

STANDARD OPERATING POLICY

CITY OF WATKINS

Subject: Public Comments and Rules of Conduct

Date Approved: July 12, 2018

1.0 Generally

1.1 The Watkins City Council wishes to give everyone an opportunity to be heard on matters not currently before the Council. As such, the Council has set aside a period for public comment near the beginning of each Council meeting, called "Public Forum".

1.2 "Public Forum" provides an opportunity to be heard and is not normally an opportunity to debate an issue.

2.0 Rules of Conduct

2.1 During the "Public Forum" portion of the Council meeting, all persons wishing to address the Council shall stand when recognized by the Mayor and clearly state their name, address, and subject being addressed.

2.2 Generally, a time period of no more than 20 minutes is reserved for public comment, with each speaker receiving a three-minute (3) time limit. Each speaker should observe this timeframe and plan their remarks accordingly.

2.3 Each speaker will be permitted to address the Council once during the meeting, unless all other persons desiring to speak have had the opportunity to do so and the Mayor determines that sufficient time remains to permit speakers a second opportunity to address the Council.

2.4 Speakers shall address all statements and questions to the Mayor. The Mayor, in turn, will refer any questions or research requests to staff.

2.5 Speakers should strive to provide only factual information and refrain from repeating comments made by other speakers.

2.6 After everyone in the audience wishing to speak has given their comments, or at the end of the allotted time for public comments, the Mayor shall close the "Public Forum" portion of the meeting. At this time, discussion shall be limited to the Council and staff unless the Mayor requests the speaker to assist the Council.

2.7 The Council does not take action on items brought up under "Public Forum" so they may allow time to thoroughly research the respective matter(s) and provide a measured and fair response. Matters raised may be referred to staff and a response, if necessary, will be provided to the speaker. If a matter will need to be brought back to the Council at a future meeting, staff will notify the speaker at such time that a meeting date has been determined.

2.8 Should a member or members of the audience be identified as disorderly; the Mayor has the right to declare the meeting temporarily recessed and call for the removal of said person(s) from the premises.

- 2.9 Persons not recognized by the Mayor shall refrain from commenting, interrupting a speaker, conducting conversations with other members of the audience, or creating any other type of disruption that might distract a member of the Council, city staffer, or a speaker.
- 3.0 The same rules of conduct noted in this policy shall also apply to members of the audience wishing to address the Council during any scheduled public hearing.