

## **General Guidelines for Public Comment at City of Beulah Council Meetings**

Public comments by guests attending regularly scheduled City Council meetings are always welcome. It must be remembered that City Council meetings are business meetings of City government and consist of many other functions other than public comments. To ensure that ALL public business is conducted in a reasonable manner and time frame, public comment will be managed using the following guidelines. Public comments will be heard at two general points in the meeting.

### **General Public Comment Period**

A General Public Comment period will be held at the beginning of each regularly scheduled City Council Meeting following the Pledge of Allegiance unless special circumstances do not allow this period to be held. The following guidelines will apply to comments made during the general comment period.

- The length of the General Public Comment period will be 30 minutes in length maximum.
- Each speaker will have 5 minutes maximum to speak. After 5 minutes have elapsed, any speaker will be asked to stop at that point. The Mayor has discretion on time limits.
- If a speaker has a presentation, this would be allowed subject to the following guidelines.
  - Written handouts will be accepted. The speaker will need to provide a copy of the handout(s) to all Council members and City Staff that are present at the meeting. Copies will need to be available prior to the start of the meeting and made at the speaker's own expense.
  - All audio-visual presentations need to be in Microsoft PowerPoint format. No other format is admissible. The presentation has to be reviewed by City Hall staff prior to presentation at a City Council meeting. This is to ensure there are no offensive obscenities, vulgarities, or other objectionable content.
  - Ten minutes would be allowed for presentations, but the 30-minute total allotted for general public comment will not be extended.
  - After 10 minutes have elapsed, any speaker will be asked to stop at that point.
- Members of the community who would like to address the Council (virtually or in-person) during the General Public Comment period are required to sign up in advance by either emailing the city at [beulahoffice@westriv.com](mailto:beulahoffice@westriv.com) or by calling 701-873-4637. Registrants must provide their name, telephone number and residential address. Registrations need to be received by the City by 12:00 Noon on the Monday of the Council meeting. Requests received after this cutoff date will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Council meeting.
- A specific topic must be provided that is city business.
- No late or in-person sign-ups immediately before or during the Council meeting will be accepted.
- In order to ensure the comment period does not exceed beyond the allotted 30 minutes, once the 30 minutes allotted for General Public Comment have been spoken for with any mix of commenters and presenters, no additional individuals will be permitted to sign up for the General Public Comment period for that meeting. Speakers will be heard in the order in which they registered.
- After the 30-minute time limit is up, the Mayor has the discretion to continue Public Input at the end of the Council meeting.

## **Portfolio Public Comment Period**

When the City Council meeting is being conducted public comments will be accepted at the conclusion of each topic discussed by the council. The following guidelines will apply to comments made during the portfolio comment period.

- At the conclusion of discussion by the Council on a portfolio topic, or after discussion of a motion prior to a vote, the Mayor will call for any public input from meeting attendees.
- Any attendee wishing to speak will ask to be recognized by the Mayor and following recognition will have 3 minutes to speak.
- After 3 minutes have elapsed, any speaker will be asked to stop at that point.
- The length of the Portfolio Public Comment period will be 15 minutes in length maximum for any topic allowing for 5 speakers maximum per topic.

## **General Guidelines**

- Only those called upon by the Mayor will be allowed to speak.
- When an individual is at the podium, they have the floor to speak. No other commentary from the public will be allowed.
- Stay on topic, multiple topics typically become confusing.
- Be respectful of the opinions of others.
- Comments should be beneficial to all parties.
- Refrain from using discriminatory or inflammatory language.
- When speaking, be sure to address an issue, not a person.
- Observe the time you are allotted to speak.