

ORDINANCE NO. – DISCUSSION ITEM ONLY

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES FOR CITIZEN INPUT AND PUBLIC HEARINGS BEFORE THE BOARD OF ALDERS OF THE CITY OF WILLARD, MISSOURI

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF ALDERS OF THE CITY OF WILLARD, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. PURPOSE AND INTENT

The Board of Alders recognizes the importance of orderly, fair, and efficient public meetings that allow appropriate opportunities for public participation while preserving the Board's ability to conduct municipal business effectively and efficiently.

The procedures established herein are intended to:

1. Provide residents and local business operators an opportunity to address the Board on matters of municipal concern;
2. Establish consistent procedures for public hearings;
3. Promote orderly conduct during meetings;
4. Prevent unnecessary repetition and disruption; and
5. Ensure meetings may be conducted efficiently and safely within the limitations of available meeting space.

ARTICLE I — CITIZEN INPUT

SECTION 2. CITIZEN INPUT PORTION OF AGENDA

A Citizen Input section shall appear on the regular meeting agenda immediately prior to City Administrator remarks.

Citizen Input shall occur after completion of all regular business appearing on the agenda unless otherwise directed by the Board.

Citizen Input is intended to provide an opportunity for eligible individuals to present opinions, concerns, suggestions, or other comments relating to municipal matters to the Board of Alders.

SECTION 3. ELIGIBILITY TO SPEAK DURING CITIZEN INPUT

Only the following individuals may speak during Citizen Input:

1. Individuals who reside within the corporate limits of the City; or

2. Individuals who own or operate a business located within the corporate limits of the City.

The Mayor, presiding officer, or City Clerk may require a speaker to provide sufficient information to reasonably verify eligibility.

SECTION 4. SIGN-UP REQUIREMENTS

Individuals wishing to speak during Citizen Input shall sign up prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Individuals wishing to speak are encouraged to sign up before the meeting and may do so by notifying the City Clerk. The sign-up period shall close immediately upon the official commencement of the meeting.

No person shall be permitted to add their name to the speaker list after the meeting has commenced.

SECTION 5. CITIZEN INPUT PROCEDURE

Unless otherwise directed by the presiding officer, Citizen Input shall proceed in the following order:

1. Presentation of comments, concerns, suggestions, opinions, or other matters by registered speakers;
2. Clarification questions or discussion by the Board, where applicable; and
3. After all registered eligible speakers have spoken, conclusion of the Citizen Input portion of the meeting.

Citizen Input shall not include debate between members of the public and the Board, City staff, or other speakers.

SECTION 6. NO BACK-AND-FORTH EXCHANGES DURING CITIZEN INPUT

Citizen Input is intended for the presentation of comments to the Board and shall not constitute a question-and-answer session, debate, or dialogue between speakers and members of the Board, City staff, or other members of the public.

Individuals who have spoken shall not be permitted a second opportunity to address the Board during the same Citizen Input portion for purposes of clarification, rebuttal, or response to other speakers.

ARTICLE II — PUBLIC HEARINGS

SECTION 7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

When a public hearing is required by law or authorized by the Board, any individual affected by the subject matter of the hearing may address the Board concerning the matter under consideration. Sign up is recommended prior to the meeting, but is not required. Public hearing sign up sheets will remain available until the public hearing portion of the meeting begins.

SECTION 8. PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURE

Unless otherwise required by law, public hearings shall proceed in the following order:

1. Presentation of the matter under consideration, including applicable documents, reports, exhibits, or staff presentations;
2. Clarification questions from the Board, where applicable;
3. Public comment;
4. Discussion by the Board; and
5. Closure of the public hearing.

SECTION 9. NO BACK-AND-FORTH EXCHANGES DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public hearings are intended to allow the Board to receive information and comments from persons directly involved in, or affected by the action contemplated by the public hearing.

No speaker shall engage in debate or direct exchange with members of the Board, City staff, or other speakers.

Individuals who have spoken during a public hearing shall not be permitted an additional opportunity to address the Board for clarification, rebuttal, or follow-up to comments made by others unless specifically requested by the Board or authorized by the presiding officer.

ARTICLE III — SPEAKING RULES AND DECORUM

SECTION 10. SPEAKING RULES APPLICABLE TO BOTH CITIZEN INPUT AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

The following speaking rules shall apply to both Citizen Input and Public Hearings:

1. Speakers shall address the Board from the designated podium or speaking area so comments may be reasonably heard by meeting attendees and captured by the City's recording equipment. Prior to speaking, speakers will be asked to identify themselves and, where applicable, provide sufficient information to establish eligibility to participate in Citizen Input. The presiding officer may excuse compliance with podium requirements for individuals with mobility

limitations, disabilities, age-related limitations, or other reasonable circumstances that make use of the podium impractical;

2. Each speaker shall be limited to two (2) minutes in the Citizen Input section or per individual Public Hearing. Participation in one Public Hearing shall not prevent the speaker from receiving an additional two (2) minutes during another Public Hearing concerning a separate matter or during the Citizen Input portion of the meeting;
3. A timing device shall begin when the speaker starts speaking;
4. Upon expiration of the allotted time:
 - a. The speaker shall immediately cease speaking; and
 - b. The speaker shall vacate the podium or designated speaking area;
5. Speakers shall avoid repetition of points, arguments, or information previously presented by earlier speakers;
6. The presiding officer may rule repetitive comments or testimony out of order; and
7. No speaker shall yield unused speaking time to another individual.

SECTION 11. DECORUM AND POSITIONAL MATERIALS

In order to preserve safety, visibility, and available meeting space, no person shall bring into the meeting chamber display signs, placards, banners, posters, or other positional display materials.

This restriction shall not prohibit:

1. The submission of written materials to the City Clerk;
2. Documentary evidence, exhibits, photographs, or other materials directly related to the subject matter of a public hearing when authorized by the presiding officer and provided it is of a reasonable size and dimension; or
3. Documents or presentation materials specifically authorized as part of an agenda presentation provided they are of a reasonable size and dimension.

SECTION 12. AUTHORITY OF PRESIDING OFFICER

The Mayor or presiding officer shall have authority to:

1. Enforce the provisions of this Ordinance;
2. Maintain decorum and orderly conduct;
3. Rule comments repetitive or out of order;

4. Direct individuals violating these procedures to cease speaking;
5. Remove disruptive individuals when necessary to preserve orderly proceedings;
and
6. Take reasonable actions necessary to conduct meetings efficiently and safely.

SECTION 13. SEVERABILITY

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance.

~~SECTION 14. EFFECTIVE DATE~~

~~This Ordinance shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval according to law.~~