

**SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP - CUMBERLAND COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
RESOLUTION NUMBER 2026-03**

**A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE
CONDUCT OF TOWNSHIP MEETINGS AND THE MAINTENANCE OF ORDER**

WHEREAS, pursuant to the laws governing open meetings in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, specifically 65 Pa.C.S. §701 et seq., (hereinafter the “Sunshine Act”), an agency may establish reasonable rules and regulations for the conduct of its meetings and the maintenance of order; and

WHEREAS, the Southampton Township, Cumberland County, is an “agency” as defined by the Sunshine Act; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this document is to set forth further rules and regulations regarding the conduct of public meetings of Southampton Township, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania (hereinafter “Southampton Township”), including guidelines for public comment, conduct and protocol and the use of recording devices as such meetings.

WHEREAS, the Southampton Township, Cumberland County, Board of Supervisors desires to adopt rules and regulations for the conduct of its meetings and the maintenance of order.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southampton Township, Cumberland County, Board of Supervisors adopts the following rules and regulations regarding conduct of public meetings.

1. SCOPE OF PUBLIC COMMENT:

The Public Comment period is a time available to an individual to provide their comments regarding a matter of township business that may come before the elected officials. The scope of public comment, as defined in the Sunshine Act, shall be limited to matters of concern, official action or deliberations which are or may come before Southampton Township. These matters are defined by the Second Class Township Code, which sets forth the powers and responsibilities and delineates the corporate and specific powers of the Southampton Township Board of Supervisors.

Public comment is not intended for the purpose of solely reciting or reading legislation, ordinances or other such documents.

The presiding officer, in his or her discretion, and with input from the other board members, shall determine whether to permit a question-and-answer session.

2. PROCEDURES FOR ACCEPTING PUBLIC COMMENT AT REGULAR OR SPECIAL MEETINGS OF SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP:

a. **Resident/Taxpayer:** Southampton Township Board shall give residents and/or taxpayers the right to provide public comment on issues that are or may be before the Board at time(s) in the agenda to be set by the Board. These matters are defined by the township code, which sets forth the powers and responsibilities and delineates the corporate and specific powers of Southampton Township.

In addition to any designated public comment period, during the course of each regular and/or special meeting, residents and/or taxpayers may also be recognized at the discretion of Southampton Township, (hereinafter the “presiding officer”), whoever is presiding over the meeting on behalf of Southampton Township, in order to provide comments or information which may be helpful to the Board in its deliberations on a matter before Southampton Township.

b. **Nonresident/non-taxpayer:** Extending the courtesy of public comment to nonresident/non-taxpayer individuals is at the discretion of the presiding officer. If a nonresident/non-taxpayer wishes to address the Board on a matter for official action or a matter of concern, the Board may or may not extend the courtesy of public comment and may want to provide for this comment, especially if the individual(s) has information that may be helpful or in the best interests of the Township for the Board to consider.

c. **Name and address:** The Presiding Officer will request that all citizens addressing Southampton Township state their full legal name and their full legal address, including municipality, for the minutes (as required by the Sunshine Act). In lieu of a public pronouncement, the Secretary is permitted to take one’s name in writing either directly during public comment or from a required sign-in sheet.

d. **Time limits:** The purpose of a time limit is to assure that all wishing to speak have the opportunity to do so, that all shall have an equal opportunity to speak and that the Board shall receive all comments on matters for official action prior to voting, and that the Board shall be able to conduct the required business of the meeting agenda.

Each person to address the Board during public comment shall be provided a maximum of three (3) minutes.

In certain circumstances, including if a large crowd wants to speak, a time limit of fewer than three (3) minutes may be utilized due to a desire to accommodate as many individuals during public comment as time allows, the presiding officer shall indicate the limit at the beginning of the public comment portion of the meeting. Such limit shall be uniformly enforced during the meeting. In no case shall a time limit of fewer than two (2) minutes be designated.

On any given subject, no more than one (1) public speaking opportunity will be afforded to any speaker. Time cannot be yielded to another speaker.

The presiding officer shall designate the timekeeper, usually the Secretary. The speaker will be told when one (1) minute remains on time.

