, questions, and responses from both the speaker and the Committee for the designated public portion of the meeting. There may be no transference of a speaker's time to other attendees. Applicants and appellants in the land use matters are usually given more time to speak pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law;
- e) Speakers will not bring to the podium any items other than a prepared written statement, writing materials, or objects that are relevant to the presentation;
- f) If any individual wishes to submit written information at the meeting, he or she shall give it to the Sergeant-of Arms, Township Clerk or Administrative staff;
- g) Speakers and any other members of the public will not approach the dais at any time without prior consent from the Chair of the meeting;

General Process

The Committee is empowered to cause the removal of any and all persons violating the provisions of its rules and removal of said individual(s). The presiding officer (Mayor or Chair) shall preserve order and decorum at Committee or other Board Meetings. He or she may order the expulsion of any person, for violation of these rules, disruptive behavior, or any words or action which incites violence or disorder. The presiding officer shall instruct person(s) to immediately leave the meeting and grounds of the public facility. Should they refuse to comply or do not remove themselves in a timely manner, the designated Sergeant-At Arms shall be authorized to remove the individual(s). Any person so expelled shall not be readmitted for the remainder of the meeting from which expelled and who at a later meeting again engages in behavior justifying expulsion may also be barred from attendance at future Committee and/or Board meetings for a specified and reasonable period of time not to exceed six months, or upon a still subsequent expulsion a period not to exceed one year by the presiding officer.

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct which will disturb, disrupt or impede the orderly conduct of the meeting may result in removal from the meeting and/or possible arrest.