

CITY POLICY NO. 2020-12

SUBJECT: Guidelines for Public Speaking at a Public Meeting

December 8, 2020

1. References.

- a. House Bill 2840 of the 86th Texas Legislature
- b. Government code, Chapter 551, The Open Meetings Act

2. **Purpose.** The purpose of this policy is to establish reasonable guidelines for members of the public who desire to address the City Council, a Board, or a Commission of the City of Cumby during an open meeting.

3. **Staff Point-of-Contact.** The point of contact for this policy is the City Secretary at (903) 994-2272 or secretary@cityofcumby.com.

4. Policy.

- a. Members of the public must fill out a speaker form that includes their name, address and topic.
- b. *Presentation by Citizens.* Members of the public are given 3 minutes to speak during Citizens to be Heard. Members of the public are only allowed to speak once at the Citizens to be Heard at the beginning of the meeting and once per posted public hearing and cannot pass their time allotment to someone else. Members may speak regarding any agenda item that does not have a posted public hearing or about any other item of interest and must speak at the podium.
- c. *Posted Public Hearings.* Members of the public are given 3 minutes to speak during posted public hearings. Members of the public are only allowed to speak once during each public hearing and cannot pass their time allotment to someone else and must speak at the podium.
- d. *Regular Agenda Items.* If members of the public want to speak during City Council, a board, or a commission's discussion of an agenda item, the Mayor or the board/commission chair may stop the meeting at the Mayor's or board/commission chair's discretion, and hold a public hearing. Members of the public are only allowed to speak once during each Regular Agenda Item and are given 3 minutes to speak and they must speak at the podium. Following the public hearing, the Mayor or board/commission chair will call the meeting back to order and City Council, a board or a commission will proceed with the meeting.
- e. A uniformed police officer may be present at a City Council or board/commission meetings, at the discretion of the Mayor, to maintain order. This officer will be chosen at the Mayor's discretion. Upon direction by the Mayor or board/commission chair the officer will remove any member of the public for unruly, disruptive or offensive behavior.

- f. *Extra Time for Translator.* An individual who addresses the Council, Board, or Commission through a translator shall have twice the amount of time as a member of the public as listed in this policy who does not require the assistance of a translator in order to ensure that all members of the public receive the same opportunity to address the body.
- g. The order of business for the City of Cumby Meetings shall follow a pattern similar to that prescribed in "Robert Rules of Order."

