

Meeting Procedures & Public Hearings

STAFF/COUNCIL DISCUSSION

AUGUST 16, 2018



Sec. 2-35. Public Participation Ordinance

(a) *Right to address council.* Persons other than council members may be permitted to address the council only upon specific agenda items ***except during the public comment portion of the meeting that is conducted before any agenda items are discussed.*** Guidelines addressing the public comment portion of the meeting are established by council and a copy is maintained in the city clerk's office.

Public Comment Guidelines

1. Sign up with Recording Secretary between 6:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.
2. NO Public Comment on items on tonight's agenda.
3. ***Two-Minute time limit for each speaker.***
4. Speakers called in the order of registration.
5. When called, go to the microphone and state name and address.
6. Comments must be directed to the Mayor and Council.
7. Council will not engage in dialogue.
8. Council reserves the right to halt any profane or obscene comments.

Sec. 2-35. Public Participation Ordinance

(c) *Time limit on public remarks.* Persons granted permission to speak on a specific agenda item shall limit their comments to ***three minutes speaking time per item*** unless the presiding officer grants additional time. The presiding officer can limit the total time allocated for public input on a subject. A majority vote of the council may extend the time limitations of this rule.

Sec. 2-38. Public Hearings Ordinance

(b) The following public hearing procedures shall apply to any zoning matters pending before the city council or the planning commission.

(1) The mayor or chairperson will allow each side equal opportunity to the floor and establish time limits. With respect to zoning hearings, ***each side shall have a minimum time period of ten minutes*** for each zoning decision. A majority vote of the council may extend the time limitations of this rule.

State Law (O.C.G.A. § 36-66-5)

Hearings for the exercise of zoning power

(a) Local governments shall adopt policies and procedures which govern calling and conducting hearings required by Code Section 36-66-4 . . . Such policies and procedures shall specify a minimum time period at hearings on proposed zoning decisions for presentation of **data, evidence, and opinion** by proponents of each zoning decision and an equal minimum time period for presentation by opponents of each proposed zoning decision, *such minimum time period to be no less than ten minutes per side.*

Public hearing Protocol

The Mayor will allow each *side equal opportunity to the floor*. Individual members of the public will be given *up to five minutes* to state their case.

All speakers from the public are asked to follow these rules:

- Keep remarks *under five minutes* and please do not repeat other's comments.

Considerations

- Ensure public has opportunity to provide evidence in quasi-judicial hearings
 - ***Avoid repetition or one speaker taking all the time***
- Provide consistency to avoid confusion
- Ensure business of City can be conducted in a timely manner

Recommendations

Standardize at
10 / 5 / 2 Minutes

Recommendations

- Retain Public Comment Times at 2 minutes
- Standardize comment times for non-public hearings
 - 2 minutes for individuals
 - 10 minutes total
- Clarify Public Hearing Ordinance
 - 5 minutes maximum for individuals
 - 10 minutes per side (20 minutes total) for zoning-related
 - 10 minutes total for non-zoning hearings
- Majority vote of Council can extend any of these times

Questions/Comments?

Ordinance amendments proposed for
September 20 Consent Agenda.



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3. **Two-Minute time limit for each speaker. (Retain)**
4. Speakers called in the order of registration.
5. When called, go to the microphone and state name and address.
6. Comments must be directed to the Mayor and Council.
7. Council will not engage in dialogue.
8. Council reserves the right to halt any profane or obscene comments.

Public Participation Ordinance

Sec. 2-35. - Public participation.

(c) *Time limit on public remarks. If the presiding officer opens the floor for comment on a specific agenda item, a total of ten minutes will be allocated for public remarks.* Persons granted permission to speak on a specific agenda item shall limit their comments to ~~three~~ two minutes speaking time per item ~~unless the presiding officer grants additional time. The presiding officer can limit the total time allocated for public input on a subject on a subject.~~ A majority vote of the council may open an agenda item for comment or extend the time limitations of this rule.

Sec. 2-38. Public Hearings Ordinance

(b) The following public hearing procedures shall apply to any zoning matters pending before the city council or the planning commission.

(1) The mayor or chairperson will allow each side equal opportunity to the floor and establish time limits. With respect to zoning hearings, each side shall have a ~~minimum~~ maximum time period of ten minutes for each zoning decision. A majority vote of the council may extend the time limitations of this rule.

Sec. 2-38. Public Hearings Ordinance

(c) Any appeal or variance that may be brought before the city council or any commission will follow the procedures outlined above. Exceptions are budget *and millage rate* hearings, *comprehensive plan updates*, and administrative hearings dealing with alcoholic beverage violations, *which shall have a total of 10 minutes for comments.*