

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rowan County, NC (April 2, 2026) — In anticipation of increased public participation in upcoming Board of County Commissioners' ("Board") meetings, the County feels it beneficial to reiterate long-standing policies regarding the public comment period. The Board places great importance on the opinions of the public and values the public comment period. As such, adherence to the Board's policies ensures all citizens have a chance to be heard on the issues that are important to them.

North Carolina law requires Boards of County Commissioners to provide at least one period for public comment per month. Rowan County has a long history of allowing for public comment twice per month, at both the regularly scheduled 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM meetings.

As authorized by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 153A-52.1, the Board adopted a policy which governs the conduct of public comment at Board meetings on March 19, 2007. That policy can be found in full at the following link: [www.rowancountync.gov/511/Board-of-Commissioners](http://www.rowancountync.gov/511/Board-of-Commissioners) ("Policy").

County Policy limits public comment to three (3) minutes per speaker and fifteen (15) minutes total. However, the Board may extend the time for public comment at any meeting upon a motion and majority vote and has a history of extending the public comment period for up to an hour for matters of important public interest. It is the intention of the Board to continue this practice at its upcoming Monday April 6 meeting.

The Policy also sets forth rules for public comment and decorum which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Persons who wish to speak at public comment must sign up prior to the meeting on the sign-up sheet provided. Sign-up sheets are available thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of Board meetings.
- **A speaker may receive "yielded" or "ceded" time from only one other speaker who is signed up, resulting in a total speaking time of six (6) minutes.**
- The Board may, in its discretion, require speakers who wish to speak on the same topic to designate a spokesperson to speak on behalf of the group to avoid repetitive comments.
- Speakers shall be courteous in their language and presentation.
- Any applause from the audience shall be held until the end of the public comment period.
- **Speakers are not permitted to speak on topics which are scheduled for a public hearing during the same meeting but may sign up to speak at the public hearing.**

**Signs of any kind are not permitted in the commissioner's meeting room.**

Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.17 any person who willfully interrupts, disturbs, or disrupts a Board meeting, either during public comment or otherwise, may be removed from the meeting. **Displays of signs, outbursts from the audience, and failure to comply with the Board's public comment policy are considered willful interruptions, disturbances, and/or disruptions and will not be permitted at any Board meeting.**

Questions: Contact Sarah Pack at 704-216-8181