

A RESOLUTION PROMOTING RESPECT & COURTESY AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

WHEREAS, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners recognizes that we have a wide array of viewpoints in the county on many important issues facing the county and we also recognize that each viewpoint represents the values and beliefs of individuals and groups should be treated with respect, especially when we disagree with those viewpoints; and

WHEREAS, each viewpoint should be considered on its own merits and not judged by the person's party or organizational affiliations, occupation, gender, age, racial or ethnic background, length or location of residency in the county, or other such factors; and

WHEREAS, the respectful sharing and discussion of viewpoints is critical to enhancing the overall quality of public decision making because it promotes the consideration of additional relevant information; and

WHEREAS, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners has a responsibility to promote an atmosphere of respect that allows all board members, county staff and the public to freely but courteously share their views and ideas.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Chatham County Board of Commissioners establishes the following rules to guide interactions of commissioners at meetings:

- Listen to speakers
- Respect opposing views
- Disagree courteously
- Accept and give helpful suggestions and ideas
- Accept responsibility for your statements and actions
- Promote the value of solutions over political positions

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVE THAT the following rules for public comment periods and public hearings will be used in addition to established time limitations and will be posted visibly at the meetings.

Speakers will:

- Respect the time of others by limiting comments to the allotted time
- Address the full board and refrain from discussions with audience members
- Be courteous and respectful of others
- Refrain from discussions with audience members
- Not expect commissioners to answer impromptu questions

Audience members will:

- Hold applause until the end of all public comments
- Avoid disrespectful displays of disagreement, such as booing
- Avoid distractions to proceedings, such as side conversations

Adopted this fifth day of December of 2011 by the Chatham County Board of Commissioners.