



## **City of Hoyt Lakes Public Forum Rules of Procedure**

General Information: The City of Hoyt Lakes would like consistent processes and procedures regarding Council Public Forums.

### Role of the Public:

The City Council welcomes the public to all Council public forums and they are encouraged to express their opinion during these meetings. To keep the forum moving smoothly, the Council has adopted basic guidelines for making presentations before the Council. The purpose of the guidelines is:

- To provide for an orderly meeting.
- To provide equal and adequate time for review and consideration of each item.
- To provide equal rights to all members of the public who address the presiding officer.
- To provide the City Council with an equal and rational approach to all decisions.

The City Council has established the following guidelines for the conduct of City Council public forums:

1. When addressing the Council, the person shall approach the podium and begin presenting by stating their name and city.
2. All remarks from the person are limited to three (3) minutes. Each person is limited to one turn. The Mayor may use discretion whether to allow repeat statements from the same person.
3. The public forum will end at 5:30 pm to start the Regular Meeting.
4. To help maintain order, applause or other disturbances are discouraged.
5. The Council will not accept any documentation handed out during the meeting.
6. Personal attacks or inappropriate remarks will not be tolerated.
7. No member of the public should engage in conversation when not recognized to speak; background conversations can make it difficult for others to hear.
8. Staff will note questions of the speaker, and if the speaker leaves a phone number or address, will follow up within a reasonable time frame with answers to those questions if directed by the Council.

### Voting:

No vote of the council will take place on any matter brought to the public hearing, with the exception of directing staff to follow up with the speaker.

## Rules of Procedure:

### Guiding Principles:

- Council members and staff have the right to participate in discussion if they wish.
- Everyone deserves to be able to hear and know what is going on at all times.
- Everyone deserves to speak without being interrupted.
- Only one topic can be addressed at a time.
- All members have equal rights, privileges, and obligations. The presiding officer must ensure all members are treated equally.

Speakers may be interrupted by Council members or staff for the following reasons:

- Personal Privilege – you cannot hear the speaker, safety reasons, etc.
- Point of Order – you see a breach of the rules
- Appeal – you disagree with the presiding officer's ruling

### Decorum by Council Members:

While the Council is in session, Council members must preserve order and decorum, and a member must neither, by conversation or otherwise, delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the Council nor disturb any Council member while speaking or refuse to obey the orders of the Council or its Presiding Officer, except as otherwise herein provided.

Council members must be respectful of diverse opinions. Personal attacks will not be tolerated. Members must honor the role of the Presiding Officer to focus discussion on current items. Objections to the Presiding Officer or other members' actions should be voiced politely and with reason.

Care must be exercised to define and constrain discussions among members to the facts and relevant information.

The Mayor and Council members have a public stage to show how individuals with disparate points of view can find common ground and seek a compromise that benefits the community as a whole. The Mayor and Council members are role models for residents, business people, and often stakeholders involved in public debate.

Members should support the majority opinion of the Council once a vote has been taken.