

**Resolution Establishing Policies and Procedures  
for Citizens Wishing To Be Heard**

WHEREAS, the local Act of the General Assembly creating the Board of Commissioners of Lowndes County (the “Board of Commissioners”) provides that the chairperson (or in his or her absence the vice chairperson) of the Board of Commissioners shall cause an agenda to be established for and preside at all meetings of the Board of Commissioners;

WHEREAS, the agenda of meetings of the Board of Commissioners has historically included an item for “Citizens Wishing to be Heard”;

WHEREAS, “Citizens Wishing to be Heard” is a limited public forum at which certain persons may speak on certain subjects;

WHEREAS, the First Amendment permits the Board of Commissioners to impose reasonable restrictions on the time and manner of speech during “Citizens Wishing to be Heard”;

WHEREAS, the First Amendment permits the Board of Commissioners to limit persons speaking during “Citizens Wishing to be Heard” to residents and taxpayers of the County;

WHEREAS, the First Amendment does not entitle a person to speak during “Citizens Wishing to be Heard” on any subject on which he or she desires;

WHEREAS, the First Amendment permits the Board of Commissioners to limit speech to subjects concerning the business of the Board of Commissioners;

WHEREAS, the First Amendment permits the Board of Commissioners to limit speech on subjects that the Board of Commissioners believes to be closed;

WHEREAS, provided an authorized speaker desires to speak on an authorized subject and otherwise complies with reasonable restrictions on time and manner of speech, the First Amendment does not permit the Board of Commissioners to limit speech based on the view point of the speaker;


WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has a significant interest in conducting orderly, efficient meetings of the Board of Commissioners;

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners desires to impose reasonable restrictions on the time and manner of speech during "Citizens Wishing to be Heard";

NOW THEREFORE, the Board of Commissioners hereby resolves to and does hereby establish the attached "Policies and Procedures for Citizens Wishing to be Heard" which shall govern and limit speech before the Board of Commissioners during the "Citizens Wishing to be Heard" portion of meetings of the Board of Commissioners.

IT IS SO RESOLVED, this 25<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2011.

Board of Commissioners of Lowndes County

  
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Ashley Paulk, Chairman

  
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Joyce Evans, District 1 Representative

  
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Richard Raines, District 2 Representative

  
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Crawford Powell, District 3 Representative

**Lowndes County Board of Commissioners**  
**Policies and Procedures for Citizens Wishing to be Heard**

1. Persons wishing to speak at “Citizens Wishing to be Heard” shall sign in with the Clerk of the Board of Commissioners. The Clerk shall be available for this purpose at least 10 minutes before the scheduled time at which the meeting will begin. Each person signing in shall provide his or her name, his or her mailing address, his or her daytime telephone number, whether he or she is a resident of the County, whether he or she is a taxpayer of the County, the subject on which he or she wishes to speak, and the action requested of the Board of Commissioners, if any. The Clerk shall prepare and have available a form for the purpose of persons signing in to speak.
2. A maximum of 10 persons shall be allowed to speak at any meeting.
3. A maximum of three persons shall be allowed to speak on any one subject.
4. Persons shall be allowed to speak on a first-come, first-served basis.
5. Persons desiring to speak shall not speak until recognized by the presiding member of the Board of Commissioners.
6. Each speaker’s time to speak shall be limited to five minutes.
7. Commissioners may in their discretion respond to a speaker at the conclusion of the speaker’s presentation.
8. The Board of Commissioners shall not vote on matters presented during “Citizens Wishing to be Heard.”
9. When a speaker makes a request for specific action, the presiding member of the Board of Commissioners may refer the subject to the County Manager.
10. To speak to the Board of Commissioners during “Citizens Wishing to be Heard”, a person must be a resident or property taxpayer of Lowndes County.

11. **Speakers shall direct their speech to the Board of Commissioners as a whole. Speakers shall not direct their speech to individual members of the Board of Commissioners or to individual employees of the Board of Commissioners or county officials. Speakers shall not solicit comments or responses from the Board of Commissioners or individual members of the Board of Commissioners.**
12. **Persons speaking shall not make impertinent, derogatory, personal, offensive, or slanderous remarks.**
13. **Subjects on which speakers may speak shall be limited to subjects concerning the business of the Board of Commissioners.**
14. **The Board of Commissioners may limit speech on subjects that the Board of Commissioners believes to be closed.**
15. **If a resident or taxpayer of the County desires to speak on a subject concerning the business of the Board of Commissioners that the Board of Commissioners does not believe to be closed and otherwise complies with these Policies and Procedures, the Board of Commissioners shall not limit the speaker's speech based on the view point of the speaker.**
16. **The presiding member of the Board of Commissioners shall ensure compliance with these Policies and Procedures.**
17. **Any failure to comply with these Policies and Procedures may be ruled out of order by the presiding member of the Board of Commissioners.**
18. **If any person attending a meeting of the Board of Commissioners fails to comply with any of these Policies and Procedures, the presiding member of the Board of Commissioners may take action to remove the person from the meeting.**

**Adopted January 25, 2011**