

**Amendment To Town Council Rules Section 27
Pertaining to Public Comments/Discussion and Public Hearings**

To see if the Randolph Town Council will amend Section 27 of the “Town Council of Town of Randolph Rules Manual” (“Rules Manual”) pertaining to Public Comments/Discussion and Public Hearings, as follows:

1. Delete the portion of Section 13 that reads as follows:

During “Public Comments/Discussion”, the public may comment on any topic. During the public comments portion of a public hearing, the public may comment only on the topic of that public hearing. The Council may change the order of items on an agenda during a meeting to promote the efficient business of the Council. “Public Comments/Discussion” shall occur as early as feasible at each meeting where it is on the agenda.

Replace that portion with the following:

"Public Comments" for general comments must be in person, and may be on any topic, for up to 3 minutes. "Public Comments" are also welcomed during hearings, but the comments must pertain to the topic of the hearing, for up to 3 minutes. "Public Comments" for general comments shall occur as early as possible in Town Council meetings. If a hearing is scheduled early in the Town Council meeting, "Public Comments" may begin and then be interrupted for the legal opening of the hearing, and then continued as soon as possible.

2. Delete the portion of Section 13 that reads as follows:

Unless otherwise required by law, during both the Public Comments/Discussion portion of a meeting and during the public comments portion of any public hearing, each person requesting to make a public comment/discussion or to speak at a public hearing may be recognized by the President, and shall state his/her name and address for the record. Public comment at meetings and at public hearings will be limited to three (3) minutes for each individual speaking. No speaker may yield to another speaker without the permission of the Chair.

The Chair may, in the Chair’s discretion and upon request, allow a group representative more time to speak in order to avoid repetitive comments from multiple speakers and aid in the efficient conduct of the meeting.

Replace that portion with the following:

"Public Comments" for general comments must be in person, and may be on any topic, for up to 3 minutes. "Public Comments" are also welcomed during hearings, but the comments must pertain to the topic of the hearing, for up to 3 minutes.

3. Delete the portion of Section 13 that reads as follows:

All remarks and questions shall be addressed to the Council as a whole through the President and not to any member thereof. No person other than members of the Council and the person having the floor shall enter into discussion either directly or through a member of the Council without permission of the presiding officer.

Replace that portion with the following:

"Public Comments" may include questions to the Councilors or Town Manager or Town staff, and answers may be provided, and the questioner may follow up, within the allotted three minutes.

4. Delete the portion of Section 13 that reads as follows:

No Councilor shall speak during Public Comments/Discussion without being recognized by the President and no Councilor shall make Public Comments/Discussion during this portion of the meeting.

Replace that portion with the following:

"Public Comments" may include questions to the Councilors or Town Manager or Town staff, and answers may be provided, and the questioner may follow up, within the allotted three minutes.

5. Delete the portion of Section 13 that reads as follows concerning Public Comments:

So long as it is permitted under the Open Meeting Law and other applicable law, the Council President may decide, on a meeting to meeting basis, whether Public Comments/Discussion will be permitted only virtually, only in person, or both. The agenda for each meeting that contains a Public Comments/Discussion agenda item shall indicate how Public Comments/Discussion shall be made by the public at that meeting.

Replace that portion with the following:

"Public Comments" during hearings may include virtual attendees.