

# BOF GROUND RULES

As approved 10DEC13

- ♦ Listen actively – respect other Freeholders (and public) when they are talking. When listening attentively, try to genuinely understand the point the other person is conveying.
- ♦ Come well prepared to discuss agenda items for every meeting.
- ♦ Be courteous and don't ramble when making a point. Be respectful of time by keeping comments brief and to the point so that everyone has an equal chance to speak and get their views heard. Likewise, give courtesy to others to finish their point – no interrupting when others are speaking.
- ♦ Speak from your own experience (in other words, speak from “I” instead of “they,” “we,” or “you”).
- ♦ Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another's positions by asking questions, but do not engage in personal attacks. Critique ideas, not people or personalities. Likewise, don't take it personally when a fellow Freeholder critiques your ideas.
- ♦ Participate to the fullest of your ability. The best possible charter will depend on the inclusion of every individual Freeholder voice. All Freeholders have a responsibility to participate equally.
- ♦ Rather than invalidate someone else's story with your own spin on their experience, share your own story/experience. Don't attack, try to hurt, or pass judgment on perspectives shared by others.
- ♦ Arrive on time, start on time, end on time.
- ♦ Remain for the entire session – do not physically wander in and out of the session. (Note that the BOF may need a short bio-break after the first hour has transpired).
- ♦ Turn all cell phones off. Encourage appropriate use of I-Pads, I-Phones, Blackberries, or other gadgets.
- ♦ Stay on topic. Sidebars may occasionally be helpful to provide context, but don't get unfocused as a group on topics which are off the agenda.
- ♦ Recognize when an engaging issue arises which really deserves to be separately agendized so that it may be fully vetted by the BOF. Place such issues in the “parking lot” during the meeting so that they may be added to a later agenda.
- ♦ Come to meetings with ideas and points of view, but also keep an open mind. Group work sometimes requires you to make your personal perspectives subordinate to the goal of the BOF. This is all the more valuable when other Freeholders recognize that this is happening.
- ♦ Ground rules may be modified whenever the group so desires.
- ♦ Freeholders are encouraged to notify the Chair and Primary Staff in advance whenever they know they will miss a BOF meeting.