

Amendment A to RES 32173 - Council Rules Updates

Sponsor: Councilmember Strauss

Creating standard time periods for Public Comment

Effect: This amendment increases the time period for public comment from 20 minutes to one hour and applies standard time periods for each speaker providing public comment based on the total number of speakers registered at the start of the public comment period. This amendment authorizes the presiding officer to designate the length of time for each speaker when the total number of speakers exceeds sixty people. Finally, the amendment would reinstate the existing Council Rule in XI.C.4 authorizing the presiding officer to extend the public comment period at their discretion.

1. Amend Resolution 32173 Attachment 1 General Rules and Procedures of the Seattle City Council by amending Rule XI.C. as follows:

XI. Public Participation and Access

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C. Public Comment at City Council Meetings and Committee Meetings.

Public comment periods are opportunities for members of the public to comment on items on the meeting's agenda. The agenda for a particular Council meeting will specify the type of public comment accepted, and it may specify the total time allotted for the public comment period and time limits for individual comments.

(See Rule XI.B Public Hearings.)

1. The Council shall not accept oral public comment at special City Council meetings.
2. The Council shall accept oral and/or written public comment at regular City Council meetings.
 - a. Public comment at City Council meetings shall be limited to matters on the Introduction and Referral Calendar, Committee Reports on that day's regular City Council meeting agenda, and other matters directly related to the City Council Work Program.
 - b. The President shall ensure that all public comment is in accordance with Rule XI.C.2.a.
3. Council committees shall accept oral and/or written public comment at standing and select committee meetings.

- a. Public comment at a committee meeting shall be limited to items listed on that day's agenda. At the Chair's discretion, public comment on matters within the purview of the committee may be accepted. The committee agenda shall provide notice of the scope of public comment that will be accepted prior to the committee meeting.
 - b. The presiding officer at a committee meeting shall ensure that all public comment is in accordance with Rule XI.C.3.a.
4. Total public comment periods shall not exceed ~~((20 minutes))~~ one hour unless extended ~~((by a majority of those present and voting))~~ at the discretion of the presiding officer.
5. ~~((Individual))~~ The amount of time provided to individual speakers shall be ~~((provided up to two minutes total speaking time))~~ based on the number of people registered to speak at the start of the public comment period:
 - a. If fewer than 30, then two minutes per speaker;
 - b. If 30 to 60, then one minute per speaker; and
 - c. If more than 60, then one minute per speaker unless the presiding officer sets a shorter time.
- Individuals who wish to speak shall sign up for public comment on registers, when provided by Legislative Department staff.
- (See Rule XI.J Inclusive Access and Participation – Requests for Reasonable Accommodation.)
6. When recognized by the presiding officer, the individual shall address the members in the form prescribed, state the individual's name for the record, and identify the item to which the individual shall speak. This Rule shall be waived at the request of the person speaking.
7. Council and committee proceedings are electronically recorded; therefore, speakers wishing to address the Council or committee during the established public comment period shall speak only from the audio source prescribed.
8. If no speakers sign up to address the Council or the committee, or if the public comments conclude before the ~~((20 minute))~~ designated time period has elapsed, the comment period shall be closed, and the Council or committee shall resume its business, with no further opportunity for public comment at that meeting.
9. The Council shall accept written public comment at Council Briefing meetings.
10. No public comments addressing the merits of a quasi-judicial action shall be permitted at any Council or committee meeting.
11. The Council President shall, in consultation with the Office of the City Clerk and in compliance with chapter 42.30 RCW, issue guidelines for the procedure by which public comment will be received in a hybrid meeting (such as those with both in- person and electronic participation).