



City of North Port

City Commission Policy — Public Comment

Policy No.: 2020-04

Resolution No.: 2020-R-30

Approval Date: October 13, 2020

Amended by Resolution No. 2023-R-27; 2025-R-11

Amendment Date: January 28, 2025

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

This policy includes the procedures and the methods for the public to provide comment to the City Commission in public meetings and workshops.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Communication Media Technology (CMT). CMT includes one or more of the following: the electronic transmission of printed matter, audio, full-motion video, freeze-frame video, compressed video, or digital video by any method available.
- B. Meeting(s). As used in this policy, the word *meeting* includes regular meetings, special meetings, and workshops of the City Commission.

III. POLICY AND PROCEDURE

A. General.

1. Opportunities for Public Comment.

- a) General Public Comment. Every meeting agenda will include an agenda item for general public comment near the beginning and the end of the agenda. A public comment does not have to relate to an agenda item and may be on any subject.
- b) Consent Agenda Items. Prior to the vote approving the Consent Agenda, the presiding officer will recognize persons wishing to provide public comment. All public comment made at this time must relate to an item on the Consent Agenda. If an item on the Consent Agenda is pulled for discussion, anyone wishing to provide public comment on the pulled item may do so when the item is considered by the Commission.
- c) Public Comment on Agenda Items. Prior to a vote on an agenda item, the presiding officer will recognize persons wishing to provide public comment on the item.
- d) Public Support on Agenda Items. When a person is recognized to provide public comment the City Clerk staff will announce the support or opposition of the person to the agenda item when that information appears on the public comment request card. A person is not required to make a public comment in order to submit their support or opposition to an agenda item and have that opinion read into the record.

2. Questions. All questions from the public to the City Commission will be addressed through the Mayor. The Mayor will handle the questions in the manner that the Mayor sees fit.
 3. Time allowed. Each person will be permitted to make public comment for a limited amount of time as provided for in each method. A commenter's time may not be transferred to another commenter and may not be duplicated by using multiple methods.
 4. Connections. Each person who chooses to use CMT for public comment will be responsible for the capability, compatibility, set-up, and connections for the person's hardware, software, internet service, and electronic devices.
- B. Methods. Persons interested in making public comment may do so by:
1. In-person Attendance. Anyone seeking to provide public comment in-person is requested to submit a comment card to the City Clerk. Comment cards with completed information may be submitted until the Mayor closes the public comment for the agenda item. When recognized by the Mayor, the commenter will approach the podium. Public comment is limited to one public comment card per item and three (3) minutes per person.
 2. Online Public Comment Form. A public comment may be submitted in writing via the online public comment form on the City's Online Public Comment webpage at <https://www.northportfl.gov/government/city-leadership/city-clerk/public-comment>. Online public comment will be accepted from 8:00 a.m. the day before the meeting until one hour before the scheduled start time of the meeting. The commenter must provide the information identified as "required" and the comment cannot exceed 2000 characters. All online public comment in compliance with this policy will be read into the record at the meeting and the City Commission will afford the comments the same consideration as if they were offered in person.
 3. Telephone Voicemail message. A public comment may be left as a voicemail message via telephone at 941-429-1032. Voicemail messages will be accepted from 8:00 a.m. the day before the meeting until one hour before the scheduled start time of the meeting. The commenter must leave all information identified as "required" in the City's outgoing message and must not exceed two minutes, fifteen seconds (2:15). All public comment voicemail messages in compliance with this policy will be played into the record at the meeting during general public comment near the beginning of the meeting. The City Commission will afford the telephonic voicemail comments the same consideration as if they were offered in person.
 4. Other methods. As platforms are advanced and updated providing viable alternatives for public comment, the City Commission may amend this policy.
- C. Posting. In addition to storing this policy with other Commission policies, the City Clerk is directed to post this policy and the information contained herein on the City's Online Comment webpage at <https://www.northportfl.gov/government/city-leadership/city-clerk/public-comment>.