

## TOWN COUNCIL

### STAFF REPORT

#### Projects and Watershed Resilience Department



<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	March 14, 2023
<b>PROJECT:</b>	Resolution to Adopt New Rules and Protocols for Public Comment Periods During Public Meetings
<b>PROJECT MANAGER:</b>	Stephen Steese, Town Manager

**REQUEST:** Town Council to approve new rules and protocols governing public comment periods during public meeting.

**BACKGROUND:** Section 5-7-250(b) of the South Carolina Code of Laws allow The Town Council to determine its own rules and order of business for meetings. Section 2-46 of the Town of Bluffton’s Code of Ordinances allows Town Council “to regulate or cease public comment with reasonable rules and regulations pertaining to public comment and proper protocol.” Town Council currently has adopted rules and protocols that are displayed and read aloud at each Council Meeting prior and during the Public Comment section of the agenda.

The rules and protocols were reviewed to determine if any additions, edits, or deletions needed to be made. During a review, it was determined that there were edits and additions that should be made. These recommendations were reviewed by the Town’s legal counsel and incorporated comments from Town Council and staff. The recommended rules and protocols would address how long public comments is allowed, protocols for those addressing Council to follow, and actions for when the rules and protocols are not followed.

**NEXT STEPS:** Should Council adopt, the new rules and protocols would go into effect immediately and govern any future Public Comment periods. The adopted rules and protocols would be displayed during Public Comment periods and updated in any location within the town’s website, documents, and other locations as needed.

**SUMMARY:** Request Council to adopt new rules and protocols for Public Comment during Public Meetings. These would go into effect immediately and replace our current rules and protocols.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution
2. Town of Bluffton Rules and Protocols for Public Comment
3. Recommended Motion

