

## Best Practices for Speaking in Public

### Do's:

- Stay positive
- If you're nervous, bring someone with you for moral support
- Talk in the public interest
- View this as a learning process
- Be respectful while others speak
- If you don't know the answer to a question, it's ok to say "I don't know!"
- Say Thank You!

### Don'ts:

- Yell
- Place blame
- Threaten
- Speak for anyone else without permission
- Misrepresent the facts
- Burn Bridges
- Storm away

- Prepare what you want to say in advance, and bring a written copy with you to the meeting.
  - Keep it to about 3 paragraphs or one page.
  - Practice your script and time yourself. Try to keep it under 3 minutes.
- Get to your location early to find parking, get through security, and find a seat in the room.
- Bring a sweater – it might be cold in the building
- Bring a bottle of water so you don't get dehydrated
  
- There may be other items on the agenda and other speakers before you. When it is your turn to speak, your name will be called to come to the microphone.
  
- When you walk up, introduce yourself with confidence!
  - "Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_, and I live in (Council District or County Precinct). Thank you for taking the time to listen to me today...."
  - If you are there to represent an organization, you may mention this at the beginning.
  
- Explain why you are there.
  - Share your prepared comments.
  - Stay on topic.
  
- End with an ask. (And a thank you!)
  - Oftentimes, people will speak at a meeting but they don't provide a clear question that needs to be answered.
  - When you end with an ask, you make it difficult for anyone to ignore you.
  
- It doesn't hurt to send a thank you note or email after the meeting to the people you addressed, especially if your comments were well-received, if a vote was taken in your favor, or if you got the response you were looking for!