

ORDINANCE No. _____
AN ORDINANCE CREATING SECTION 2.62.060 PUBLIC COMMENT DURING
COMMON COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Common Council of the City of Whitewater, Walworth and Jefferson Counties, Wisconsin, do ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this ordinance is to establish formal procedures governing public comment, public hearings, and participation in agenda items during meetings of the Common Council and its Committees to ensure orderly, efficient, and respectful discourse.

SECTION 2. PUBLIC APPEARANCE CARD

(a) Members of the public who wish to speak during public comment, a public hearing, or on a specific agenda item must complete a Public Meeting Appearance Card (PMAC).

(b) The PMAC may also be used by individuals who do not wish to speak but wish to register their support or opposition to an agenda item.

(c) Prior to taking action on any agenda item, the presiding officer shall request the City Clerk/Secretary to identify individuals who have signed up to speak.

(d) The Clerk/Secretary shall call the names of speakers in an alternating order between those in support and those in opposition.

(e) Upon conclusion of verbal testimony, the Clerk/Secretary shall read the names and stated positions of those who submitted written comments, which shall be entered into the meeting minutes.

SECTION 3. TIME LIMITS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

(a) Public Comment Period:

(1) Each speaker shall be limited to three (3) minutes.

(2) The total time allotted for public comment shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes.

(b) Public Hearing:

(1) Each speaker shall be limited to five (5) minutes.

(2) The total time allotted shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes for both supporting and opposing speakers.

(c) Agenda Items:

(1) Each speaker shall be limited to three (3) minutes.

- (2) An extension of time may be granted upon approval of the Common Council/Committee.
- (d) In instances where multiple individuals wish to address the same subject, a designated spokesperson may be identified to present on behalf of the group.
- (e) The presiding officer, with concurrence from the Common Council/Committee, may modify the time allocations based on the complexity of the item and the number of speakers.
- (f) The Common Council/Committee may, by majority vote, allow additional comment periods if new information is presented.

SECTION 4. MEETING CONDUCT

(a) Expectations of Speakers:

- (1) Speakers shall conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner.
- (2) All remarks shall be directed to the Common Council/Committee as a body, not to individual members, City staff, or members of the public.
- (3) Speakers shall refrain from defamation, intimidation, personal affronts, threats of violence, or the use of profanity.

(b) Expectations of the Public:

- (1) Audience members shall not engage in shouting, clapping, or other disruptive behavior.
- (2) Defamation, intimidation, personal affronts, threats of violence, or profanity shall not be permitted.
- (3) Any behavior that disrupts the orderly conduct of the meeting is prohibited.

(c) Expectations of Council/Committee Members:

- (1) Members shall preserve order and decorum at all times.
- (2) Members shall not delay or interrupt proceedings through conversation or other means.
- (3) Members shall not disturb a speaker or refuse to obey the directives of the presiding officer.

SECTION 5. ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES

- (a) The presiding officer shall have the authority to enforce the provisions of this ordinance and may take necessary actions to maintain order, including warnings or removal of disruptive individuals.
- (b) Repeated violations may result in additional penalties as determined by the Common Council/Committee.

Ordinance introduced by Council Member _____, who moved its adoption.

Seconded by Council Member _____.

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ADOPTED:

John Weidl, City Manager

Heather Boehm, City Clerk