



### **Meeting Rules of Decorum:**

- Speakers are only allowed to speak one time during the public comment period for an agenda item.
- A person may speak only if they have signed up to speak in accordance with the City's procedures. Speaker substitutions at the meeting are not allowed.
- Each speaker is allotted 3 minutes to speak on an agenda item. In general, each agenda item will have up to a total of one hour for public comment. The Mayor, or presiding officer may, in their discretion, increase or decrease this time allocation depending on the number of speakers.
- A speaker may not share or relinquish any remaining time they have not used to another speaker.
- Speakers shall refrain from personal attacks and/or threats directed towards City Council, City staff or members of the public.
- Speakers shall be civil and courteous in their language. Insults, profanity, use of vulgar language or gestures, or other inappropriate behavior are not allowed.
- Comments, questions, or jeering from the audience are not allowed. Speakers shall likewise not address or respond to members of the audience.
- Speakers should not expect Council members or City staff to comment on or respond to their comments directly during the meeting. The Mayor or presiding officer may, however, request the City Manager's office to follow up with a speaker after the meeting or provide additional information to the Council at a later date.
- The Mayor or presiding officer has the authority to enforce the Rules of Decorum. Failure to obey these Rules may result in forfeiture of the remaining speaking time. Individuals who engage in egregious or repeated violations may be asked to leave the meeting. Speakers and members of the audience should also note the following Asheville City Code provision and North Carolina General Statutes:

City Council Rules of Procedure Rule 7(e) - Persons addressing the Council are expected to observe the decorum of the Chamber, to be respectful of the Council and the public, to refrain from use of profanity or foul language, to refrain from personal attacks and commentary on candidates for political office, and to refrain from making disclosures by the Personnel Privacy Act with respect to any City employee.

N. C. Gen. Stat. sec. 143-318.17 - Disruptions of official meetings - A person who willfully interrupts, disturbs, or disrupts an official meeting and who, upon being directed to leave the meeting by the presiding officer, willfully refuses to leave the meeting is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor.

N. C. Gen. Stat. sec. 160A-81.1 - Public Comment Period during Regular Meetings -

The council shall provide at least one period for public comment per month at a regular meeting of the council. The council may adopt reasonable rules governing the conduct of the public comment period, including, but not limited to, rules (1) fixing the maximum time allotted to each speaker, (ii) providing for the designation of spokesmen for groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions, (iii) providing for the selection of delegates from groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions when the number of persons wishing to attend the hearing exceeds the capacity of the hall, and (iv) providing for the maintenance of order and decorum in the conduct of the hearing. The council is not required to provide a public comment period under this section if no regular meeting is held during the month.