



## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT VIRGINIA BOARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES MEETINGS**

The Virginia Board of Historic Resources (“Board”) is an instrumentality of the Commonwealth of Virginia, created by Act of the Virginia General Assembly in 1966. Board of Historic Resources meetings are public meetings. The Virginia Board of Historic Resources desires to hear the viewpoints of interested citizens in an orderly, fair, and efficient manner. Therefore, it will schedule time for public participation during its regular meetings.

Public comments on adopted agenda items will be heard at various points during the meeting as indicated on the agenda. However, most Board meetings will also include an opportunity for general public comment. This portion of the Board meeting is intended as an opportunity to identify matters of interest and concern, and the role of the Board is to listen and not to formally respond to speakers or take formal action on matters presented. If matters broached during the general public comment portion of the agenda are within the Board’s authority under Virginia Code Section 10.1-2204 and seem to warrant Board attention and discussion, those matters may be taken up as formal agenda items at subsequent Board meetings. Board members will not officially respond to speakers or take action on matters presented during the general public comment period.

***A Sign-In Sheet for General Public Comments will be placed on a table at the entrance to the meeting room. Persons who wish to address the Board are required to sign-up prior to the start of the meeting.*** Speakers will be called to the podium in the order in which their names appear on the *Sign-in Sheet for General Public Comment*. Failure to sign-in prior to the meeting will place that speaker at the end of the public comment period as time permits. Citizens requesting a special accommodation due to a communication disability should notify a Department of Historic Resources staff member prior to the scheduled meeting start time.

In consideration of the time constraints associated with formal Board agenda items, speakers during the public comment period are required to limit their presentation to a maximum of 3 minutes. The Chair of the Board has the discretion to limit the entire general public comment

period to a total of 30 minutes. Therefore, the 3-minute time limit per speaker may be reduced if a large number of citizens wish to speak. With the consensus of the Board, the chair may extend this time limit if the chair/Board believes it is necessary for clarification of the issue being presented.

Prior to recognizing speakers, the Board chair will read a statement providing the protocols for the general public comment period. Speakers will be called to the podium in the order in which their names appear on the sign-in sheet. When their name is called, speakers will approach the podium, clearly state their name, and commence their remarks. Speakers will address their comments directly to the Board. The chair has discretionary authority to rule a speaker out of order.

The Board chair is responsible for maintaining proper order and is authorized to stop and/or have removed any speaker who uses language that is obscene, vulgar, or profane; constitutes fighting words, true threats, or solicitation to commit crimes; or incites imminent lawless action. Moreover, the chair may stop and/or have removed any person who disrupts the orderly functioning of the meeting by making loud, boisterous, threatening, redundant, or otherwise inappropriate comments. The Board also requests speakers refrain from making references to specific individuals.

Other guidelines that must be adhered to by speakers during the general public comment period include:

1. Any written or printed materials intended for Board members are required to have been given to DHR staff prior to the beginning of this public comment period, to ensure that the materials are a part of the permanent record of the meeting and are available under the *Virginia Freedom Information Act Virginia Code Section 2.2-3700 et. seq.*
2. DHR staff will distribute all printed materials to Board members. No members of the public shall distribute materials directly to Board members.
3. Speakers shall be limited to verbal comments only; the use of electronic, digital media, or the staff projection system is not permitted while addressing the Board.

4. In order to maintain respect for all points of view, the Board prohibits: clapping, booing, or any other form of support or nonsupport, the use of abusive or profane language, and personal attacks on Board members or DHR staff. The failure to comply with these or any other forms of offensive conduct will not be tolerated.

5. When multiple comments on the same topic have been presented, the chair of the Board may request additional comments on the topic be limited to those who have new information to present.