



Guidelines for Citizens' Communications

The City Council of the City of Auburn has chosen to provide a venue for Auburn's citizens to address their elected officials. Citizens' Communications is a chance for the City Council, the general public, and the media to hear in open forum a citizen's concerns, or comments.

To facilitate an orderly and productive public meeting, please keep in mind the following rules for Citizens' Communications:

- All citizens should use a professional, respectful, and civil tone when addressing the Council, and should expect the same in return.
 - Threatening comments and behavior will not be tolerated.
- Any citizen wishing to address the Council must do so from the podium, using the microphone so that citizen comments can be properly recorded.
- Any citizen wishing to address the Council must first state his or her name and address for the record.
- Organized groups should choose one representative to speak during a single communications session.
- Citizens' Communications are an opportunity for citizens to present comments to Council, and are not a forum for debate. As such:
 - Citizens should address the City Council as a body and not an individual Council member or City staff.
 - City staff, through the City Manager, will also direct comments to the Council, and not the citizen speaking.
 - While the Council may choose to interact with the speaker, typically a citizen will be allowed to present comments, after which the Council will ask questions or offer comments as necessary before moving to the next speaker.
 - To facilitate the orderly flow of the meeting, the City Council may direct City staff to follow-up on a question or comment after the meeting, rather than trying to provide feedback immediately.
- The City Council reserves the right to allow citizens of the City of Auburn to present their comments before the floor is opened to non-citizens.

Citizens' Communication on Agenda Items

This period of time is dedicated solely for citizens to address items on the evening's agenda, and, during which, citizens may present comments and ideas about particular agenda items. The following rules, as well as those previously mentioned above, apply to this Citizens' Communication:

- Each citizen has five (5) minutes in which to address the Council about a particular agenda item.
- The citizen must be recognized by the Mayor and, upon being recognized, must address the Council at the podium.
- The previous rules for giving name and address apply, as well as rules regarding the addressing of comments only to the Council as a full body.
- Citizens may speak only once, unless there is a specific question directed to them by a Council member.
- This time is not a forum for debate.

Citizens' Open Forum Procedures

The Citizens' Open Forum is a time in which any citizen may be recognized by the Mayor to present thoughts, ideas, concerns, or comments about any topic, issue, or situation. This time is dedicated to all non-agenda items. The following rules, as well as the previously mentioned general rules for all Citizens' Communications, apply:

- Citizens have three (3) minutes in which to address the Council.
- Each citizen must be recognized by the Mayor prior to speaking and address the Council at the podium.
- Citizens may speak only once, unless there is a specific question directed to them by a Council member.
- This time is not a forum for debate.
- The City Council reserves the right to allow citizens of the City of Auburn to present their comments before the floor is opened to non-citizens.

Public Hearings

Public hearings are an opportunity for citizens to express thoughts, comments, and concerns on the agenda item being considered by the Council. Please note that not all agenda items will have a public hearing. The following rules, in addition to the previously, above-mentioned general rules, apply to public hearings:

- Citizens must address the Council at the podium.
- Citizens may speak only once, unless there is a specific question directed to them by a Council member.
- Additional comments from the public are not allowed after the public hearing is closed.
- This time is not a forum for debate.

Unanimous Consent

Ordinances that are of a permanent nature are not allowed to be passed at the meeting at which they have their first reading, or first introduction, unless the entire Council agrees to suspend the rules by unanimous consent. Unanimous consent is simply the entire Council agreeing to lay aside the normal procedure of voting on an ordinance at the second meeting at which it is presented so as to bring it to a vote at its first introduction. Therefore, on the first reading of an ordinance, a councilmember will "move to approve the ordinance and ask for unanimous consent." Denying or approving unanimous consent is not the actual vote to determine whether or not the ordinance passes or fails. The official vote for the passage of the ordinance takes place after no Councilmember has denied unanimous consent.

If a Councilmember wishes to deny unanimous consent, thus disagreeing with voting on the passage of the ordinance at its first introduction, then they state "I wish to deny unanimous consent." When this happens, there is no more debate, and the ordinance will come up for a vote at the next, regularly held Council meeting. If unanimous consent is denied, a Councilmember will not need to ask for unanimous consent at the next council meeting and will only have to move for the approval of the ordinance.

Consent Agenda

Items on the consent agenda are considered routine and non-controversial and will be approved with a single motion. Consent agenda items may include previous meeting minutes, alcoholic beverage license requests, board appointments, contracts and agreements, and right-of-way and easement dedications. Ordinances or agenda items requiring a public hearing will not be included on the consent agenda. Any item can be removed from the consent agenda by a city council member for discussion and vote.