

RESOLUTION 2025-09

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF STONE MOUNTAIN, GEORGIA, TO ADHERE TO RULES OF DECORUM AND TO ENSURE EQUITABLE AND EFFECTIVE MEETING MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS, the City Charter, Section 2.16(b) provides that, “In addition to all other powers conferred upon it by law, the city council shall have the authority to adopt and provide for the execution of such ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations, not inconsistent with this charter and the Constitution and the laws of the State of Georgia, which it shall deem necessary, expedient, or helpful for the peace, good order, protection of life and property, health, welfare, sanitation, comfort, convenience, prosperity, or well-being of the inhabitants of the City of Stone Mountain and may enforce such ordinances by imposing penalties for violation thereof”; and

WHEREAS, the City Charter, Section 2.19 requires City Council to adopt rules of procedure consistent with the Charter; and

WHEREAS, the City of Stone Mountain City Council values participatory democracy, civil discourse, and adherence to the established Rules of Decorum, which are designed to promote respect, inclusivity, and fairness in public meetings; and

WHEREAS, the City’s adopted Rules of Decorum emphasize the importance of treating all participants courteously, focusing on issues rather than personalizing debates, and uniformly enforcing order at public meetings; and

WHEREAS, instances of prolonged discussions, selective recognition of speakers, avoidance of certain topics, and debates centered on personal views undermine the effectiveness of meetings, discourage participation, and conflict with the Rules of Decorum; and

WHEREAS, the role of the Presiding Officer is crucial in ensuring adherence to these rules and maintaining a public meeting environment conducive to open and respectful public discourse.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Stone Mountain, Georgia, this _____ day of _____, 2025, as follows:

Section 1: Affirmation of the Rules of Decorum. The Rules of Decorum, as adopted by the City Council on September 6, 2022, are hereby reaffirmed as the guiding principles for all public meetings in the City of Stone Mountain.

Section 2: Public Meeting Requirements.

(a) The Presiding Officer shall ensure equitable treatment of all attendees and participants by:

1. Allowing all individuals a fair opportunity to speak during public comment periods, without favoritism or bias;

2. Adhering to established time limits and agenda structures to ensure orderly and efficient meetings; and
 3. Preventing personal or extended debates that detract from agenda topics.
- (b) The time allotted for citizen comments may only be extended upon a majority vote of the members of City Council present at such meeting.
- (c) Upon conclusion of the citizen comments portion of the agenda, no meeting attendees shall speak during the meeting without consent from a majority vote of the members of City Council present at such meeting. Meeting attendees who violate this rule will be removed from the meeting.
- (d) A City Council member may motion to have a disruptive attendee removed from the meeting. By majority vote of the City Council members present at such meeting, the disruptive attendee shall be removed.
- (e) All City Council meetings shall end no later than 10:00 pm, and any unfinished agenda items will appear on the agenda for the next scheduled or special-called meeting.
- (f) At a work session, for each item on the agenda, City Council members shall be allotted a total of twelve (12) minutes to speak so that each member is allowed two (2) minutes, and the Mayor shall be allowed two (2) minutes to speak. Speakers will be called in order of his/her Post, and the Mayor will be the last speaker. Any Council member may yield his/her time to other selected Council members and/or the Mayor, but the order of speakers will not change. The Mayor is not required to speak, and no portion of the Mayor's time may be yielded. No member of Council is required to speak or yield his/her time. Response of staff to questions related to the agenda item will not count toward any speaking time allotment. Only urgent matters or sound/technical difficulties may interrupt a speaker. A majority vote of the members of Council present at the meeting is required to extend speaking times.
- (g) At meetings where agenda items will be voted on, for each item on the agenda, City Council members shall be allotted a total of six (6) minutes to speak so that each member is allowed one (1) minute, and the Mayor shall be allowed one (1) minute to speak. Speakers will be called in order of his/her Post, and the Mayor will be the last speaker. Any Council member may yield his/her time to other selected Council members and/or the Mayor, but the order of speakers will not change. The Mayor is not required to speak, and no portion of the Mayor's time may be yielded. No member of Council is required to speak or yield his/her time. Response of staff to questions related to the agenda item will

not count toward any speaking time allotment. Only urgent matters or sound/technical difficulties may interrupt a speaker. A majority vote of the members of Council present at the meeting is required to extend speaking times.

- (h) If a Council member makes a motion, which is seconded, and another Council member moves to substitute his/her motion for the original motion, if the substituted motion is seconded, discussion will continue on both motions. Speaking times of those Council members who spoke prior to the substitute motion will start over, and those members will be called to speak in order after the Post 6 member has spoken. After all speakers, a vote will be taken on the substitute motion, and if it does not pass, a vote will immediately be taken on the original motion.
- (i) No meeting agenda may be modified during a meeting to add new business items except in cases of emergency which shall be articulated and captured in the minutes of the meeting. If additional documents are available to be distributed at a meeting where those documents were not previously included in the meeting's agenda packet, those documents may be distributed during the meeting and will not be considered a new business item. Copies of such additional documents must be made available to the general public prior to the start of the meeting.
- (j) No City Council member shall act in an aggressive or combative manner towards the public or with other City Council members or the Mayor.
- (k) The Mayor shall not act in an aggressive or combative manner towards the public or with the City Council members.
- (l) No applause is allowed from attendees except for recognition of an achievement and in conjunction with applause from the City Council.
- (m) The Presiding Officer shall call published agenda items in the order as they appear on the published agenda. The published agenda will clearly state whether the meeting is a work session or Council meeting for voting. Except for special called meetings, agenda packets will be distributed the Thursday prior to the Monday scheduled meeting.
- (n) Except for special called meetings, if a Council Member or the Mayor wishes to have an item placed on the agenda of a particular meeting, the request must be made in writing and submitted to the City Manager and City Clerk, along with any related documentation to be included in the agenda packet, at least seven (7) days prior to the Monday scheduled meeting.

- (o) All actions and rulings by the Presiding Officer shall align with the adopted Rules of Decorum and shall serve to:
 - 1. Prevent disruptions caused by disorderly conduct or unstructured debates; and
 - 2. Promote robust and inclusive dialogue that respects differing viewpoints.

Section 3: Monitoring and Enforcement

- (a) The City Council may review adherence to this Resolution and the Rules of Decorum through periodic assessments of meeting conduct.
- (b) Persistent violations of these principles by the Presiding Officer shall result in a formal review of conduct by the City Council.
- (c) Potential corrective actions, including censure or other measures as deemed appropriate by the City Council.
- (d) The City Attorney is authorized to call “point of order” when any portion of any meeting conflicts with the Rules of Decorum and/or this Resolution. The Presiding Officer shall then call the meeting back to order to reflect the Rules of Decorum and/or this Resolution.
- (e) The City Clerk shall be the timekeeper at all meetings.

(signature page follows)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption and shall serve as a directive to maintain the integrity, fairness, and decorum of all public meetings within the City of Stone Mountain.

**CITY OF STONE MOUNTAIN, GEORGIA, by
and through its City Council**

Beverly Jones, Mayor

Anita Bass, Post 1

Mark Marianos, Post 2

Ryan Smith, Post 3

Gil Freeman, Post 4

Shawnette Bryant, Post 5

Teresa Crowe, Post 6

[Affix City Seal]

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk