



Finance Committee Agenda Item

Meeting Date: September 24, 2024

Agenda Item: Public comment

Staff Contact (name, email, phone): Heather Boehm hboehm@whitewater-wi.gov 262-473-0102

BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what, when, where, why)

At the July 23, 2024 Finance Committee, it was requested that I, the City Clerk survey the staff regarding the process of public comment at the committee level. And make sure the Transparency Ordinance, Meeting Ordinance, and the Good Governance manual all have the same info regarding public comment at public meetings.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Dates, committees, action taken)

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT

(If none, state N/A)

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Whatever is decided, Council, Committees, Commissions, all should be the same. Discretion should be up to the President or Chair of the meeting if more time should be allotted. All time limits decided should be upheld for everyone at that meeting and enforced.

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED

(If none, state N/A)

Chapter 2.62 Whitewater Transparency Enhancement Ordinance
2.08.010 Meetings

Chapter 2.62 - WHITEWATER TRANSPARENCY ENHANCEMENT ORDINANCE

Sections:

2.62.010 - Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to maximize public awareness and participation in City of Whitewater Government.

(Ord. No. 1804A, § 1, 10-5-2010)

2.62.020 - Posting requirements.

- (a) Agenda notices for all council, committee, commission and board meetings, requiring legal notice, shall be posted seventy-two hours in advance. If an agenda item is added between twenty-four and seventy-two hours prior to the meeting, it shall require an affirmative vote of a majority of the members voting to take up the matter.
- (b) All council, committee, commission and board agendas shall be posted online on the city website seventy-two hours in advance of the meeting.
- (c) All council, committee, commission and board packet materials, that can be reasonably scanned, shall be posted online twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting. The city shall provide an electronic notification feed alert, indicating that new information is available regarding an upcoming council, committee, commission or board meeting, to any party that has subscribed to the feed (requested notice from the city of the updated information).
- (d) All requests for proposals and requests for bids shall be posted online as soon as is practicable.
- (e) The council and all committee, commission and board meeting minutes shall be posted online within thirty days of the meeting. If the body does not meet within thirty days of the meeting, the minutes shall be posted within fourteen days of the next meeting.

(Ord. No. 1804A, § 1, 10-5-2010)

2.62.030 - Information technology requirements.

Beginning December 1, 2010, city council, community development authority, plan commission and police commission meetings shall be videotaped, and the video shall be posted online.

(Ord. No. 1804A, § 1, 10-5-2010)

2.62.040 - Meeting procedures.

- (a) All council, committee, commission and board meetings shall have a public input agenda item to allow citizens to make statements on matters that are not on the agenda.
- (b) All council, committee, commission and boards shall allow the public an opportunity to comment on substantive items on the meeting agenda. The council, committee, commission or board shall have the discretion to impose time limits and other reasonable procedural rules concerning the public comment.
- (c) If the agenda for a council, committee, commission or board meeting includes staff reports or other reports, a specific description of the item to be reported on shall be listed on the agenda and said report(s) shall be limited to the specific items listed in the agenda.

(Ord. No. 1804A, § 1, 10-5-2010)

2.62.050 - Failure to abide by chapter provisions does not cause actions to be invalid.

The failure by any council, committee, commission or board to adhere to the provisions of this chapter shall not cause any action by said council, committee, commission or board to be invalid.

(Ord. No. 1804A, § 1, 10-5-2010)

2.08.010 - Meetings.

- (a) The regular sessions of the city council shall be held on the first and third Tuesdays in each month, commencing at six-thirty in the evening. If any council meeting falls on an election day or on a holiday, the council meeting for that day shall be held on the Thursday following the first or third Tuesday in the month, at six-thirty p.m. Special meetings may be called, as provided by the Wisconsin Statutes. A city council meeting may be cancelled or set at a date other than is set forth in the section if said cancellation or date change is approved by a majority of the city council members voting or is approved by both the city manager and the city council president. There shall, however, be at least one meeting of the council each month.
- (b) The city council meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the following guidelines:
- (1) The agenda shall be established under the authority of the city manager. Councilmembers who wish to have agenda items addressed need to make their request no later than twelve noon, six business days prior to the meeting. The city manager shall honor all legal requests of councilmembers.
 - (2) Consent Agenda. A consent agenda item that recommends expedited approval of appropriate resolutions, ordinances and considerations, per the recommendation of the city manager may be included. At the request of a councilmember, any consent agenda item shall be removed, discussed and acted upon individually.
 - (3) Period of Public Comment. The period of public comment is a time set aside for the purpose of allowing the council to receive information from the public concerning matters that are not on the meeting agenda. Pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 19.82(2), no decisions shall be made on matters addressed during this period. The council president should inform the public that the purpose of the public comment period is limited and, if any action is requested, the matter must be put on the council agenda of a future meeting for consideration. Comments by any one member of the public shall be limited to three minutes. Repetitious statements should be discouraged, except when they are declarations of support of a prior speaker's comments. Personal attacks are inappropriate.
 - (4) Order of Business. The following shall be the order of business:
 - (A) Common council president reads the agenda title;
 - (B) The city manager, staff and/or city consultant may give a brief introduction to the issue (if necessary);
 - (C) Immediately after introduction of the agenda item, at the option of any councilmember, a motion may be made and seconded prior to any additional statements regarding the agenda item. If this procedure is used, public input and discussion of the agenda item shall take place after the second. If there is not an immediate motion made and seconded, public comment and further discussion of the matter will proceed. During this

period a councilmember may, at any time, make a motion concerning the matter. The council president shall attempt to make certain that any member of the public wishing to speak on the issue has an opportunity to be heard before a final vote is taken;

- (D) There shall be a three-minute limit placed on each speaker from the general public. If necessary, requests shall be made to speakers not to make comments that are similar to prior public input about the same issue, unless the comments are a declaration of support of a prior speaker's statements.
- (5) **Official Public Hearings.** Guidelines should be printed and distributed prior to each hearing to any citizen who wishes to participate. Conduct of the public hearing:
- (A) The common council president shall call the hearing to order, summarize the need for the hearing, review the public hearing meeting guidelines and, if necessary, allow the city manager, staff or city consultant to make a presentation.
 - (B) The public hearing guidelines for the public input portion of the hearing shall include a five-minute time limit. There shall be a request of speakers not to make redundant comments unless the speakers is declaring his or her support of a prior speaker's comments. As much as possible, speakers shall be called upon to make comments first in support of and then in opposition to the public hearing proposal in alternating order. The president shall have the authority to give time extensions to a speaker, if in the judgment of the president the speaker needs more time to clarify his/her position.
 - (C) Questions from the common councilmembers are appropriate; however, comments from the councilmembers should be held in reserve until after the public input portion of the hearing is closed.
 - (D) Citizen participants in the public hearing should not debate the issues directly with councilmembers, staff, or other members of the audience.
 - (E) The council president will then declare the public input portion of the hearing closed and council discussion shall begin. Discussions of agenda items related to the public hearing will not include input from the public unless reasonably solicited by a councilmember.

(Ord. No. 1764A, § 1, 5-4-2010; Ord. No. 1959A, § 1, 9-18-2018; Ord. No. 2071, 10-17-2023)