

in the same manner as special meetings. County staff will provide an official record of the proceedings via audio recording or summary minutes.

23: Board Workshops. Board workshops will be scheduled by the County Administrator to accommodate larger policy discussions, such as budget preparations or growth planning.

- (a) Workshops may focus on a single theme or topic or may include multiple discussion topics.
- (b) The time and place of the workshop will be advertised.

24: Ceremonial Meetings. Meetings may be scheduled for ceremonial purposes, such as the swearing in of newly elected or re-elected Commissioners and Constitutional Officers. Such ceremonial meetings will be advertised in accordance with the requirements for special meetings. If the meeting is limited to the ceremonial purpose, Open to the Public will not be required.

SECTION II - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN COUNTY GOVERNMENT

1: Board Meetings – Accessibility. All meetings of the Sarasota County Commission shall be open to the public in accordance with the Florida Government in the Sunshine Law, Section 286.011, Florida Statutes.

- (a) The exception shall be those meetings statutorily exempt, such as executive collective bargaining sessions - Section 447.605(1), F.S.; meetings regarding risk management claims - Section 768.28(15), F.S.; and litigation meetings pursuant to Section 286.011(8) F.S. The Board shall follow all statutory requirements for exempt meetings.
- (b) Because of the need to comply with seating capacity requirements of the fire code, there may be occasions when entrance by the public to the Commission Chambers or other meeting rooms is at capacity. In those instances, the Board will make other rooms available for those who desire to participate in the meeting or adjourn and reschedule the meeting to a location to accommodate the public.
- (c) All meetings of the Board will be held in a building that is open to all members of the public. No fee may be charged.
- (d) For public safety purposes, no signs or placards mounted on sticks, posts, poles or similar structures will be allowed in Board meeting rooms. Any signs, placards, or banners that are disruptive or interfere with a person's ability to observe the meeting shall be removed.
- (e) All persons with disabilities shall be provided reasonable assistance to enable them to effectively participate in Board meetings.

2: Civility Code. The Board-adopted Civility Code governs all proceedings held before the Sarasota Board of County Commissioners:

1. All electronic devices, including cell phones and pagers, shall be either turned off or otherwise silenced.
2. Prolonged conversations shall be conducted outside Commission Chambers.
3. Clapping, whistling, heckling, gesturing, loud conversations, or other disruptive behavior is prohibited.
4. Only those individuals who have submitted speaker cards and who have been recognized by the Chairman may address comments to the Board.
5. Comments at public hearings shall be limited to the subject being considered by the Board.
6. Comments at Open to the Public shall be directed to County issues.
7. All public comments shall avoid personal attacks, abusive language and redundancy.
8. No person attending a board meeting is to harass, annoy or otherwise disturb any other person in the room.

Any member of the public whose behavior is disruptive and violates the Sarasota County Civility Code is subject to removal from the Board meeting and such other action as may be appropriate. If a law enforcement officer is the person removing the member of the public, the decision of whether to take action shall be made by the law enforcement deputy based on state and federal law.

3: Opportunity to be Heard. Persons desiring to address the Board must first fill out a Request to Speak card and turn it in to the Clerk to the Board. County employees providing information on Consent or Discussion Section items as part of their official duties are not required to complete a Request to Speak card. Upon recognition and introduction by the Chair, the person may speak. Comments made during a public hearing must be under oath or affirmation and limited to the topic of the public hearing. Any topic may be addressed at Open to the Public. In compliance with Section 286.0114, Florida Statutes, to ensure that everyone has a fair opportunity to participate, the following policies are in effect:

- (a) After being recognized, the person shall:
 - step up to the speaker's rostrum and state his/her name;
 - limit comments to three minutes for Open to the Public and five minutes for public hearings (unless modified by consensus of the Board);
 - address all remarks to the Board as a body, and not a member thereof;
 - make comments and present documents to the Board and the Clerk to the Board;
 - make comments concise and to the point;
 - submit into the record by providing to the Clerk to the Board any data or evidence for the Board to consider.
- (b) No person may speak more than once on the same subject at the same meeting unless granted permission by the Board.