

## RULE 10 – PUBLIC COMMENT/PUBLIC FORUM

### CITY COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE

*The entire City Council Rules of Procedure are available [online](#).*

- A. Public Comment.** The City Council appreciates hearing from the public about items on its agenda, and desires to set aside time at each Council business meeting for Public Comment. At the start and close of each meeting, the public may address the Council about any matter concerning City operations. Comments regarding items on the agenda will be taken when that agenda item is heard. Comments should not be taken on items subject to quasi-judicial consideration by the Council, unless it is during a specified public hearing. Speakers are asked to identify the specific agenda items they wish to address, if applicable. Speaker sign-in cards will be available for persons wishing to address the Council.
1. All comments by proponents, opponents or other members of the public shall be made from the podium; any individuals making comments shall first give their name and address. This is required because an official recorded transcript of the public hearing is being made.
  2. No comments shall be made from any other location. Anyone making “out of order” comments shall be subject to removal from the meeting. If you are disabled and require accommodation, please advise the City Clerk or City’s ADA Coordinator. During this portion of the meeting, the Presiding Officer will invite the public to talk with the Council about topics that are not scheduled for public testimony on the evening’s agenda. Speakers will limit their presentation to 3 minutes, to allow time for all present. No speaker may convey or donate his or her time for speaking to another speaker. If many people wish to speak to a particular issue, Council may limit the total amount of time dedicated to that single issue.
  3. During specific agenda items, if the Presiding Officer or City Clerk has received Speaker’s Sign-In cards, public comment will be invited. Following the introduction and briefing if any of each item and prior to the beginning of Council discussion or a motion, the Presiding Officer will call for public comment on the issue. A motion made prior to the call for public comment shall be out of order.
  4. If many people wish to speak to a particular issue, Council may choose to continue the time for public comment on that issue to a future Council meeting. In the event of single subject group comment, at the discretion of the presiding officer, single time allocation for a spokesperson greater than three (3) minutes can be allowed. Groups that qualify for this exception shall submit to the presiding officer, prior to comment, a list of present group constituents or others in agreement so that duplication will not occur.
  5. Speakers are asked to complete the “Speaker Sign-in Card” provided.
  6. Written comments may be submitted into the record of a Council meeting by presenting the written document to the Clerk at the Meeting. A copy of the document will be provided to each Council Member; the document will not be read aloud unless a motion approved by a majority of Council present requests it.

7. The following language will be printed on the published agenda under “Public Comment”:

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** – Audience participation at Council meetings is encouraged. This is your opportunity to address to the Mayor and Council about any matter concerning City operations.

- a. If you wish to speak, please complete a Speaker Card and submit it to the Clerk. If you will be commenting on an item on the Agenda, write the Agenda Item number on the Card. You will be called when that item is heard.
- b. You will have three (3) minutes to make your comments. When there are 30 seconds remaining, you will hear a beep to alert you to summarize your comments. At the end of your comments, you will hear a second beep signifying the end of your comment period.
- c. Testimony during Public Hearings is generally limited to five (5) minutes and should not be presented during this portion of the meeting.
- d. Responses to questions from elected officials will not count towards the time limit. Information offered in response to questions should be kept to the specific question asked.

8. Length of Comment(s).

Where necessary, due to the number of persons who want to address the Council, the presiding officer shall retain authority to limit all persons’ remarks to an equal period of less than three minutes. The exception to this would be during a public hearing. To further ensure equal opportunity for the public to comment, each person may address the Council only one time during the Public Comment portions of the meeting, and at one time each agenda item.

9. Manner of Addressing the Council.

All remarks shall be addressed to the Council as a body and not to any member thereof. No person, other than the Presiding Officer, members of the Council and the person having the floor shall be permitted to enter into any discussion, either directly or through the members of the Council. No questions shall be asked of the Councilmembers, except through the Presiding Officer.

10. Resolutions and Ordinances.

Comments may be made on resolutions and ordinances. Written comments submitted prior to Council actions shall be considered in the same manner as oral comments.

- B. Courtesy.** All speakers during Public Comment, in the discussion, comments, or debate of any matter or issue, shall be courteous in their language and deportment and shall not engage in or discuss or comment on personalities, or indulge in derogatory remarks or insinuations in respect to any member of the Council, or any member of the staff or the public, but shall at all times confine their remarks to those facts which are germane and relevant, as determined by the presiding officer, to the questions or matter under discussion. Courteous behavior may include, but is not limited to, things such as ad hominem attacks or personal insults.