



**Committee Members:**

- Josh Palmer, 7<sup>th</sup> Ward, Chair
- Dan DeArment, Ward 4
- Dennis Hellmann, Ward 2
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**Staff:**

- Don Rasmussen
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Meeting Start Time: 4:01

Guests: Members of the public

Meeting End Time: 4:30

**Agenda:**

Call to Order

Roll Call

New Items

Review 2024-2025 Council Rules of Procedure

Adjournment

Josh Palmer  
Ad Hoc Committee Chair

# COMMITTEE REPORT

## THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO

An **AD HOC COMMITTEE** met on March 26, 2024 to continue discussions from the March 13, 2024 Ad-Hoc Committee meeting on reviewing the 2024-2025 Council Rules of Procedure.

We recommend

Further discussion, receive feedback,  
and finalize draft for rules of procedure  
for council procedure.

Aye  Nay



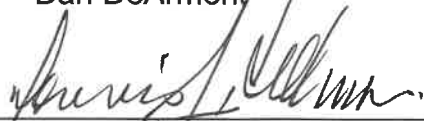
Josh Palmer, Chair

Aye  Nay



Dan DeArment

Aye  Nay



Dennis Hellmann

**AD-HOC COMMITTEE**

**LEGISLATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATED: March 26, 2024**

## Ad Hoc committee meeting on Council Rules

Tuesday, March 26, 2024 4:00pm

Josh Palmer (chair), Dennis Hellmann, Dan DeArment

Comments by Dan DeArment:

1. I plan to read my comments tonight so they will be part of the meeting minutes similar to what I did last week.
2. I want to start by defining my understanding of the goal of city council and the goal of the general public in defining a process for public input. With these goals defined, we can structure our rules to try to accommodate everyone. Crafting a good process that meets both goals is a challenging and complex task. I ask for your patience and an open mind.
  - a. The goal of city council is to create an environment in which we can conduct the City's business with minimal distraction. **Respectful** public input is not considered a distraction and is welcomed to help inform our decision-making process.
  - b. Based on comments received and the petition being circulated, I believe the public's goal is to be able to express their views during the city council meetings in an expanded timeframe with no limitation on content. In addition to being heard, they would like responses to questions and concerns.
  - c. Let's keep these goals in mind as we work through this process.
3. At the last meeting, we discussed the timing of public comments. Speakers addressing agenda specific items would be invited to the podium while that topic is being addressed by the council. Non agenda items would be discussed towards the end of the meeting after new business but before we adjourn. That concept was received positively by this committee and will be included in the recommendation going forward.
4. I appreciate Patty Klein's thoughtful comments on the structure of the speaker form, especially as they relate to tying responses to public comments back to ward council representatives. This can enhance communication and establish accountability for response. I would like to include Ms. Klein's draft speaker form in the minutes of this meeting. We may edit her form but use the general concept.
5. There was an individual concerned about doxing. I don't think that request holds any water in today's internet and information society but we can easily accommodate the request by only asking for the speaker's name and residence ward on the form.
6. There was a comment made during the last City Council meeting about why council has the right to make its own rules and that the public should make the rules for us to follow. My response to that is that you elected us to represent you to conduct the

City's business. By law we need to meet on a regular basis to conduct this business. Council needs a controlled, civil environment for us to do our work with minimal distractions. Legally, we are allowed to set our meeting parameters to create this environment.

- a. Comments from Committee:

## **New Proposal Items**

### **7. On the time limits:**

- a. Comments specific to an agenda item remain at 4 minutes. In my opinion, 4 minutes is a reasonable amount of time for speakers to express their opinion on a single topic. Speakers can address any item on the agenda including committee reports.
- b. Comments not specific to an agenda item will be increased from 4 to 6 minutes and will be made at the end of the meeting.
- c. An individual can only speak once during a meeting.
- d. If a speaker wishes to comment on multiple agenda items, they can choose to speak at the end of the meeting with a 6-minute time allowance.
- e. An individual can only speak once on the same agenda item. This means a speaker cannot speak at three meetings in a row on the same topic. Repetition does not add to the process and can take away the opportunity for others to speak.
- f. Public input will be allowed up to 60 minutes, not by the number of speakers as is currently the rule. The President of Council shall make best effort to balance the number of speakers for or against an issue.
- g. The 60-minute clock starts when the first citizen starts to speak, runs continuously until they leave the podium, and includes Q&A. The 60-minute limit is cumulative of comment time spent on both agenda and non-agenda items.
- h. The president of council will have to utilize two stopwatches during council meetings to implement this.
- i. Comments from the committee:

8. The purpose of the city council meeting is for council to conduct the city's business. Speakers will address only city council. Complaints, concerns or questions about other elected officials such as the auditor, law director, mayor or council president are not the business of city council. We are not here to defend or answer for other elected officials. Those issues should be handled by scheduling an appointment with that elected official. The podium in the council chamber room should be oriented directly towards city council as a reminder to speakers of who their audience is.
  - a. I have received concerns from my constituents and the business community that the public comment timeframe of our meeting is being used as a campaign platform for an individual to build political capital and that this forum is not an appropriate place for campaigning.
  - b. Comments from the committee:
  
9. The president of council and clerk of council should screen out issues that don't directly involve city council. Two recent examples include zoning and private properties issues in Allen Township and Sunny Farms Landfill near Fostoria.
10. All speakers must live in the City of Findlay or represent companies that conduct business in Findlay.
11. Another comment received recommended is that we add a new section to the agenda called "Contractor Communications" for contractors working directly for or within the city to address city council. Examples include Hancock Regional Planning Commission, and utility companies such as AEP, Columbia Gas, Hancock Wood, Metronet, etc. They would be separate from public comment.
12. The sequence of events for an individual agenda item would be:
  - a. Introduction of item, reading of ordinance
  - b. Public comment
  - c. Motions (if any), discussion, vote
13. Finally, I recommend that once we have a draft final version of our rules that we move forward with a pilot for two months (4 meetings) to make sure we get it right. The Ad Hoc committee would stay intact until the rules are finalized after the pilot period.
  - a. Comments from the committee

# Communication Form

- Oral (in person)
- email

- Present this form to the City Council President prior to the meeting
- Attach this form with email communication or include all fields below when submitting an email
- The City Council President will present this to the submitter's Council Representative
- Ward number: \_\_\_\_\_, Council Representative name: \_\_\_\_\_

To the honorable council of the City of Findlay, Ohio:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, residing ~~at~~ *IN WARD #* \_\_\_\_\_,  
phone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ *OR EMAIL* \_\_\_\_\_

Wish to address your honorable body in regards to:

Issue: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Submitter's Requested  
Action: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Action taken by Council Representative:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Representatives Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_