

CLARKSTON ZONING PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKER POLICY

Clarkston City Council meetings and public hearings are recorded. They are part of the permanent and public record of the Clarkston City Council

PLEASE REVIEW THE ZONING PUBLIC HEARING POLICIES AND RULES OF DECORUM

1. Any person wishing to speak, either in support or opposition to a Zoning Application, must register with the City Clerk either thru the City website between 9:00 a.m. and 4 p.m. on the day of the hearing, or in person at City Hall Council Room, beginning one hour prior to the start of the meeting, during which the public hearing will be held, and ending five minutes prior to the start of the public hearing.
2. The Mayor (or presiding officer) shall announce a total time allotted for the public hearing. The total time allotted shall be no less than twenty minutes (ten minutes per side) and no longer than one hour (thirty minutes per side). At all public hearings, the proponents and opponents of the application shall collectively be allotted equal time to present their views to the City Council.
3. Except for the applicant, each speaker shall initially be limited to a maximum of three minutes to speak. In the event that all registered speakers on one side of an application have had an opportunity to speak and a portion of the total time for that side (proponents or opponents) remains unused, registered speakers will have an opportunity to speak again within the total time allotted for their side, restarting at the beginning of the registration list.
4. Order of public comment at hearing.
 - a) Proponents. The City Council shall first hear from the proponents of the application. The applicant will have the first opportunity to speak. Then individuals that registered to speak in support of the application shall have the opportunity to speak, in the order that they registered.
 - b) Opponents. After the proponents' comments are complete, the opponents shall have the opportunity to speak. Individuals that registered to speak in opposition to the application shall have the opportunity to speak, in the order that they registered.
5. Public hearing not an opportunity for dialogue. The public hearing is strictly for proponents and opponents to express their opinions regarding the application to the City Council. Speakers shall not direct questions to the applicant, Mayor, Councilmembers or City staff during the public hearing. City Council members may wish to question the applicant and/or proponent(s) and/or opponent(s) of the application as part of the Council's consideration of the application. However, any such dialogue will be conducted outside of the public hearing portion of the meeting.

RULES FOR PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS AT CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

A. CITY COUNCIL MEETING – PUBLIC HEARING COMMENT POLICY

In accordance with State law and policy, the Clarkston City Council and its Boards conduct Public Hearings on a number of matters and issues. These Public Hearing rules are intended to ensure that the public has the opportunity to participate fairly in the meeting while promoting the orderly, efficient, and effective flow of the meeting.

B. RULES FOR CONDUCTING PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. The Meeting Presiding Officer shall announce that the Public Hearing on a matter is now open and should call forth those persons who wish to speak in favor, against, or otherwise on the particular issue. The Presiding Officer shall inform the public that all comments by proponents, opponents, or the public shall be made from the podium and that any individual making a comment should first give their name and address. The Presiding Officer shall also inform the public that comments will only be received from the podium.

2. Members of the public who wish to speak must register on the sign in sheet provided (See: CLARKSTON ZONING PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKER POLICY) ending at five minutes prior to the commencement of the Public Hearing. Members of the public are expected to adhere to the Public Hearing Comment Policy and the Rules of Decorum outlined below and should be informed of such at the beginning of the Public Hearing by the Presiding Officer. There should be no vocal or boisterous demonstrations which will disrupt the orderly flow of the meeting. Any person(s) engaging in this type of behavior shall be ruled out of order by the Presiding Officer and shall, at the his/her discretion, be removed from the building.

3. Time. The Meeting Presiding Officer) shall announce a total time allotted for the public hearing. The total time allotted shall be no less than twenty minutes (ten minutes per side) and no longer than one hour (thirty minutes per side). At all public hearings, the proponents and opponents of the application shall collectively be allotted equal time to present their views to the City Council.

4. Time allotted to each registered speaker. The total time per side allotted for the public hearing (per section 2) shall be equally divided among registered speakers. Except for the applicant, each speaker shall initially be limited to a maximum of three minutes to speak. In the event that all registered speakers on one side of an application have had an opportunity to speak and the total time for that side (proponents or opponents) remains unused, registered speakers will have an opportunity to speak again within the total time allotted for their side, restarting at the beginning of the registration list.

5. Order of public comment at hearing.

a) Proponents. The City Council shall first hear from the proponents of the application. The applicant will have the first opportunity to speak. Then individuals that registered to speak in support of the application shall have the opportunity to speak, in the order that they registered.

b) Opponents. After the proponents' comments are complete, the opponents shall have the opportunity to speak. Individuals that registered to speak in opposition to the application shall have the opportunity to speak, in the order that they registered.

6. Public hearing not an opportunity for dialogue. The public hearing is strictly for proponents and opponents to express their opinions regarding the application to the City Council. Speakers shall not direct questions to the applicant, Mayor, Councilmembers or City staff during the public hearing. City Council members may wish to question the applicant and/or proponent(s) and/or opponent(s) of the application as part of the Council's consideration of the application. However, any such dialogue will be conducted outside of the public hearing portion of the meeting.

7. Once the Public Hearing has concluded, the Presiding Officer shall so announce and the Council or Board shall convene into regular session to make its decisions.

CITY OF CLARKSTON – MEETINGS: RULES OF DECORUM

- 1) All electronic devices, including cell phones and pagers, shall be either turned off or otherwise silenced.
- 2) When speaking, always talk directly into the microphone and begin by stating your name, full address and the name of any organization you represent.
- 3) Prolonged conversations shall be conducted outside Council Chambers.
- 4) Speakers will only have the opportunity for one public comment per meeting.
- 5) Clapping, whistling, heckling, gesturing, loud conversations, or other disruptive behavior is prohibited.
- 6) No person attending a Council or Board meeting is to harass, annoy or otherwise disturb any other person.
- 7) Public Comment (Not Public Hearings): Comments under public comment shall be limited to subjects not being considered by the Council or Board as an advertised Public Hearing. Speakers are limited to a maximum of three minutes to comment.
- 8) Public Hearings (Not Public Comment): The public will be expected to follow the Rules of Decorum when addressing the Council or Board during an advertised Public Hearing and will be subject to the additional rules and regulations outlined in the “Public Hearings Comment Policy” adopted by the City Council of the City of Clarkston, GA.
- 9) Citizens Comments shall be directed to City issues and to the Council or Board.
- 10) All public comments shall avoid personal attacks, abusive language and redundancy. Insults, attacks of a personal nature directed toward the Mayor, Council or at any staff member will not be permitted.

Anyone found to be disruptive or in violation of this policy may be asked to immediately cease speaking and yield the podium. If the individual continues to be disruptive or fails to yield the podium, they may be asked to remove themselves from the Council Chambers. Failure to do so on their own may cause the party or parties to be removed from the Council Chambers.