



# **CONCORDE ESTATES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

## **PUBLIC SPEAKING POLICY**

**Adopted November 17, 2021**

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is the desire of the Board of Supervisors (“Board”) of the Concorde Estates Community Development District (“CDD” or “District”) to implement a public speaking policy that will foster better communication between the residents and the Board and facilitate more effective Board meetings.

## **PURPOSE OF A PUBLIC SPEAKING POLICY**

Meetings of the Board are open to any member of the public. However, we ask that you keep in mind that it is a business meeting of the Board members to discuss issues, make decisions, and have conversations that they cannot have outside of a publicly noticed meeting to which the public and press are invited.

The purpose of these meetings is for the Board to conduct business; however, in the course of business, residents and members of the public have valuable and applicable comments relating to these meetings and issues that the Board faces. In order to facilitate this communication between the Board and the public, it is necessary to set forth a policy related to members of the public speaking during any portion of the meeting.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

As a courtesy to others, please turn your cell phones and/or pagers to vibrate or silent mode during the meeting. These meetings are recorded and videotaped. Your cooperation in this regard will allow everyone to hear all of the meeting discussion.

The Board is very interested in hearing comments from its citizens and encourages participation in meetings, at the appropriate time and in the appropriate manner. We ask that each person who speaks at a meeting be courteous and respectful, speaking only when recognized by the Chairman and yielding the floor when requested by the Chairman, Manager, Attorney, or other Board member.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 286.26, Florida Statutes, any person requiring special accommodations because of a disability or physical impairment to participate in any of these proceedings should contact the District Office, 3151 Georgian Bay Ln, Kissimmee, Florida 34746, 407-449-4687, at least two (2) business days in advance of the meeting. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the Florida Relay Service at 800-955-8770 for aid in contacting the District Office at least two (2) days prior to the date of the meeting.

## **DESIGNATING PUBLIC COMMENT PERIODS**

1. An initial Public Comment Period shall be provided at the start of each Board meeting prior to consideration of any propositions by the Board and shall be limited to items which appear on the agenda or are otherwise scheduled to be considered by the Board during such meeting (the “Initial Comment Period”). In the event that, during the course of the meeting, there are propositions that come before the Board that are not listed on the agenda, the Chairman shall announce an additional Public Comment Period on such proposition prior to the Board voting on the matter.

2. During the Initial Comment Period, speakers shall be permitted to address any agenda item (but not non-agenda matters, which may be addressed as indicated herein) of personal or general concern. The Chairman may elect to also allow public comment on any non-agenda item of personal or general concern at the beginning of the meeting.
3. If not allowed during the Initial Comment Period at the beginning of the meeting, prior to the close of the meeting, an additional Public Comment Period shall be held in order to allow speakers to address any non-agenda item of personal or general concern (the “General Comment Period”).
4. Individuals wishing to make a public comment, whether during the Initial Comment Period, the General Comment Period, or any other Public Comment Period, are limited to three (3) minutes per person. Potential speakers may not assign his/her three (3) minutes to extend another speaker’s time.
5. The Chairman may extend or reduce the time periods set forth herein in order to facilitate orderly and efficient District business, provided however that a reasonable opportunity for public comment shall be provided consistent with the requirements of Section 286.0114, Florida Statutes. The Presiding Officer may also elect to set and announce additional Public Comment Periods if he or she deems it appropriate.

## **IDENTIFYING INDIVIDUALS WHO WISH TO BE HEARD**

Unless otherwise directed and declared by the Chairman, individuals seeking to be heard before the Board during any Public Comment Period shall identify themselves by a show of hands at the beginning of each Public Comment Period, as announced by the Chairman. Alternatively, in the event that public attendance is high, and/or if otherwise in the best interests of the District in order to facilitate efficient and orderly District business, the Chairman may require individuals to complete speaker cards that include the individual’s name, address, the proposition on which they wish to be heard, the individual’s position, if any, on the proposition (i.e., “for,” “against,” or “undecided”), and if appropriate, to indicate the designation of a representative to speak for the individual or the individual’s group. In the event large groups of individuals desire to speak, the Chairman may require each group to designate a representative to speak on behalf of such group.

Speaking Request Forms should be completed and given to the Manager prior to the start of the meeting. These forms are available online for your convenience in advance of the meeting. They are also available next to the agendas in the back of the meeting room.

## **PUBLIC DECORUM**

1. Each person addressing the Board shall proceed to the place assigned for speaking, and should state his or her name and address in an audible tone of voice for the public record.
2. All remarks shall be relevant to the matter at hand, and shall be addressed to the Board as a body and not to any member thereof or to any staff member. The Chairman shall rule as to the relevancy of any remarks, as appropriate. No person other than a Board Supervisor or District staff member shall be permitted to enter into any

discussion with an individual speaker while he or she has the floor, without the permission of the Chairman.

3. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit the Chairman from maintaining orderly conduct and proper decorum in a public meeting. Speakers shall refrain from disruptive behavior, and from making profane, vulgar, intimidating, or threatening remarks. Speakers shall refrain from launching personal attacks against any Board Supervisor, District staff member, or member of the public. If any speaker, after a verbal warning from the Chairman against such behavior, continues to disregard these policies, the Chairman shall have the discretion to expel such speaker from the meeting in accordance with the process set forth herein. Persons in the audience shall also refrain from behavior which may disrupt the meeting. This will include loud noises, verbal outbursts, clapping, shouting, heckling, booing, hissing or engaging in any other activity in a manner that disturbs, disrupts or impedes the orderly conduct of meeting.
4. In the case that any person, whether a speaker or audience member, is declared out of order by the Chairman and ordered expelled, and does not immediately leave the meeting facilities, the following steps may be taken:
  - a. The Chairman may declare a recess.
  - b. The Chairman may contact the local law enforcement authority.
  - c. In case the person still refuses to remove himself or herself from the meeting, the Chairman may request that he or she be placed under arrest by local law enforcement authorities for violation of Section 871.01, Florida Statutes, or other applicable law.

## **OTHER POLICY ELEMENTS**

1. Board Action: At the Board's discretion, any issue can be placed on the agenda for formal action at a later date or later on the same agenda.
2. Public Comments: The public is welcome to make comments at the appropriate times during the meeting, in conjunction with the other elements and instructions listed in this Policy. This is a forum for commenting, not debating. Many residents find it helpful to write their comments before speaking to ensure the most valuable use of their three minutes. The Board may choose at its sole discretion to further discuss an item among its members, but that is not an open forum for the public to join.