

Guidelines Regarding Citizen Participation In Meetings of Washburn City Commission



The Washburn City Commission welcomes citizen participation at its regular meetings and provides opportunities for citizens to address the City Commission during meetings concerning agenda items.

The City Commission's regularly scheduled meetings are on the second Monday of each month beginning at 6:00 p.m., at City Hall. Committee meetings are set as needed. Meeting dates may be changed due to holidays, etc.

Washburn City Hall
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Washburn, ND

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General Rules of Conduct

Citizens are encouraged to attend City Commission meetings and to participate in public hearings when the subject matter of such hearings is important to them.

Citizen's Rules of Decorum:

- Speakers will refrain from using profanity; language likely to incite violence or outbursts from the audience; language that is disruptive to the orderly process of the meeting; engaging in conversations with individual Commission members; making comments of a personal nature regarding others; shouting, yelling or screaming.
- Personal attacks directed at members of City Commission, City staff, or fellow citizens will not be tolerated.
- In many cases, the speaker will be directed to meet with staff to resolve the issue or to get their questions answered.
- Speakers will not continue to address the City Commission once their time has been depleted and will not engage in conversation with Commission members from their seat.
- The President or other Commission member chairing the meeting is in charge and shall have the authority to order any person to terminate his or her remarks if the time allotted to such person has expired or if the speaker has violated any of the foregoing rules. Any person who violates an order of the chair in a manner which tends to disturb or disrupt the meeting, after one additional warning from the chair, may be subject to removal from the meeting and possible criminal charges, depending upon the severity of the situation and the magnitude and frequency of the disruption(s).

Citizen Comments on Agenda Items During the Meeting

Many routine agenda items that are dealt with by the City Commission during its meetings do not require public input before formal action is taken. Nevertheless, the chair shall have discretion to allow members of the public who are in attendance to address such matters. For example, the chair might—and usually will—allow citizens to comment with respect to agenda items, provided that the comments offered be germane to the subject matter. The following rules apply for audience members wanting to comment on a specific agenda item.

- Be recognized by the presiding officer before speaking and clearly state their name.
- Stand if able and speak from the Audience in a civil, non-argumentative and respectful manner. If asked, approach the table for discussion
- Comments are to be limited to 2 to 3 minutes in length.
- The President may allow more time for a speaker or make other judgments or limitations about this portion of the agenda, depending upon the circumstances.

Rules of Decorum for the Audience

Those attending the meeting:

- Will refrain from commenting, clapping, shouting, booing, or other inappropriate and/or disruptive behavior.
- Will refrain from private conversations during meetings.
- Should not address Commission members in individual conversation or make comments to individual Commission members.
- Discussions and debates between or among members of the audience are strictly prohibited.

Public Hearings

When an item requires a public hearing by statute, the presiding officer will open and facilitate the public hearing. Public comments can be made in the same manner as the Citizen Comments agenda item. Reasonable limitations on the number of speakers and time allowed to speak may be imposed by the presiding officer in order to keep the meeting moving. Public hearings are held to gather data and opinions from the citizenry that facilitate the decision-making by the City Commission.

Contacting City Commission Members Outside of Meetings

You may contact a City Commission member at any time. Their contact information is on the City's website (www.washburnnd.com) at the button marked "Government" you can find it under "Governing Body".

Being Put On the Agenda

All speakers must be placed on the agenda by Thursday at noon, the week prior to the meeting. The following must be submitted with every request to be on the agenda.

- Speakers Name and Address
- Name and a description of desired item to be placed on the City Commission agenda
- Any documentation to be presented at the meeting or supporting information. Any supporting documentation you wish to present at the meeting should be submitted with the request.

Upon written or phone request, City personnel will answer questions about Commission business and add items to meeting agendas. The office personnel have the authority to decide if an item gets added to the agenda or forwarded to a commission committee for review.