If the presiding officer determines that public interest on a particular issue is of such magnitude that to allow continued comment on such matter during a regular business meeting of the Board will impede and interfere with the ability of the Board to conduct and complete general business within a reasonable time, the Board may defer comment on issues to the end of the meeting or to its next regular meeting or to a special meeting occurring in advance of its next regular meeting for the sole purpose of receiving such comments.

e. Written comments: There is no limitation on the submission of written comments, which may be used as a substitute for time to speak at a Township meeting. Written comments can be submitted to the Township Secretary before, during or after any public meeting. In the event that an individual desires to provide written comments to the Township Secretary prior to a public meeting, such written comments must be received by the Township Secretary in hard copy or electronically, no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting.

3. CONDUCT AND PROTOCOL:

a. All public comments shall initially be directed to the presiding officer. The presiding officer may provide a response if appropriate, or defer to another board member. The speaker should not address any other person in the room, unless in response to a direct question permitted by the presiding officer. This shall include comments related to any presentation made to the Board. In those instances, the presenter, when asked to make responses, shall also do so through the presiding officer.

b. If a member of the Board has information that he or she wishes to offer, the member may request to be recognized by the presiding officer and then provide the information to the presiding officer. The presiding officer may also, at his or her discretion, request or offer a member of the Board the opportunity to respond to a comment.

c. The public and members of the Board shall at all times demonstrate civility and mutual respect and decorum. The Board is not to engage members of the public in arguments, nor are members of the public to speak out from their seats or engage one another in argument. Any Board member or members of the public engaging in any such conduct shall be called out of order.

d. Comments which are obscene, profane, or threatening shall not be permitted.

e. The presiding officer may:

(1) Interrupt or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant, not in the

confines of the topic, outside the township's authority or jurisdiction; and/or items that have been previously decided by the township.

(2) Call for recess or adjournment to another time when the lack of public propriety interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action, and/or

(3) Request the presence of law enforcement in the removal of a person or persons when the decorum of the meeting is hampered.

f. The presiding chair at each township meeting shall follow township policy for the conduct of public meetings. Where his/her ruling is disputed, it may be overruled by a majority of those Board members present and voting.

4. USE OF RECORDING DEVICES:

Recording devices, including tape recorders, video cameras, television cameras, microphones, cameras, wireless telephones, and other similar mechanical, electric, or electronic devices, shall generally be permitted in public meetings. However, no recording devices which produce sound distracting to the audience or to meeting participants shall be permitted.

a. No recording devices shall be permitted prior to the commencement of a public meeting, following the announcement of a public meeting, during a recess of a public meeting, during a conference held pursuant to §707(b) of the Sunshine Act, or during an executive session of Southampton Township held pursuant to §708 of the Sunshine Act.

b. Handheld recording devices shall generally be operated from the front row and the perimeter so as not to interfere in any way with the activities of the Board or the ability of the general public to observe the Board.

c. Larger recording devices shall be positioned to the rear of the meeting room, which designation shall provide reasonable access to record the proceedings, without distracting or blocking the view of the audience.

d. No supplementary lighting shall be used for recording devices unless prior approval for additional lighting is granted by the Township in consultation with the presiding officer.

e. Movement about the room while a meeting is in progress may be distracting and disruptive to the audience and to meeting participants. The presiding officer may request that distracting behavior be discontinued.

f. No recording devices may be operated while concealed.

g. Recording devices should not be used to record private conversations between audience members or officials who are engaging in private discussions that may occur before or after a public meeting.

h. The official minutes, as recorded by the Township Secretary, are the official record of the meetings of Southampton Township. The Township does not maintain audio or video recordings of a public meeting.

5. AMENDMENTS:

Southampton Township may adopt amendments to these Rules and Regulations from time to time in order to comply with the Sunshine Act or as it deems necessary to further ensure order in the conduct of public meetings.

6. POSTING:

A copy of these Rules and Regulations shall be conspicuously posted at Southampton Township Municipal Building, 200 Airport Road, Shippensburg, PA 17257.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE:

These Rules and Regulations shall take effect on this _____ day of _____, 2026.

DULY ADOPTED this ____ day, of _____, 2026 by Southampton Township, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, in lawful session duly assembled.

SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP - CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Talon D. Landreth, Chairman

Steven A. O'Donnell, Vice-Chairman

Scott J. Mack, Supervisor

ATTEST:

Chrissy Zukauckas, Assistant Secretary