

**ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF GORDON, ALABAMA
RULES FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS**

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-002

BE IT ORDAINED by the Town Council of the Town of Gordon, Alabama, as follows:

SECTION 1. REPEALER.

Any ordinances, rules, or regulations conflicting with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 2. RECORDINGS OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS OR WORKSHOPS.

All cameras, cellular telephones, or any other visual recording device must be located in the area designated by the Mayor, or any person to whom he may designate this authority. Any person failing and/or refusing to comply with or otherwise violating this Section shall be subject to Section 4 of this Ordinance.

SECTION 3. POLICY FOR DECORUM DURING COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR.

(a) Every petition, communication, or address to the Town Council at a public hearing, council meeting, or administrative workshop shall be in respectful language.

(b) Privileges of the Floor

1. Opening the Floor, also known in this ordinance as Privileges of the Floor, are a privilege, and not a right, of Town citizens.

2. Individuals or groups wishing to speak under Privileges of the Floor at a regular Town Council meeting shall submit a written request to the Town Clerk by close of business on the Friday prior to the regular meeting date. The request shall include the speaker's name, address, and the topic to be addressed. Any person wishing to speak on behalf of a group shall so indicate and shall identify the name and address of the group or organization. The Mayor shall review requests and determine whether to allow such applicant to speak.

3. Privileges of the Floor shall be for the purpose of allowing members of the public to present any matter which, in their opinion, deserves the attention of the Council. They shall not serve as a forum for debate with the Council.

4. Remarks shall be addressed directly to the Council and not to staff, the audience, or the media.

5. The Mayor shall open the Privileges of the Floor.

6. Speakers shall be resident citizens of the Town of Gordon, Alabama.

7. Each speaker shall clearly state his or her name, address and topic.

8. There shall be a time limit for each individual speaker for three (3) minutes.

9. A representative of a group shall identify the group at the beginning of his or her presentation. A group may have no more than one (1) spokesperson.

10. The maximum number of speakers who will be allowed to speak during Privileges of the Floor at any given meeting is five (5).

11. Speakers are not permitted to donate time to other speakers.

12. There shall be no comment during Privileges of the Floor on a matter for which a public hearing is scheduled during the same meeting.

13. There shall be no comment during Privileges of the Floor on a matter that has already been the subject of a previous public hearing where no final vote has been taken.

14. Council members shall not discuss issues raised by the public during Privileges of the Floor.

15. Once the Council has heard a presentation from an individual or organization on a particular subject, the individual or organization may not make another presentation on the same subject within three (3) months of the first presentation unless permitted by the Mayor.

16. The above rules notwithstanding, members of the public may present written comments to the Council or to individual Council members.

(c) No citizen, except the Mayor, Council members, or Town officials, may speak unless permission is first granted by the Mayor during Privileges of the Floor.

(d) No speaker's time shall be extended except by consent of a majority of the Council members present during Privileges of the Floor.

(e) Persons appearing before the Council during Privileges of the Floor will not be allowed to:

1. Campaign for public office;
2. Promote private business ventures;
3. Use profanity or vulgar language or gestures;
4. Use language which insults or demeans any person. Citizens have the right to comment on the performance, conduct, and qualifications of public figures;
5. Make statements unrelated to their topic;
6. Interrupt other speakers or engage in behavior that disrupts the meeting, including, but not limited to, applause, cheers, jeers, yelling, shouting, etc.,
7. Engage in behavior that intimidates others or incites violence or disorder;
8. Address the Council on issues that do not concern the services, policies, or affairs of the Town;

9. Make unduly repetitive statements;
 10. Refuse to stop talking after the allotted time has expired;
 11. Address the Council on a matter to which the speaker is a party and is currently pending before a court, quasi-judicial body, board, or administrative forum.
- (f) Any person failing and/or refusing to comply with or otherwise violating this Section shall be subject to Section 4 of this Ordinance.

SECTION 4. ENFORCEMENT.

(a) The Mayor shall preserve order and decorum at Council meetings, including, but not limited to, recording equipment placement and Privileges of the Floor.

(b) Any citizen who fails to comply with the directive of the Mayor to comply with these rules may be held by the Mayor to be out of order.

(c) Any person held to be out of order must:

1. cease any behavior not complying with this ordinance;
2. comply with the Mayor's directive; and
3. give up the floor and cease speaking, if exercising Privileges of the Floor.

(d) The Mayor may order the expulsion of any person who fails to comply with the Mayor's directive, refuses to comply after being found out of order, or otherwise fails to comply with this ordinance.


(e) Any person so expelled shall not be readmitted for the remainder of the meeting from which expelled.

(f) Any person who has been expelled and who at a later meeting again engages in behavior justifying expulsion may also be barred from attendance at future Council settings for a specified and reasonable period of time, not to exceed six (6) months. If necessitated, a second expulsion period not to exceed one (1) year may be instituted either by the Mayor, subject to appeal to a majority vote of the Council members present, or by Motion passed by the Council.

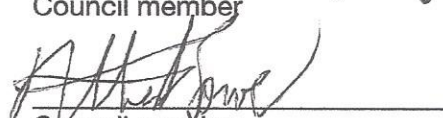
SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.

After posting as required by law, this ordinance shall become effective immediately.

PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED ON this the 13th day of April, 2021.

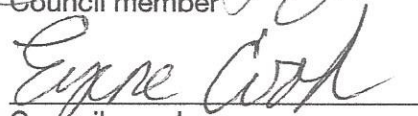

Mayor


Council member

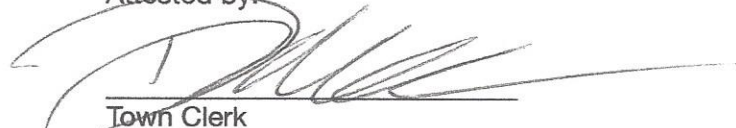

Council member


Council member


Council member


Council member

Attested by:


Town Clerk