



## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

In support of and respect for an open, fair, transparent, and informed decision-making process, the Bellbrook City Council recognizes:

### City of Bellbrook

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[www.cityofbellbrook.org](http://www.cityofbellbrook.org)

- Civil, respectful, and courteous behavior are an important part of the democratic and decision-making process.
- Uncivil discourse and/or discourteous and inappropriate behavior have a negative impact on the character and productivity of the decision-making process.
- To preserve the intent of open government and maintain a positive and safe environment for citizen input and Council decision-making, it is the goal of Council to engage public participation and structure public meetings with the following guidelines:
  - All citizens may participate in the public meeting process.
  - If a citizen desires to register a spot for comments on a meeting agenda, they may register to speak prior to the meeting online ([meetings.cityofbellbrook.org](http://meetings.cityofbellbrook.org)) or in person, to the Clerk prior to the start of the meeting. Registering to speak is not required, only an option if desired.
  - Anyone speaking will be recognized by the Mayor or Presiding Officer to be provided the floor for appropriate attention.
  - To make sure other participants of the meeting can see and hear comments, speakers will be asked to provide comments from the podium.
  - The preferred time limit for comments is 5 minutes, although the limit can vary at the discretion of the Mayor or Presiding Officer.
  - If a group wishes to address the City Council on the same subject, it is preferred that a spokesperson be chosen by the group.
  - In order to make sure comments are directed to the right person, remarks should be directed to the City Council as a body rather than to any particular Council member or any member of the staff or audience. Questions to Council or others will be facilitated by the Mayor or Presiding Officer.
  - Safety and comfort of all attendees is a high priority; therefore, comments of a personal nature regarding others, shouting, yelling, or screaming, language that is obscene or disruptive to the orderly process of the meeting, or anything that creates a safety risk may result in law enforcement action.
  - Complaints against any public official or employee during a public meeting will be referred to the proper complaint filing procedure, so the issue is addressed.
  - To make sure all comments are considered, members of the audience should not enter the public meeting discussion from their seats in the audience.
  - The Mayor or Presiding Officer is responsible for maintaining order and decorum of the public meeting and may suspend the meeting for the safety of others.

General guidelines and requests for audience members not speaking at a public meeting:

- Please silence all mobile devices.
- Refrain from behavior that is inappropriate and/or disruptive.
- Refrain from side conversations during meetings.
- Come and go from the meeting space in the least disruptive manner possible.