



ORDINANCE

RELATIVE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

CITY OF NASHUA

In the Year Two Thousand and Twenty

The City of Nashua ordains that Part I “Administrative Legislation”, Chapter 5 “Administration of Government”, Part 2 “Board of Aldermen”, Article III “Rules and Order of Business”, Section 5-14, “Order of Business”, of the Nashua Revised Ordinances, as amended, be hereby further amended by deleting the struck-through language and adding the new underlined language, as follows:

“A. The order of business for regular meetings of the Board of Aldermen shall be as follows:

...

(9a) A period not to exceed 15 minutes for the acceptance of orally presented communications or comments from the public or others relative to resolutions, ordinances, or communications to be accepted in Subsection A(9b) upon which final action is expected to be taken at the meeting. If there is a reasonable expectation by the President of the Board that final action shall be taken on such an item not on the agenda, the President shall allow comment on that item of business. Upon vote of a majority of the Board members present, the time for orally presented communications or comments may exceed 30 minutes due to additional speakers wanting to comment;

(9b) Communications requiring final approval by the Board of Aldermen, including but not limited to awards of contracts and expenditure of funds;

...

(16) Communications, to include a period not to exceed 15 minutes for the acceptance of orally presented communications or comments from the public or others; on items not on the agenda or regarding actions taken by the Board during the current meeting;

...

B. Meetings of ~~standing~~ committees of the Board of Aldermen shall include the following:

(1) ~~(1)~~ Public comment at the beginning of the meeting, which comments shall be germane to the meeting’s agenda for a period not to exceed five (5) minutes per presentation; and shall be limited to 30 minutes total unless there are others who

wish to speak and then may be extended by a majority of the public body present for a time certain;:

(2) Public comment at the end of the meeting, shall be for a period not to exceed ~~five~~ (5) fifteen (15) minutes per presentation; and

~~(3) — Remarks by the aldermen.~~

C. Public comment allowed in A and B above shall be conducted as follows:

(1) Speaker must sign-in prior to the start of the meeting to indicate intent to speak during public comment;

(2) Speaker may not speak until recognized by the presiding officer;

(3) Speaker shall identify him or herself by name and addresses when beginning to speak;

(4) One person speaks at a time;.

(5) Each speaker is limited to speaking once per public comment period and is limited to ~~five (5) three 3~~ minutes during the first public comment period and ~~three (3) three 3~~ -minutes during the second comment period, which time may not be deferred to another speaker or speaker;

~~(5)(6)~~ If there has been a public hearing on a matter on the same day, there shall be no further public comment allowed on that matter;

~~(6)(7)~~ The presiding officer may allow questions at the presiding officer’s discretion ~~but only the presiding officer shall address the question or call upon the most qualified person to answer the question;~~

~~(7)(8)~~ Prior to or at a meeting, members of the public may submit written comments to the full Board of Aldermen or the committee by email or paper copy. It is the responsibility of the member of the public to have enough paper copies and such copies shall be handed to the clerk for distribution prior to the start of the meeting. Written comments may be accepted as correspondence but shall not be read in to the record;

~~(8)(9)~~ Excessive repetition and irrelevant remarks are discouraged; ~~and~~

~~(9)(10)~~ Remarks shall be civil; ~~rude or profane remarks are prohibited; and~~

(10) The presiding officer has authority to terminate the remarks of any speaker when such remarks do not adhere to this ordinance or other applicable law.”

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All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

This legislation shall take effect following its passage.

LEGISLATIVE YEAR 2020

ORDINANCE: O-20-009

PURPOSE: Relative to Public Comment

ENDORSERS: Alderman-at-Large Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons

**COMMITTEE
ASSIGNMENT:**

FISCAL NOTE: None.

ANALYSIS

This ordinance provides rules of order for public comment at regular Board of Aldermen meetings.

Approved as to form: Office of Corporation Counsel

By: _____

Date: _____