



PUBLIC MEETING PROCEDURES

Recognizing that every legislative body and recommending or advisory body needs a systematic way of conducting its business, these rules of procedure are to provide for the orderly conduct of City business by the City Council and all Boards, Commissions and Committees of the City, with the objective of providing for full, open, and comprehensive debate of issues brought before the body for action in a forum open to the public, and which encourages citizen's awareness of the City Council and all Boards, Commissions and Committees activities. These procedures do not increase or diminish the existing powers or authority of the Mayor, City Council members or Board, Commission and Committee members, but it's intended merely to serve as a general set of guidelines to assist the governmental body in conducting City business.

Home Rules:

- Cell phones should be silenced in the City Council Chambers or other location of the public meetings.
- Members of the public will be respectful when addressing the City Council or members of the City Staff.
- The Presiding Officer of the meeting has the right to reasonably limit citizen comments to three (3) minutes.

CITY COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The City Council finds that reasonable rules regarding the public's right to address the City Council at open meetings are necessary to promote efficient, organized process and to allow all members of the public who intend to speak an opportunity to address the City Council. Accordingly, the City Council adopts the following reasonable rules pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.007, as amended.

Public Comment at Open Meetings

- At an open meeting of the City Council, members of the public have the option of addressing the City Council regarding items on the agenda during the "Public Comment" portion of an open meeting; or
- During the discussion portion of an agenda item members of the public can address the City Council regarding agenda items that are not a public hearing.
- Persons unable to stay at the meeting until a subject agenda item is presented can submit a written statement that will be included in the meeting record. Persons must be present to submit a written statement.

- Per the Texas Open Meetings Act, the governing body is not permitted to take action on or discuss any item not listed on the agenda. The Council may: (1) make a statement of fact regarding the item; (2) make a recitation of existing policy regarding the item; or (3) propose the item be placed on a future agenda.
- Public Comments related to Public Hearings will be heard when the specific hearing begins.
- Persons wishing to address the governing body shall complete a “Public Comment Form” and present the completed form to the City Secretary prior to the beginning of the meeting.
- Each speaker shall approach the podium and state his/her name and address before speaking. Speakers shall address the governing body with civility that is conducive to appropriate public discussion. Speakers can address only the governing body and not individual city officials or employees. The public cannot speak from the gallery, but only at the podium.
- Each speaker will be allowed a total of three (3) minutes to speak. If the speaker requires the assistance of a translator, the speaker will be allowed a total of six (6) minutes to speak, in accordance with HB 2840.

Role of the Mayor as Presiding officer and other Council Members:

- The Mayor shall preside at meetings of the City Council.
- Participate in discussion of all matters.
- Shall vote as a member thereof, and shall have no power to veto.

In addition, the Mayor, as Presiding Officer or the Presiding Officer or Chairperson of any Board, Commission or Committee, has the primary responsibility for ensuring that the Council’s rules of procedure are followed and:

- For maintaining the dignity of Council meetings.
- Calls the meeting to order and confines the discussion to the agreed order of business.
- Recognizes City Council members or Boards, Commission and Committee members for motions and statements and allows audience participation.
- Use generally accepted rules of parliamentary procedure.
- Requires knowledge of parliamentary procedure and how to apply it.
- Recognizes the City Council member or Board, Commission and Committee members offering the motion, in accordance with Robert Rules of Order as defined by the City Attorney, restates the motion, presents it to the council for consideration, calls for the vote, announces the vote, and then requests the City Secretary to announce the next order of business.

Code of Conduct for City Council includes:

- Remarks should be contained to the question under debate.
- Shall avoid references to personalities, and refrain from questioning motives of other members or staff personnel.
- Demonstrate courtesy and shall not disrupt proceedings.

- Shall not use their positions to secure privileges or personal gain and shall avoid situations which could cause anyone to believe that they may have brought bias or partiality to a question before the City Council or Board, Commission or Committee.
- Shall be dedicated to the principles of democracy by recognizing that the function of local government is to serve the best interests of the Public.
- Shall be dedicated to the effective use of the City's available resources.
- Shall refrain from any activity that would hinder their abilities to be objective and impartial.
- City business shall be discussed in open meetings posted in accordance with state law, except in rare situations in which Executive Sessions are authorized.

Parliamentary Rules:

- The City Attorney will serve as the Parliamentarian and will recommend rulings, upon request by the Presiding Officer or any member of the City Council, to all points of order raised during the proceedings.
- These Rules of Procedure were adopted by Fate City Council on the 18th day of November, 2019, by Resolution No. R-2019-080. A copy of the Resolution may be obtained from the City Secretary's Office.