

# Candidates' Night — Sample meeting logistics

## Agenda

- 6:30 p.m.      Pledge of Allegiance  
                    Introductions — Board members, cohost and moderator
- 6:45 p.m.      Opening statements  
                    Questions and answers  
                    Audience questions and answers  
                    Closing statements
- 8:30 p.m.      Adjourn  
                    Refreshments

## Ground rules for the event

1. Candidates are asked to arrive 15 minutes early.
2. Candidates are not permitted to distribute campaign literature in the meeting room. A table will be available outside the meeting room for campaign literature.
3. Substitutes or written statements in lieu of a candidate's appearance are permitted if determined ahead of time.
4. Each candidate will have no longer than three minutes for a personal statement. A timekeeper will be present.
5. The order of speaking will be alphabetical.
6. There will be a moderator for the event.
7. Written questions will be taken from the audience. Each candidate may participate in the question-and-answer session. Questions must be written legibly and will be asked by the moderator. All candidates will be given an opportunity to respond to any question.
8. All questions are screened by an impartial committee. Duplicate or related questions may be combined.
9. If the question is directed to a specific candidate, other candidates will have the opportunity to respond. Those questions not specifically directed to a candidate will be answered on a rotating basis as to which candidate answers first.
10. Questions and answers will be limited to one minute each.



11. The moderator’s ruling is final in distribution of questions.
12. Each candidate will be given two minutes for a closing statement.

### **Time limits for candidates**

Time limit for opening statements:	3 minutes
Responses to questions:	1 minute
Timekeeper’s warning:	1 minute card 30 second card Time-buzzer
Closing statements:	2 minutes

### **General tips for the moderator**

Be aware of the timekeeper’s signals.

Be firm, but friendly. A smile often cuts through a tense situation.

Maintain ready access to the microphone so you can keep control of any situation that might otherwise get out of hand.

Remember that you have the right to adjourn the meeting if it becomes unmanageable.

Even in a small auditorium, repeat each question so everyone in the audience hears the main points.

Be prepared for ticklish situations with useful phrases like:

- “We realize many of you have strong feelings on some of these issues, but the rest of us have come tonight so we might be informed by listening to the candidates themselves.”
- “Some of you are already committed, but many here are not; you do not help your cause with these interruptions.”
- “We wish time permitted us to hear more personal views in detail, but we must restrict ourselves to the candidates’ interpretations.”
- “Please phrase your statement as a question for the candidates.”

(Taken from the League of Women Voters’ Voters Service Handbook for Ohio.)

