

LOWER SAUCON TOWNSHIP
Northampton County, Pennsylvania

RESOLUTION #75-2022

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF LOWER SAUCON TOWNSHIP ADOPTING
PROCEDURES FOR LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC HEARINGS**

WHEREAS, Lower Saucon Township is a Township of the Second Class, Optional Plan of Government, located in Northampton County, Pennsylvania, and is governed by an elected Council; and

WHEREAS, the Council of Lower Saucon Township is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations for legislative public hearings to be conducted by Council; and

WHEREAS, the Lower Saucon Township Council is authorized to establish a level of civility and promote an atmosphere of reasoned expression of ideas in promulgating rules and regulations for its public hearings; and

WHEREAS, the Council recognizes that public participation in the public hearing process is intended to afford citizens an opportunity to comment on the important matters being considered by the Lower Saucon Township Council; and

WHEREAS, the Council is strong advocate of free speech and wishes to promote an atmosphere of reasoned expression of ideas.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of Lower Saucon Township establishes the following rules and regulations regarding legislative public hearings and conduct:

1. These Procedures are intended to maintain proper decorum for the hearing, participation, and respect for all citizens and to maintain order.
2. These Procedures for legislative public hearings shall be posted on the Lower Saucon Township website.
3. Signs will be posted at the meeting location advising people attending the meeting of the hearing procedures.
4. Legislative public hearings are designed to allow residents and taxpayers in Lower Saucon Township to express comments regarding the subject matter of the public hearing. Legislative public hearings are not quasi-judicial public hearings; and these rules and quasi-judicial public hearings, such as Zoning Hearing Board or Conditional Use hearings, shall be conducted according to the laws applicable in those instances.
5. Responses to public comment/testimony or questions will not be provided during the hearing, other than to clarify facts related to the subject matter. Public hearings of this nature are a one-way conversation.

6. The Township Manager, in his/her sole discretion, is authorized to request police presence at the public hearing.
7. No attendee shall obstruct in any way the entrances or exits to the hearing room.
8. A sign-in sheet will be used for order of public comment/testimony.
9. Public participation and comment/testimony shall occur after the subject matter of the hearing has been discussed by Council.
10. Individuals desiring to speak must be sworn in under oath by the Court Stenographer. The oath will take place as a group at the beginning of the hearing using the sign-in sheet. Individuals who speak must give their name prior to speaking and acknowledge that they took the oath. Individuals who arrive later will be required to take the oath prior to speaking.
11. Individuals desiring to testify shall announce their name and municipality of residence prior to testifying.
12. Comment/testimony may be made only by a person who has been recognized by the Council President.
13. Comment/testimony will be limited to no more than three minutes per person.
14. The Council President (or acting Council President) shall, in his or her sole discretion, be permitted to expand the individual comment period by no more than two minutes upon request from the individual. Thereafter, additional time may be allowed only upon motion approved by a majority of Council.
15. Groups of people attending the meeting because of the same subject matter may designate one of the members to speak for the group.
16. No speaker will be allowed to surrender his/her time to any other person, or to call upon other persons for comment/testimony.
17. The resident or taxpayer shall testify from the lectern or other designated space, unless the resident or taxpayer is disabled and/or unable to stand.
18. All public comment/testimony will be addressed to Township Council.
19. Members of the audience may not address other members of the audience, or to argue, speak or yell back and forth at or to each other.
20. In order to facilitate the orderly conduct of the hearing, there shall be no foul or vulgar language used or gestures made during the hearing.
21. Comment/testimony should be substantive and not include any defamatory content and/or personal attacks on the integrity of others whether or not present.
22. Letters may be read during public comment/testimony subject to the allotted three-minute time limit for individual testimony. No extension shall be granted for residents or taxpayers reading a letter during testimony. Any letters cited or read may be submitted to the Township Manager.

23. Copies of any documents and/or materials reviewed or discussed during testimony shall be marked, made available to Council and placed into the record.

24. At all times, each attendee shall respect the point of view of others. No comment disagreeing with another's point of view shall involve a personal attack on the character of others with a different view point.

25. Any conduct disruptive of the hearing and interfering with the business of the hearing, such as talking when not recognized by the Council President (or acting Council President), talking beyond the allotted time and/or the use of a cell phone shall not be tolerated.

26. The Council President (or acting Council President) will rule out of order any speaker or comment which is defamatory, contentious, scandalous, impertinent, redundant or disruptive to the proceedings of the meeting.

27. If the conduct and order of the hearing is no longer maintained, the Council President (or acting Council President) may recess the hearing to restore order so the business of the hearing may be conducted when the hearing resumes.

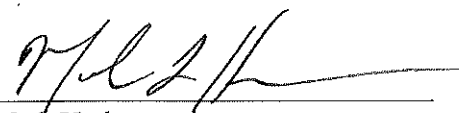
28. Public comment will have no personal attacks of any nature directed toward or against any applicant, respondent, Council person, employees of Lower Saucon Township, members of the audience or any other persons.

29. Legislative public hearings will conclude at 10:00 p.m., unless a majority of Council votes to extend the time deadline. To the extent practicable, any necessary continuation will be discussed at the hearing.

This resolution shall replace the Hearing Procedures established by Township Council on August 21, 2013.

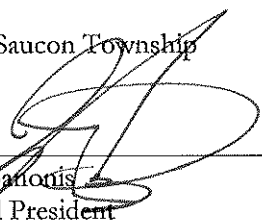
RESOLVED by the Council of Lower Saucon Township this 16th day of November, 2022.

Attest



Mark Hudson
Township Manager

Lower Saucon Township



Jason Banonis
Council President