

CITY OF HILLSBORO
MUNICIPAL POLICY STATEMENT

Policy No. 95

Subject: Public Comment, Consent Agendas and Two Step Consideration Process

Effective Date: November 16, 2021

PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY

Public comment is a vital part of the democratic process. Citizens have the right to be heard on various issues in a public forum. In the interest of fairness and transparency, the City Council offers multiple opportunities at each public meeting for the comment from citizens. To insure that meetings are conducted in an efficient, effective, and orderly manner, the City Council will regulate public comments in the following manner.

A. Public Comment on Any Item

1. **Speaker's List.** To speak on any item on the City Council's agenda, the speaker may sign up with the City Clerk prior to the start of the meeting. The City Clerk may determine the methods of sign-up, but the speaker must state his/her name, residential address, and if applicable, organization he/she represents. At the meeting, the City Clerk will first call the speakers on the Speaker's List to speak in the order in which they signed up. No substitutions will be permitted. After the Speaker's List has been completed, any other members of the public may speak to the item, after being recognized by the Mayor and signing up at the podium.
2. A member of the public shall only be permitted to speak on an item one time per meeting.
3. If a speaker wishes to present documents or other items for consideration, those must be provided to the City Clerk by Noon on meeting date. Items not presented before the meeting may or may not be received at the discretion of the City Council. Any documents presented are considered public information and must be made available for public review and inspection.
4. **Time limit.** A speaker shall not speak for more than five minutes. A speaker may not combine his/her time with another speaker's time. If several members of the public wish to speak on any one item, the Mayor or meeting chair, may reduce the time of each citizen based upon the number of people wishing to speak and the amount of time available.

B. Rules of Decorum Applicable to All Public Comment

1. At the podium, the speaker should state his/her name, residential address, and, if applicable, organization he/she represents. Only one speaker may be present at the podium at a time.
2. The speaker may not read a written document of another person; such document may instead be submitted to the City Clerk prior to the meeting to distribute to the City Council. However, this provision shall not limit the representative of any group from reading a statement of the group that represents their position(s).
3. If the speaker wishes to present a PowerPoint or similar presentation that requires the use of the City computer, the electronic file(s) must be provided to the City Clerk by 5 p.m. the Monday before the meeting in the format requested by the City Clerk.

4. The speaker's comments should be directed to the City Council as a whole and should not be directed to individual members. No personal, slanderous, profane, obscene, or threatening remarks are permitted.
5. The speaker's comments should relate to City business (Open Public Comment), to the public hearing, or to the agenda item of business.
6. The speaker may not debate with audience members during his/her comments or make personal comments toward audience members.
7. Once public comment on an item has closed, no further public comment will be permitted as the item progresses.

C. Response to Public Comment. The purpose of public comment at a business meeting is for the City Council to receive the input of those speaking. Generally, neither the City Council nor the City staff will respond to questions or issues raised during open public comment or agenda item comments. Provided that, the City Council may ask questions of the speaker, decide to address the issue at a future meeting, or refer the matter to City Administration.

D. Noncompliance. Any speaker may be ruled out of order and the speaker may lose their privilege to speak in any of the following circumstances:

1. If the speaker fails to confine their remarks to relevant issues before the Council.
2. If the speaker fails to observe time limitations.
3. If the speaker fails to conduct themselves in an appropriately respectful manner, is disruptive or otherwise out of order.

The Mayor or meeting chair will warn any member of the public who is not in compliance with this policy that any continued non-compliance will result in (1) the speaker's revocation of his/her speaking privileges at the meeting, (2) the speaker's revocation of his/her speaking privileges at future meetings, (3) the speaker's removal from the premises, and/or (4) the speaker's potential arrest for violating State or local law.

E. Accommodation of Individuals with Disabilities. If an individual with a disability (as defined by federal law) would like to request a reasonable accommodation (as required by federal law) from the application of any provision(s) of this policy, the individual should contact the City Clerk at least one (1) business days before the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDAS

The use of the consent agenda allows for the efficient approval of routine business in front of the City Council. The principal of the consent agenda is all members of the governing body must agree or consent that the items being approved do not require further discussion or debate. If any member of the City Council wishes to discuss an individual item on the consent agenda, that item will be considered separately while the remaining consent items are considered as a group.

Consent agenda items will be limited to meeting minutes, vouchers, routine appointment of city officers, city board appointments, renewal of annual licenses, routine planned purchases, approval of job descriptions and any other regular business items deemed routine by the City Administrator in consolidation with the Mayor or meeting chair.

All documentation associated with consent items will be provided in the Council packet. Council members are free to ask questions of the City staff before the meeting. Any answers to those questions will be distributed to the entire council.

During the meeting, the chair will ask for discussion on any items listed on the consent agenda. If it is determined that an item on the consent agenda requires further discussion, it is removed from the consent portion and addressed individually at the end of the business section. Council members must be given an opportunity to ask associated questions before the vote. Simple questions, clarifications, or short amounts of dialogue relative to a consent item may be discussed after the motion, but before approval.

ITEMS CONSIDERATION PROCESS

Consideration of policy items, large purchases and ordinances that are not time sensitive will generally occur in a two-step process. The intention is to provide governing body members and the public an opportunity to review the item before action is taken. In the first step items will appear as an item for future consideration on a regular agenda. The Council can provide feedback and direction on the issue presented. Generally this step requires no action from the City Council. At a future meeting date, items reviewed in the first step will be brought to the Council for final discussion and action. The Mayor and Council may, at any time, opt to bypass or extend the two-step process as deemed appropriate to meet the needs of the city.

The governing body of the City of Hillsboro agreed by motion at the November 16, 2021 regular meeting to approve the policy statement.

Approved: _____



Lou Thurston, Mayor

11-16-21

Date