

Morrisville Town Council Meeting Rules of Procedure

Rule 5. Public Address to the Council

The Council believes in a fair process for individuals that are interested in presenting suggestions, comments or other thoughts. Public comment is vital to the function of Town governance and the Town encourages a wide variety of input for fair representation during decision making, which enables educated leadership and a better decision making process.

Definitions:

- **Public Address** refers to specific time during Council Meetings during which general public comment may be submitted to the Council Items that already have a public input session or public hearing scheduled on the current agenda will not be discussed during the public address.
- **Public Hearing** refers to specific time during Council Meetings during which public comment may be submitted on specific items and is legally required by State Statutes.
- **Public Input Session** is similar to a public hearing and refers to specific time during Council Meetings during which public comment may be solicited for specific items; however, a Public Input Session is not required by State Statutes.

Procedure:

- Persons wishing to speak during public address and at public hearings are asked to sign up prior to the meeting and provide all required information. The registry period will end prior to the first public hearing or public address session. The public address sign-up period will begin at 5:00 p.m. the day of each meeting. At the appropriate time, the mayor will acknowledge those who have signed up to speak and they will be called upon in the order registered. Speakers will address the Council as a whole, from the podium at the front of the room and begin their remarks by stating their name and address.
- **Time Allotment:**

The **Public Address** will be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes for the entire comment period, unless an exception is granted by the Mayor or Council consensus. If the time period runs out before all persons who have signed up to speak have an opportunity, those names will be carried over to the next Public Address Period.

Public Hearing and Public Input Session comments will be limited to 20 minutes for those in favor and 20 minutes for those in opposition at each meeting, unless an exception is granted by the Mayor or Council consensus. Note that one public hearing/input session may be continued through several meetings and speakers may present only once unless authorized by Town Council. Additional options for input to any item are available and encouraged.
- Only one speaker will be acknowledged at a time. Individual comments are limited to three minutes unless otherwise stated by the Mayor.
- The spokesperson for a group may be permitted to speak up to six minutes at the discretion of TC.
- A delegate may be selected from a group of individuals supporting/opposing positions when a number of people wishing to attend a public hearing exceeds the capacity of the Council Chambers. Advance arrangements must be made to accommodate those not able to listen to the hearing from within the Council Chambers.
- Speakers offering comments may ask questions. The Council will not generally answer questions during the comment period, but may refer questions to staff for response or follow-up.
- Speakers should be courteous in their language and presentation.

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- Speakers who have prepared written remarks and supporting documents for presentation are required to leave a copy of any documents presented with the Town Clerk.
- Those who do not wish to speak, but would like to submit comments are encouraged to do so. These comments will not be read aloud. However, the Council will be given a copy of the comments submitted. These documents will become a public record.
- Speakers requesting audio visual display of any information must request the ability to do so no later than 5:00 p.m. prior to the start of the meeting from the Town Clerk. Town Council has the ability to grant or deny a request at their discretion.

Public comments are not the only opportunity to address the Council. Input is strongly encouraged. Speakers are encouraged to directly contact Council Members and/or staff with any questions or comments. Town Council may be contacted as a group by e-mailing TownCouncil@TownofMorrisville.org.