

Citizen Comment Guideline and Policy

And

Public Meeting Decorum Guideline and Policy

1. Citizen Comments

¶1.1 General public comment and participation, apart from public hearing or comments requested on specific agenda items, will be scheduled for regular City Council meetings and only during the portions of the meeting designated as “Citizen Comment” on the City Council Agenda. Public comment and participation will not be scheduled or permitted during meetings of the Committee of the Whole or special City Council Meetings, except for public hearings or comments that are requested on specific agenda items during such meetings.

~~¶1.2 Only individuals who are (a) residents of, (b) own real property within, (c) operate a Can business within or (d) an employee of a business or governmental entity operated within, the City of Grand Forks or the extra-territorial zoning area of the City of Grand Forks, will be permitted to speak during the designated “Citizen Comment” portions of the City Council meetings. [SL1][DG2] Students at the University of North Dakota shall be considered residents of the City of Grand Forks. Also, the Grand Forks Air Base will be considered a governmental entity operated within the City of Grand Forks.~~

¶1.32 The City Council Agenda will include ~~two~~ a “Citizen Comment” portions of the meeting.

¶1.43 The ~~first~~ “Citizen Comment” portion will be immediately before the Action Item portion of the Agenda and will be labelled “Citizen Comments—~~Action Items~~.”

~~¶1.54 The second “Citizen Comment” portion will be at the end of the meeting and immediately before agenda items for comments by City Administrator, Mayor and City Council members and will be labelled “Citizen Comments—General.”~~

¶1.654 During each of the ~~two~~ Citizen Comment portions of the City Council Agenda, each speaker will be limited to ~~five~~ three minutes and the time from one speaker cannot be used by another speaker. The ~~five~~ three minute time allotted for Citizens Comments—Action Items and Citizens Comments—General are separate time allotments and cannot be accumulated or added together to increase the time of speaking during these respective Citizen Comment portions of the meeting. [SL3][DG4] The total amount of time public comment during the Citizens Comments—Actions Item shall be ~~—~~30 minutes, and for the Citizens Comments—General shall be ~~—~~ minutes.

¶1.765 Comments during the Citizens Comments—~~Action Items~~ portion of the meeting are limited solely to the items listed as an Action Item on the Agenda. If a speaker does ~~—~~ Action Items not limit comments to Action Items during the Citizens Comments—Action Items, the speaker will be requested to leave the podium and the speaker’s five-minute time allotment will end. If the speaker refuses to leave the podium, this will be considered disruptive behavior.

~~¶1.87 6~~ Comments during the Citizens Comments—General portion of the meeting are open to any topic the speaker wishes to comment on that is pertinent to the City.^[SL5]^[DG6]

~~¶1.98 7~~ Individuals who wish to speak during the Citizen Comments—Action portion of the Agenda must place their name, address, and the subject to be addressed on a comment card prior to the Citizens Comments—Action portion of ~~of~~^[SL7]^[DG8] the City Council meeting.

~~¶1.109 8~~ Individuals who wish to speak during the Citizen Comments—General portion must place their name, address, and the subject to be addressed on a comment card prior to the Citizens Comments—General portion of the City Council meeting.

~~¶1.11~~ Individuals who are not a residents of the City of Grand Forks must list the address of the City of Grand Forks business he/she operates or is an employee of, or the City of Grand Forks real property he/she owns.^[SL9]^[DG10]

~~¶1.1210 9~~ Individuals who do not submit a comment card prior to the start of the Citizen Comments—Action or the Citizen Comments—General portions of the City Council meetings will not be permitted to speak during these respective times.

~~¶1.1311 10~~ Individuals who wish to submit a written statement may do so, but written statements are limited to two and a half pages.

~~¶1.12-11~~ An individual may not disrupt the orderly conduct of the meeting.

~~¶1.13 12~~ An individual may not make comments that are defamatory, abusive, harassing or unlawful.

~~¶1.14 13~~ Comments may be limited if an alternative procedure exists to bring that particular type of comment before the City, the public comment includes confidential or exempt information or the public comment is otherwise prohibited by law.

2. Public decorum

¶2.1 The following public decorum rules and guidelines shall apply to all attending or participating in meetings of the City Council, Committee of the Whole, and other City Council committees (including planning and zoning ~~committee~~ commission meetings), and violation of these public decorum rules and guidelines will be considered disruptive conduct, adverse to the legitimate government interest of conducting orderly, efficient, effective, and dignified public meetings:

- (A) An individual, during the Citizens Comments portion of the city council meeting^[SL11]—Action Items and Citizens Comments—General, refuses to leave the podium after being requested to do so because ~~the individual is not within those that may provide public comment (i.e. not a resident or business owner within the City of Grand Forks)~~, the individual's five three-minute time allotment has ended, ~~or the speaker during the Citizens Comments—Action Items period did not limit comments to an Action Item.~~

- (B) Outbursts, shouting, clapping, booing, hissing, interruptions, loud noises, and comments during presentation of any agenda item, discussion by the members of the public body that are meeting.
- (C) Behavior or conduct that disturbs, disrupts, impedes or interrupts presenters of an agenda item, discussion by the members of the public body or the orderly conduct of the meeting.
- (D) Behavior or conduct that creates, provokes or causes disturbances involving unwelcome physical contact or verbal abuse.

¶2.2 If, in the opinion of the presiding officer of the meeting, that any of the above behavior or conduct has occurred or other conduct or behavior that disrupts or impedes the orderly and efficient conduct of the meeting has occurred, the presiding officer may provide a warning indicating the individual's conduct is considered by the presiding officer to be disruptive conduct and further disruptive conduct by any individual in attendance at the meeting may result in the meeting being recessed until order is restored in the Council Chambers.

¶2.3 If, in the opinion of the presiding officer, the disruptive conduct is so severe, the presiding officer may request the sergeant at arms or police officer in attendance to immediately remove the individual from the meeting.

¶2.4 The general public is reminded, pursuant to City Code § 2-0104(30), "[n]o person . . . shall be admitted upon the dais unless at the request of the mayor, but the right of such admission shall not extend beyond that meeting." A violation of City Code is subject to punishment [SL12][DG13]pursuant to City Code § 23-0101.

Adopted and Effective: _____, ~~2023~~2025