

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE II
ENTITLED ‘CITY COUNCIL’ REGARDING THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Winston-Salem as follows:

Section 1: Section 2-38 Rules of order. is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 2-38. Rules of order. General rules relating to hearings and presentations before council excluding the public comment period.

- (a) Unless otherwise provided in this article, the deliberations of the city council shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.
- b) Unless otherwise determined by the city council, persons or groups appearing before the city council in support of an issue pending before the council shall be limited to 15 minutes for their presentation, and those appearing in opposition to the issue shall likewise be limited to 15 minutes for their presentation. The council may, for good cause shown, grant an extension of these limits.
- (c) In addition to the 15 minutes permitted for the presentation of each side of an issue, each side shall have three minutes of rebuttal time. Groups shall be encouraged to select spokesmen inasmuch as the time limitation specified in this section shall apply to all persons or groups representing support for, or opposition to, the issue before the council. Speakers will be orderly and decorous in conduct and shall address only the issue or matter that is the subject of a hearing before council.
- (d) ~~City council will hold a public comment period at the end of its regular open session meeting on the third Monday of each month. If there is no regular meeting on the third Monday of any month, the public comment period will be held at the regular meeting on the first Monday of that month. The public comment period will be limited to 30 minutes, and each speaker will be limited to three minutes. New speakers will precede speakers wishing to address a subject they spoke to the previous month. Speakers will be orderly and decorous in conduct and shall address only subjects related to city government.~~

Section 2: Section 2-38.1 Public Comment Period. is hereby written to read as follows:

“Sec. 2-38.1. Public comment period.

- (a) City council will hold a public comment period at the end of its regular open session meeting on the third Monday of each month. If there is no regular meeting on the third Monday of any month, the public comment period will be held at the regular meeting on the first Monday of that month. Council shall not hold a public comment period during a month in which no regular meetings are held.
- (b) The public comment period will be limited to 30 minutes, and each speaker will be limited to three minutes. If there are more than ten speakers, council, by majority consent, may

extend the public comment period by a reasonable time period. If a large number of people are present to comment on the same subject, it is suggested that the group designate a speaker that will acknowledge the presence of the group. After the second person representing the same group has spoken, the next person and all others from the group will be permitted to speak after all other speakers not associated with the group have spoken, provided the 30 minute time limit has not been exhausted. Anyone desiring to speak may sign up in advance in person with the city secretary in City Hall, Suite 140 or immediately before the meeting by providing: (i) name, (ii) address and (iii) the subject of the speaker's proposed comments. Except as provided herein, speakers will address council in the order in which their names appear on the sign-up sheet. Speakers who are city residents will have priority over non-city resident speakers unless the city resident spoke the previous month on the same or related subject(s). In that case, the non-city resident speaker will have priority over a resident speaker who spoke the previous month on the same or related subject(s). New city resident speakers will precede city resident speakers wishing to address a subject they spoke to the previous month. Speakers may yield their time to another speaker. Unless council determines otherwise by majority consent, all speakers, including designated speakers, will be limited to three minutes even if other speakers have relinquished their time to said speaker. Speakers shall be orderly and decorous in their conduct and shall address only subjects related to city government.

- (c) Speakers are encouraged to use other channels such as the committee complaint procedure, and the city manager's and city attorney's, offices rather than the public comment period, to discuss the following matters: personnel, litigation, property acquisition, matters that are the subject of the attorney-client privilege, and confidential matters. Speakers shall not comment during the public comment period on matters that are the subject of an upcoming quasi-judicial proceeding or other public hearings before the city council. Comments regarding such matters should be made during the scheduled public hearing.
- (d) The mayor and council may respond to comments made during the public comment period or direct the city manager or city attorney, where appropriate, to provide a response.
- (e) Because of the time delays and disruptions associated with running non-city videos during the public comment period, speakers shall refrain from presenting videos during the public comment period. Speakers wishing to present videos may provide copies of the same to the city secretary for review by the mayor and council members, individually, at a later date, if such is desired.

Section 3: This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.