



# THE CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 3

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Alysha Lewis-Coleman, Board Chair

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## Guide to Public Participation at Community Board 3 Meetings

Community Board 3 plays an important role in improving the quality of life for all residents of our district. The Board plays an important advisory role in how Government funds are spent in our District. Most importantly, the Board provides the residents and businesses in our district with the ability to have a voice in decision making for our community.

We hope this guide provides you with some basic information of how Board meetings are structured and how to successfully participate in them as a member of the public

- **Meeting Structure**

- The agenda for the meeting is published on our website shortly after the previous full Board meeting and includes the date by which agenda items for the following month must be received by the office. You can also sign up on the website to receive a monthly email with the agenda. Items not on the agenda cannot be discussed or voted on.
- Meetings typically include formal presentations by city agencies or nonprofits. When a presentation is finished the meeting structure typically follows the pattern below:
  - Committee Members asks clarifying questions first (except in formal public hearing for a ULURP hearing)
  - Members of the public provide comments and questions
  - Committee deliberation (and vote if necessary)

- **The role of the Committee/Board Chair**

- Each Community Board meeting is led by a Committee or Board Chair. Part of the Chair's role is to keep the meeting running and focused on the agenda as published. The Chair or designated members may do the following:
  - Review and/or rearrange agenda
  - Call on people to speak (this includes fellow board members and members of the public)
  - Set a time restriction on comments/questions and keep time
  - Redirect discussion to be focused on the agenda matter

- **How to participate in the meeting as a member of the public**

- Upon arrival at the meeting sign the attendance form
- If you'd like to speak or ask a question about something on the agenda, ask for a Speaker Form
  - Note that speaker forms are generally available at the beginning of the meeting so if you arrive late you may not have the opportunity to speak. If you are called on to speak without having filled out a form first, please complete the form after speaking so that we can accurately record all public speakers.
  - Fill out the speaker form, indicating what agenda item you wish to speak about and whether you are for or against the agenda item if that is appropriate
  - Submit the speaker form in and wait until the Chair calls on you to speak

- Typically, you will have 2minutes to make your point, and you will be timed so make sure to stay on topic and get your point across. As stated above, Chairs have the discretion to allocate less or more time to public comments depending on how many Speaker Forms were submitted and how many more agenda items are left to be discussed.
  
- **How to help us keep the meeting moving**
  - Please mute cell phones or any other noise making devices
  - Don't talk while others are talking
  - No applause or booing
  - Take any side conversations with others out of the room so you do not disturb the meeting
  - If not staying for the entire meeting, please leave as quietly as possible so the meeting can progress to the next agenda item
  - Many of our meetings are held in residences generously offered to the Board to "give back" to the community. Please be respectful with noise, garbage, speaking outside residents' windows
  - Be respectful of others