



Resolution No. 2022-265
November 26, 2024

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YPSILANTI:

That the following Rules for Public Comment be adopted:

Persons wishing to speak before the City Council during designated Public Commentary periods must sign up with the City Clerk in person, electronically, or by telephone during the times stated in these rules. Speaking times and any portions thereof are not transferable, and speakers may not use Public Commentary time to address the Council on an agenda item for which a public hearing is scheduled for the same meeting.

At regular and special Council meetings, during the time designated as Public Commentary, those wishing to address the Council will be recognized by the City Clerk to speak for up to three minutes. Public Commentary at Council meetings shall be limited to an overall time limit of 45 minutes, and speakers who have signed up to speak but are unable to address the Council during Public Commentary due to the overall time limit shall be allowed to address the Council during the Continued Public Commentary portion of the meeting agenda. Time for purposes of this policy shall be kept by the City Clerk or their designee, using a timing device and an audible alarm to indicate that a speaker's time has expired. The City Clerk shall reduce the amount of time allowed for each speaker to two minutes if more than 30 speakers have signed up to speak at a Council meeting.

If a large group of people desire to communicate the same message, Council may request that the group appoint a spokesperson to represent the group and make remarks on behalf of the group.

During business hours on the day of a regular Council meeting, the City Clerk shall sign up persons interested in speaking during the time designated as "Public Commentary" and create an ordered list of speakers by established priority groups. All speakers within each priority group will be recognized in random order by the City Clerk (using a randomization tool), and priority groups shall be as follows, in order:

- (a) Persons wishing to address the Council on agenda items who have not signed up for Public Commentary at the previous two meetings.
- (b) Other persons wishing to address the Council on agenda items.
- (c) Persons wishing to address the Council on items not on the agenda who have not signed up for Public Commentary at the previous two meetings.
- (d) Persons wishing to address the Council on any other matter.
- (e) Persons wishing to address the Council who had not signed up in advance.

The City of Ypsilanti encourages persons with disabilities to participate. Upon two days' notice, we provide auxiliary aids and services (such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting). Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City Clerk's office.

Public Speaking Rules

Speakers and the public shall obey these Council Rules, including the following public speaking rules, and all rules announced by the Chair or their designee at the start of the Council meeting:

1. Speakers who are not present or available when recognized by the City Clerk shall lose the opportunity to speak.
2. All public speakers must speak from the podium, unless the speaker is attending the meeting remotely, directing their comments and questions only to the Mayor and the Council. The City Clerk may designate and mark a speaker area around the podium. All persons and items not belonging to the speaker must remain outside the designated speaker area.
3. All public speakers are encouraged to identify themselves by their full name and residence address prior to speaking, and if applicable, the organization or group on whose behalf they are speaking.
4. Members of the public shall not disturb, interrupt, harass, or speak over the speaker at the podium, or use their time to engage in direct dialogue with other persons attending the meeting.
5. Members of the public shall not interrupt Council members, City officials, or staff while they are speaking during a meeting or otherwise unlawfully disrupt a Council meeting.
6. Speakers are requested to remain civil and respectful, and refrain from the use of profanity, true threats, personal attacks against officials unrelated to performance of their job duties, and other categories of speech not protected by the First Amendment.
7. The public should sit on the chairs provided and not stand. If public members must stand, then it shall be at a designated area at the rear of council chambers and not obstructing of any aisles, walkways, or exits/egress routes. Table seating is reserved for City officials and staff.
8. Members of the public desiring to hold up signs should sit in the back row of chairs so that their signs do not interfere with others or obstruct cameras. Signs must be handheld and kept below shoulder height. Signs must not be attached to poles, sticks, or affixed to any public property, including furniture, walls, podiums, chairs, etc. Signs may not be placed in or obstruct aisles, walkways, or egress routes.
9. If speakers have materials they wish to provide to Council, they must signal to the City Clerk who will instruct the speaker how to provide the materials to the City Clerk, who will then provide them to Council.
10. If a speaker raises a question for which the input of a person other than the Mayor or the Council would be helpful to the Council's information gathering and/or decision-making process, the Mayor may recognize the recipient of the question, if that person is present, once the speaker has concluded their remarks.
11. Members of the public must comply with the directions of law enforcement and the Fire Marshal or their designee regarding matters of public safety.
12. Persons wishing to provide written comments may submit them to the City Clerk in person or via electronic mail.

Public Hearings and Special Meetings

Persons speaking at a special meeting or public hearing must limit their remarks to the subject of the meeting and each shall not speak for more than three minutes.

Public Speaking Time Limit Waiver

Public speaking time shall not be modified or extended except upon the motion of a Council member and an affirmative vote of at least five members of the Council.

Members of the Public Addressing Council Outside of Public Commentary Periods

Upon the motion of a Council member and an affirmative vote of the Council, a member of the public shall be permitted to address the Council at a time other than during public commentary.

Conduct at Meetings

The Chair may call to order and may issue a warning to any attendee who:

1. Disrupts the orderly conduct of the meeting
2. Engages in conduct that may reasonably be perceived by the Mayor, the Council, and/or law enforcement as presenting an imminent threat to the safety of the Mayor, the Council, a City official or staff member, or the public.
3. Speaks longer than the allotted time.
4. Fails to respect public property, disturbs public property, or otherwise engages in activity that could reasonably cause, or does cause damage to or destruction of public property.
5. Otherwise violates the rules of this Council.

Failure to come to order may result in the microphone being shut off or the attendee being muted if attending remotely, the forfeiture of any remaining speaking time, or, at the request of the Mayor, expulsion from the meeting. Nothing herein is intended to limit or restrain negative, positive or neutral comment about the way an individual employee, officer, official or councilmember carries out his or her duties in public office or employment, or otherwise prohibit protected speech or expression based on content.

OFFERED BY: _____

SUPPORTED BY: _____

YES: NO: ABSENT: VOTE: