

**THE
CHAMBER**
The Columbia Montour Chamber of Commerce

January 3, 2023

Columbia County Commissioners
35 West Main Street PO Box 380
Bloomsburg, PA 17815

Dear Commissioners:

The Columbia Montour Chamber of Commerce board of directors has adopted a code of conduct to encourage greater collaboration among elected and other officials. The included document was developed in response to increasing polarization and unprofessionalism among people in leadership positions, resulting in organizational dysfunction and decreasing engagement in the decision-making process. We are inviting all municipal, school district, and non-profit governing boards in Columbia and Montour counties to consider adopting the code of conduct.

This code of conduct is intended to encourage decorum, professionalism, and collaboration among officials, leading to greater productivity and encouraging others to become involved. Adopters pledge to actively participate in the entity they represent, conduct themselves professionally, be open in the decision-making process, and act in the best interests of the entity and its stakeholders.

The document is also available at columbiamontourchamber.com/code. If you adopt it, please let us know and you will be added to this webpage and promoted to the community.

Please feel free to contact me at 570-784-2522 or fgaffney@columbiamontourchamber.com if you have any questions. Thank you for your public service and your consideration.

Sincerely,



Fred Gaffney
President

/attachment

Conduct at meetings. The professional and personal conduct of representatives while exercising their office must be above reproach and avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Representatives shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges, or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other representatives of the entity, including staff, as well as the public.

Difficult questions, challenges to a particular point of view, and criticism of ideas and information are legitimate elements of debate and discussion. However, free debate does not require, nor justify, belligerent, personal, impertinent, slanderous, threatening, abusive, or disparaging comments.

The governing body of the entity will not tolerate inappropriate behavior of these types during its meetings.

Open discussion. Discussions by the governing body which result in official actions by that body should involve all members (and the public for public entities), except when expressly permitted by Pennsylvania's Sunshine Act or established policies of the entity.

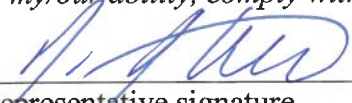
Respect for process. Representatives shall perform their duties in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the entity.

It is the responsibility of the chair of the governing body to keep the comments of members on track during public meetings. Representatives should honor efforts by the chair to focus discussion on current agenda items. If there is disagreement about the agenda or the chair's actions, those objections should be voiced respectfully and with reason, following procedures outlined in parliamentary procedure.

The governing body will encourage different points of view in order to make good decisions and cultivate a sense of group responsibility, putting the emphasis on collective decisions versus individual decisions.

Advocacy. Representatives shall represent the official policies or positions of the entity to the best of their ability when designated as delegates for this purpose. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, representatives shall explicitly state they are not representing their entity, nor will they allow the inference that they do.

I/we affirm that I/we have read and understand this Code of Conduct and will, to the best of my/our ability, comply with its guidance.



Representative signature

1-18-23

Date



Governing entity

Adopted 1-19-23