



**HAMPTON CITY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC HEARING & PUBLIC COMMENT PROTOCOL**

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**I. Introduction**

- 1.1 The city council takes pride in being fair and courteous to all parties in attendance at its meetings. It is important that all involved understand how the city council conducts public hearings and how those coming before the city council should conduct themselves.
- 1.2 The public hearing protocol applies to all public hearings as may be required by city, state, or federal law, or as the city council may direct.
- 1.3 The public comment protocol applies to the general public comment period offered by the city council at its meetings.
- 1.4 Anyone desiring to speak on any item, including public hearings and public comment, must sign up in the lobby of City Hall, or such other place as may be designated by city staff at the meeting, and provide their name and identify the subject matter or item that they wish to speak upon. Speaker sign-up for public hearings and public comment is available one hour before the meeting time. Sign-up ends at the time of the meeting.

**II. Public Hearing Protocol**

- 2.1 **General Public Hearings.** The following procedure shall apply to agenda items that involve a public hearing but which do not involve an applicant presentation.
  - a. The clerk of council shall announce the item number and title being considered.
  - b. The city manager, city attorney, or their designees may provide a staff presentation.
  - c. After the staff presentation, if applicable, individuals shall be called by the mayor to speak in order of sign-up. Each individual shall have three (3) minutes to speak on the item. Speakers may not yield their time to another speaker. All comments shall be directed to the council.
  - d. Speakers shall comply with the **Citizen Participation Policy** when addressing the city council. This Policy includes, but is not limited to, prohibitions on personal attacks, off-topic speech, and campaign-related speech.
  - e. Once all speakers have been heard, the mayor shall close the public hearing and solicit discussion and a motion from the city council.
  - f. When a public hearing has been closed by the mayor, no further public comment shall be permitted. Council members, however, may direct questions to the applicant, speaker(s), staff members, or others as they may deem appropriate.
- 2.2 **Land Use Public Hearings and Other Public Hearings Involving Applicants.** The following procedure shall apply to land use applications, including but not limited to rezoning applications and use permits, as well as other agenda items involving an applicant presentation, as may be designated by the city manager.

- a. The clerk of council shall announce the item number and item title being considered. The case before the council shall be presented by a staff member.
- b. After the case has been presented, the applicant or the applicant's representative shall have up to ten (10) minutes to address the council and present written and/or oral comments. The applicant may also request up to three (3) additional minutes for rebuttal of any comments from speakers in opposition to the application.
- c. Individuals, other than the applicant or the applicant's representative, who have signed up to comment on the case shall have three (3) minutes to present written and/or oral comments. Speakers may not yield their time to another speaker. All comments shall be directed to the council.
- d. Speakers shall comply with the **Citizen Participation Policy** when addressing the city council. This Policy includes, but is not limited to, prohibitions on personal attacks, off-topic speech, and campaign-related speech.
- e. After all persons who desire to address the council have had the opportunity to do so, the mayor may grant rebuttal time to the applicant, if previously requested by the applicant, and at his/her discretion may grant additional time to persons, other than the applicant, who have previously spoken. The mayor may close the public hearing at any time after all persons who desire to address the council have had one opportunity to do so, other than any rebuttal reserved by the applicant.
- f. When a public hearing has been closed by the mayor, no further public comment shall be permitted. Council members, however, may direct questions to the applicant, speaker(s), staff members, or others as they may deem appropriate.

### III. **Public Comment Protocol**

- 3.1 The following procedure shall apply to the general public comment period.
  - a. The mayor shall call individuals to speak in order of sign-up. Each individual shall have three (3) minutes to speak. Speakers may not yield their time to another speaker.
  - b. Speakers shall comply with the **Citizen Participation Policy** when addressing the city council. This Policy includes, but is not limited to, prohibitions on personal attacks, off-topic speech, and campaign-related speech.
  - c. It is the council's practice to listen to speakers and not engage in dialogue. After all of the speakers have been heard, the city manager, city attorney and/or members of city council may respond as appropriate.

#### Last Amended:

- March 9, 2022 - incorporated by reference in the Citizen Participation Policy