

City of Muskogee

Rules of Decorum

- Rules of Decorum exist to govern time, place and manner of expression to ensure orderly conduct of business and responsiveness to your concern.
- To ensure that all meetings of the City Council are conducted in a way that allows the business of the City to be effectively conducted.
- To ensure that members of the public who attend meetings of the Committees or City Council can be heard in a fair impartial manner
- To ensure that all meetings of the City Council are conducted in a way that is open to all viewpoints, yet free from abusive, distracting or intimidation behavior.
- To ensure that the rules of the governing decorum at meetings of the City Council are understood by persons attending the meetings.
- To ensure items for consideration are adequately researched and studied.

Duties of Presiding Officer

- The Mayor (or in the Mayor's absence, the Vice Mayor) shall be the presiding officer of the Council.
- The Chairman (or in the Chairman's absence, the Vice Chairman) for Council Committees shall be the presiding officer of the Committee.
- In the absence of the Mayor and Vice Mayor, the City Clerk or Deputy City Clerk shall call the meeting to order, whereupon a temporary presiding officer shall be elected by the members of the Council present.
- Upon the arrival of the Mayor or Vice Mayor, the temporary presiding officer shall relinquish the chair upon the conclusion of the matter of business before the Council.
- The presiding officer shall preserve order and decorum at all meetings of the Council, announce the Council's decisions on all subjects, and decide questions of order.
- If there is an appeal to a decision of the presiding officer, the Council as a whole shall decide the question by majority vote.

Rules for the Public

- Citizens and other visitors attending Committee meetings or City Council Meetings shall observe the rules of propriety, decorum and good conduct
- Silence all cell phones, pagers and other electronic devices.
- While civic participation and debate are welcome and encouraged, derogatory, personal, impertinent, or slanderous remarks, or becoming unduly boisterous is not.
- Display of placards, banners, and signs shall not be permitted if same block or interfere with the ability of others to observe the proceedings.
- Obscene and inappropriate language shall be avoided.

Rules for Speaker (Item on Agenda)

- Speaker shall sign-in with the City Clerk prior to 15 minutes before scheduled meeting, providing their name, address, supplemental information and specify the agenda item they wish to address on a form provided.
- A person will not be allowed to speak without having signed in or by motion of a Council Member and affirmative vote of the Council.
- The speaker shall come to the podium and state their name and address.
- The speaker will have five (5) minutes to speak on the agenda item that requires a public hearing or on a regular agenda item and when the time limit on the speaker has expired, the presiding officer will announce time has expired and he or she shall promptly conclude his or her sentence and cease speaking.
- Speaker is only allowed to speak one time only on any one subject.
- Each speaker is only entitled to the time for which they have signed up and may not reserve or transfer their time to any other speaker.
- A person who addresses the City Council during a public hearing must limit remarks to the specific subject matter being considered by the City Council in that public hearing.
- Speakers must address their comments to the presiding officer.
- If written materials are submitted, it is suggested that twelve (12) copies be made available. Submitted materials may not be returned.

Rules for the Speaker (General Comment – Subject Not on Agenda)

- The public may speak during the Public Comment section of the agenda during the regularly scheduled Public Works Committee Meeting and the City Council Meeting.
- Speaker shall sign-in with the City Clerk prior to 15 minutes before scheduled meeting, providing their name, address and subject matter on a form provided. Subject may include any subject of choice.
- The speaker shall come to the podium and state their name and address.
- The person addressing the City Council must speak on the specific item that has been requested on the sign-in sheet.
- There will be a three (3) minute time limit for each speaker and when the time limit has expired, the presiding officer will announce time has expired and he or she shall promptly conclude his or her sentence and cease speaking.
- Each speaker is only entitled to the time for which they have signed up and may not reserve or transfer their time to any other speaker.
- Under Oklahoma law, the Council/Committee Members are prohibited from discussing or taking any action on items not on today's agenda.
- Generally, matters presented which require further investigation or information shall be referred to staff, and if Council determines that action is required, the item may be placed on a future agenda.
- If written materials are submitted, it is suggested that twelve (12) copies be made available. Submitted materials may not be returned.

During Set Agenda Presentation

- Citizens may request a Council Member place an item on the agenda for discussion.
- If the matter is placed on the agenda, the issue will be introduced by the sponsoring Council Member.
- Maximum time will be set by the sponsoring Council Member not to exceed thirty (30) minutes.
- If written materials are submitted, it is suggested that twelve (12) copies be made available. Submitted materials may not be returned.

Electronic Media, Visual Aids and Special Accommodations

- Use of electronic media and visual aids is limited to Presentations of agenda items and shall not be used during public hearing, agenda comment or general comment periods.
- Any person wishing to make use of audio or visual records during the course of their presentation to Council, or requiring special accommodations such as use of City equipment, alteration of the layout of the Council Chambers, or staff assistance, shall notify the City Clerk with such request at least three (3) business days prior to the scheduled meeting time.
- The decision to grant or deny such request shall be at the sole discretion of the presiding officer.

Enforcement of Rules of Decorum

- The Chief of Police (or representative) shall act as ex-officio sergeant-at-arms of the Council.
- The Police Chief shall carry out all orders and instructions of the presiding officer for the purpose of maintaining order and decorum in the Council Chambers.
- Upon instruction of the presiding officer, it shall be the duty of the sergeant-at-arms or any police officer present to remove from the Council Chambers any person in the audience who uses boisterous or profane language, or language tending to bring the Council or any Council Member into contempt, or any person who interrupts and refuses to keep quiet or take a seat when requested to do so by the presiding officer, refuses to abide by the rules of decorum or otherwise disrupts the proceedings of the Council.
- Any such individual removed from the meeting shall be required to leave the public property upon which the meeting is held, including any adjacent parking lots, and not re-enter thereon for three (3) hours after the meeting is adjourned.