



CITY OF TEMPE GUIDELINES

Conduct at City Council Meetings

Government meetings are considered limited public forums, enabling the City of Tempe to impose content-neutral restrictions on the time, place and manner of expression, to achieve the governmental purpose of such meetings. During the meeting, civility and order will be imposed in order to carry out the public business of the City of Tempe and to ensure that the public has a full opportunity to hear and view the deliberative process.

Public Appearances/Call to the Audience:

Regular City Council meetings and Work Study Sessions provide for public appearances. Citizen input is encouraged and appreciated.

Rules of Decorum:

Tempe rules of decorum governing public appearances include: A three (3) minute limit on the duration of remarks.

Remarks shall be addressed to the Council as a whole, and not to City staff or any member of the general public.

During the Call to the Audience at Work Study Sessions, members of the public may only address the City Council on items that are listed on the agenda.

During the Public Appearances, members of the public should address the Council on subject matters that would fall within the jurisdiction of the City of Tempe.

Advocacy for or against candidates for City Council and or ballot or initiative measures are prohibited by Arizona law, as well as any other expression made for the purpose of influencing the outcomes of elections.

Visual aids are not allowed. If handouts are provided to Councilmembers, a copy must be provided to the City Clerk for the public record.

Personal, impertinent or slanderous remarks, including profanity are prohibited, as is any other disorderly conduct that disrupts, disturbs or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of any Council meeting.

Becoming boisterous while addressing the Council or attending the meeting is prohibited. In addition, unauthorized remarks from the audience, as well as clapping, stomping of feet, yelling or any similar demonstrations are also prohibited, as is other behavior that disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of any Council meeting.

Enforcement of Rules of Decorum:

Violations of these rules will result in a warning by the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer may direct the member of the public to be silent and/or orderly.

If the disruption continues, the Presiding Officer may direct the member of the public to leave the meeting. If the person does not leave willfully, the Presiding Officer may have the member of the public removed. Such person may be subject to arrest under state law (ARS 13-2904).

Removal from a meeting will result in the member of the public being prohibited from further attendance at the meeting.

Public Appearances Procedure:

Members of the public must fill out a speaker card with his or her name, city of residence and the subject of the comment. Speaker cards are turned in to the City Clerk prior to the comment. All speaker cards are public record and subject to disclosure under Arizona law.

Council:

The Mayor and Councilmembers are prohibited by Arizona's Open Meeting Law from discussing or acting on any matter unless it is specifically listed on the agenda. The City Council may respond to criticism, ask staff to review a matter, or ask that a matter be put on a future agenda.

Arizona's Defamation Law:

The City of Tempe is unaware of any legal exception that would provide protection to a speaker for comments made during a public meeting, if such comments constitute slander or defamation under Arizona law. Members of the public are encouraged to consult their own attorney for further guidance.

The City of Tempe reserves the right not to televise, re-publish and/or rebroadcast any meeting or portion(s) of any meeting, in its sole discretion.