

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 00-07, AN
ORDINANCE ADOPTING GUIDELINES AND ESTABLISHING
PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT AT VILLAGE OF
WINNEBAGO MEETINGS**

WHEREAS, it is necessary to amend the Public Comment Guidelines of the Village of Winnebago, Illinois, to provide flexibility in how residents may sign up to address the Village Board;

WHEREAS, the Village Board recognizes the importance of ensuring accessible and transparent procedures for public participation in its meetings;

WHEREAS, Village Staff may need to make administrative changes to the public comment sign-up process from time to time for efficient management of Village proceedings;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Winnebago, Illinois as follows:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT

The Public Comment Guidelines of the Village of Winnebago, Illinois, are hereby amended as follows:

1. Section 1 of the Public Comment Guidelines shall now read as follows:

"It is recommended that a written request to address the Village Board by non-members should be submitted via mail, hand delivery, or the Village Website to the Village of Winnebago Office located at 108 West Main Street, Winnebago, Illinois, 61088, by 12:00 Noon on the day of the meeting scheduled by the Village authorities in which the speaker would like to participate. Alternatively, speakers may fill out the form at the meeting to sign up for public comment. Speakers will be invited to speak in the order in which their request was received by the Village."

2. Section 2 of the Public Comment Guidelines shall now read as follows:

"Requests must identify the name of the speaker, resident status and topic to be discussed. Speakers are encouraged to complete the 'points to be raised' section, although such completion is not required. Speaker must identify themselves by name and provide whether they are a resident or non-resident of the Village of Winnebago before their comments. If they choose, speakers may also provide their residential address."

3. Section 3 of the Public Comment Guidelines shall now read as follows:

“Each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes. A maximum of thirty (30) minutes shall be allowed for public comment at each meeting. If a particular item is deemed by the Village President to be controversial, the Village President shall strive to allow all sides an equal amount of time to speak, and may increase the total time limit described above. Time limits shall not apply to Public Hearing.”

4. Section 4 of the Public Comment Guidelines shall be deleted in their entirety.

5. Section 6 of the Public Comment Guidelines shall now read as follows:

“No abusive or profane language, unruly conduct, or personal attack commentary shall be tolerated. The Village President reserves the right to terminate a speaker's comments before the three-minute time limit has been exhausted if the above guidelines are violated. Furthermore any person who violates these rules or otherwise disrupts the order and the quorum of the meeting may be removed.

6. Additional Sections shall be added containing the following:

- a. “Speakers will refrain from repeating testimony and comments that have been previously provided to the governing board. Whenever possible, groups of residents shall consolidate their comments and avoid repetition through the use of representative speakers. It is acceptable for speakers to state that they agree/disagree with the previously provided comments and testimony to avoid repetition.”
- b. “No speaker may give their allotted minutes to another person.”
- c. “Speakers may not use public comment to harass board or Commission members or staff. Public comment is not for asking questions of officials or staff or engaging in a dialogue or debate.”
- d. “Members of the governing body are not required to answer questions or otherwise respond to public comments. Comments may be taken under advisement and may be referred to the appropriate staff member for response outside of the meeting.”
- e. “All speakers and the audience shall respect the presiding officer’s discretion and furtherance of maintaining proper order, respect, and decorum during the meeting. Members of the audience shall refrain from noisy outbursts or other distracting actions such as applauding, cheering, or booing during the conclusion of any remarks made by any speaker, staff member, or village official.”

SECTION 2. ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

Administrative changes may, from time to time, be made to the “Public Comment Sign-Up Sheet”, from Ordinance 00-07 “Exhibit A”, with the written approval of the Village Administrator without the requirement of further amendment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon passage by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Winnebago, and publication of the same in pamphlet form.

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2024

Franklin J. Eubank, Jr.,
Village President

ATTEST:

Sally Jo Huggins, Village Clerk

PASSED:

APPROVED:

PUBLISHED IN

PAMPHLET FORM: