

## **DILLINGHAM CITY COUNCIL POLICY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT AT MEETINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Adopted by Resolution 2021-xx on November 4, 2021

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for public comment at meetings of the Dillingham City Council.

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to all regular meetings, special meetings and work sessions.

**BACKGROUND:** City Council meetings are designed for the Council to discuss and make decisions on issues before the Council. A meeting of the City Council is held in public to provide transparency in the decision-making process. Opportunities for public input are provided and the City Council takes the input into consideration in making decisions.

The Dillingham Municipal Code provides numerous opportunities for public comment during regular council meetings:

- a) Public hearings - § 2.09.080(A)(6): When an item requires public hearing by statute or ordinance, the presiding officer will open the public hearing for members of the public to provide comment.
  
- b) Citizens' discussion (prior notice or agenda items) - § 2.09.080(A)(7): This is a time for members of the public to provide information to Council regarding any item listed on the agenda; or if the speaker does not wish to wait until later in the meeting, to provide information to Council if prior notice was given.
  
- c) Citizens' discussion (open to public) - § 2.09.080(A)(11): This is a time for members of the public to provide information to Council on any issue.

Opportunities for public comment at special meetings will be provided in accordance with the agenda for that special meeting, which shall include a public comment period on the agenda.

During a work session, members of the audience wishing to testify may raise their hand and be recognized by the Mayor.

**STATEMENT OF POLICY:** The purpose of public comment is for citizens to provide information and inform the City Council about their opinions. The Mayor and City Council value community input and encourage participation in public comment opportunities at meetings of the City Council.

Public comment opportunities are not a time for members of the public to ask questions of, or engage in dialogue with the Mayor, City Council Members or City Staff. Community members are encouraged to contact City Staff during normal business hours, or to contact the Mayor and City Council members directly.

These guidelines apply to all types of public comment opportunities described above.

1. Public Comment by spoken or written word is limited to three (3) minutes per person. Persons may not give their time to another person and may address a single topic or agenda item only once during a meeting. If a need arises, the meeting chair has the authority to waive this formality at their discretion § 2.09.100(C).
2. PUBLIC COMMENT IN PERSON
  - a. Wait to be recognized by the presiding officer.
  - b. Use the microphone provided.
  - c. State your name.
  - d. Address all comments to the Mayor and City Council as a body.
3. PUBLIC COMMENT BY AUDIO OR VIDEO PLATFORMS
  - a. In order to promote an orderly meeting, all persons participating by telephone or online platforms must notify the City Clerk by email at [cityclerk@dillinghamak.us](mailto:cityclerk@dillinghamak.us) or phone (907)842.5212, or by using notification features available in the online platform (i.e. in ZOOM, the “raise your hand” feature, or \*9 by telephone). Participants may also choose to notify the City Clerk during regular business hours before the start of the meeting. By necessity, this requirement applies to all opportunities for public comment for persons participating by telephone or online. *(See alternate language below)*
  - b. At the appointed time, the speaker will be allowed to un-mute.
  - c. Wait to be recognized by the presiding officer.
  - d. State your name.
  - e. Address all comments to the Mayor and City Council as a body.
4. WRITTEN COMMENT
  - a. Written comment is accepted by the following methods:
    - i. regular mail, City of Dillingham, PO Box 889, Dillingham AK 99576
    - ii. email at [cityclerk@dillinghamak.us](mailto:cityclerk@dillinghamak.us), [communitysuggestions@dillinghamak.us](mailto:communitysuggestions@dillinghamak.us)
    - iii. fax, (907)842-2060
    - iv. hand delivery, City Hall 141 Main Street Dillingham AK
  - b. The name of the person providing written comment must be included.
  - c. Written comment shall be submitted to the City Clerk’s department no later than the Thursday prior to the council meeting for inclusion in the council packet. If received after the packet has been published the comments will automatically be included in the next regular council meeting packet.
  - d. Written comments submitted will be noted by listing the name of the person that provided the comments and the main subject matter on the agenda under Citizens’ discussion (prior notice or agenda items) - § 2.09.080(A)(7).
5. SOCIAL MEDIA
  - a. Public comment is NOT taken via any social media platform.

*3.a. In order to promote an orderly meeting, all persons participating by telephone or online platforms must notify the City Clerk by 3:00 p.m. the day of the meeting, by email at [cityclerk@dillinghamak.us](mailto:cityclerk@dillinghamak.us) or phone (907)842.5212. To be recognized during the meeting the name used in Zoom or phone number calling from must be given when notifying the Clerk. By necessity, this requirement applies to all opportunities for public comment for persons participating by telephone or online.*