

Sec. 2.045. - Rules of decorum for city council and city board and commission meetings.

- (a) The purposes of these rules are as follows:
  - (1) To ensure that meetings of the city council and of city boards and commissions are conducted in a way that allows the business of the city to be effectively conducted.
  - (2) To ensure that members of the public who attend meetings of the city council and of city boards and commissions can be heard in a fair, impartial and respectful manner.
  - (3) To ensure that meetings of the city council and of city boards and commissions are conducted in a way that is open to all viewpoints, yet free from abusive, distracting or intimidating behavior.
  - (4) To ensure that the rules governing decorum at meetings of the city council and of city boards and commissions are understood by persons attending the meetings.
- (b) This section applies to city council meetings and to meetings of boards and commissions whose membership is wholly appointed by the city council.
- (c) Members of the public may address the city council or a city board or commission at the following times during a meeting:
  - (1) During citizen comment period, if such a period is on the agenda for the meeting;
  - (2) During a public hearing on an agenda item; or
  - (3) At other times with the permission of the presiding officer.
- (d) Members of the public who wish to address the council or a board or commission at any time during a meeting must sign in prior to the meeting at the city clerk's office, for a council meeting, or at the office of the staff liaison, for a board or commission meeting. Speakers must state their name, and must limit their remarks to three minutes. The allotted time will commence from the beginning of the speaker's remarks and will include any time spent in discussion between the speaker and council or board or commission members. Issues taking longer to communicate can be addressed outside the meeting to the city staff or to individual members of the council or board or commission, or submitted in writing.
- (e) All comments and questions by members of the public at a meeting will be directed to the presiding officer.
- (f) During a citizen comment period, members of the public will be given one opportunity to speak, and they must observe the three-minute limit under subsection (d). If a speaker speaks during the citizen comment period on a topic listed on the agenda, including a public hearing topic, the person cannot speak again on the item when it is considered by the council or the board or commission, except in response to a question from a council or board or commission member.
- (g) The mayor and council, and the presiding officer and members of boards and commissions, will endeavor to ensure that meetings are conducted in a courteous manner, and in an atmosphere

free of defamation, intimidation, personal affronts, profanity, or threats of violence.

- (h) Members of the public shall not engage in any of the following in the meeting room during a council or board or commission meeting:
  - (1) Shouting, unruly behavior, distracting side conversations, or speaking out when another person is talking.
  - (2) Defamation, intimidation, personal affronts, profanity, or threats of violence.
  - (3) Audible use of phones, pagers, radios, computers or other electronic equipment.
  - (4) Booing, hissing, foot stomping, parading, singing or other similar behavior that impedes or disrupts the orderly conduct of the meeting.
- (i) The rules in this section shall be enforced in the following manner:
  - (1) The presiding officer will request that a person who is violating a rule cease the violation.
  - (2) If the violation continues, the presiding officer will warn the person that he or she will be required to leave the meeting room if the violation continues.
  - (3) If the violation continues, the presiding officer will order the person to leave the meeting room.
  - (4) If the person does not leave the meeting room, the presiding officer may order any peace officer at the meeting to remove the person from the meeting room.
- (j) It is unlawful for any person to intentionally or knowingly resist removal from a meeting room by a peace officer under subsection (i).

(Ord. No. 2003-35, § 1, 5-28-03)

Any person violating any provision of the Rules of Decorum commits a misdemeanor and is subject to a fine of up to \$500 as provided in Section 1.015 of the San Marcos City Code upon conviction.