

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF COPPELL, TEXAS, AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES BY AMENDING CHAPTER 1, ‘ADMINISTRATION’, ARTICLE 1-10, “RULES, TIMES AND PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS”, SECTION 1-10-6 “ORDER OF BUSINESS”, TO REPEAL AND REPLACE SAID SECTION OF SUCH ARTICLE AND CHAPTER IN ITS ENTIRETY AND ADDING A NEW SECTION 1-10-6.3.3 ‘PRESENTATIONS BY CITIZENS’; PROVIDING A PUBLIC COMMENT DECORUM DURING CITIZENS’ APPEARANCES; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of Coppel believes it will benefit to amend and update the City’s Code of Ordinances;

WHEREAS, the City desires to amend the Rules, Times and Procedures for Conducting City Council Meetings previously implemented for the benefit of the citizens of the City of Coppel.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COPPELL, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. That the Code of Ordinances of the City of Coppel, Texas, be and in the same is hereby amending Chapter 1, ‘Administration’, by Article 1-10 “Rules, Times and Procedures for Conducting City Council Meetings”, Section 1-10-6 “Order of Business”, to repeal and replace said section in its entirety and adopting a new Section 1-10-6.3.3, “Presentations by Citizens,” of said Chapter and Article to provide public comment decorum during citizens’ appearances to hereinafter read as follows:

“CHAPTER 1 – ADMINISTRATION

**ARTICLE 1-10. RULES, TIMES AND PROCEDURES FOR
CONDUCTING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Sec. 1-10-6.1

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Sec. 1-10-6.2. Citizen appearance. Persons wishing to speak on any matter other than an item scheduled for a public hearing on the agenda, must sign a register and list their residence address, provided by the city secretary on a table outside the council chambers, and such persons may be heard only at the “citizens appearance” portion of a regular meeting or special meeting. Each speaker must state his or her name and address of residence.

Presentations by individuals during the “citizens appearance” shall be limited to three (3) minutes each. In the event that there are more than thirty (30) speakers registered for citizens appearance, the mayor may reduce each speaker’s time to no less than one minute per speaker. Those persons who signed up to speak at the “citizens appearance” shall be called upon in the order that they have signed the provided register. No personal attacks by any speaker shall be made against any member of the council, mayor, individual, group or corporation (Charter Article 3, Section 3.12).”

Sec. 1-10-6.2.2. *Public hearings.* Any person wishing to appear at a public hearing held by the council pursuant to any official notice thereof shall sign a register and list his or her address, provided by the city secretary, outside the council chamber indicating the item on the agenda the person wishes to address. Each speaker will be limited to five (5) minutes, and there shall be a cumulative limit of sixty (60) minutes for all those speaking for an item on the agenda, and a like limit for all those speaking against an item on the agenda. No group or organization shall be allowed more than three (3) speakers on any agenda item. These limitations may be extended at the discretion of a majority vote of the council members present.

Sec. 1-10-6.3.3. *Presentations by citizens.*

A). Public Comment Decorum During Citizens’ Appearances

1). Purpose.

Public comment is a vital part of democratic governance. The City of Coppell welcomes diverse viewpoints, but speakers and council have a responsibility to maintain an orderly and respectful meeting environment to conduct the public meeting and business.

2). Speaker Conduct Requirements.

All speakers during public comments or public hearings shall comply with the following rules while addressing the Council:

- a) Sign-up with name, address, and subject matter prior to beginning of meeting.
- b) Speak only during the designated public comment period or designated public hearing.
- c) Abide by the 3-minute time limit for citizens appearances, and five (5) minutes for public hearings.

- d) Remain at the podium, face the council, and address the council as a whole.
- 3.) During the public comment or public hearing, the speakers shall refrain from the following conduct:
- a) Personally insulting, targeting, or harassing individual members of governing body, staff, or persons attending the meeting.
 - b) Using obscene, profane, or defamatory language, including veiled profanity, sexual innuendo, or crude mimicry.
 - c) Using props, costumes, sound effects, or gestures perceived as to provoke, disrupt, or mock the city council, public, or persons attending the meeting.
 - d) Engage in any animated histrionics or conduct which disrupts or impedes the orderly conduct of the meeting.
 - e) The playing or use of music, videos, or other media without first having submitted to the city secretary 24 hours in advance of the meeting.
- 4) Enforcement of Decorum.
- a) The Mayor or presiding officer may issue a warning to the speaker for violation of speaker conduct rules established in this Section.
 - b) Repeated or egregious conduct with or without prior admonishment which is perceived to evoke or cause disruption in the meeting.
 - c) The Mayor or presiding officer in order to maintain decorum during the meeting may:
 - 1) Terminate speaking privileges;
 - 2) Cause the removal of the speaker from the meeting pursuant to Texas Penal Code § 42.05;
 - d) The City Council may after notice and hearing invoke the following penalties for a speaker who has violated the rules of decorum when requested by a member of the governing body to include, but not limited to, the following:

- 1) To suspend such speaker from appearing before the Council for a period of up to 6 months;
- 2) A second incident or breach of the decorum rules within twelve (12) months is a suspension of such speaker from appearing before the Council for a period of six (6) months to one (1) year;
- 3) A third suspension would be permanent, subject to reinstatement after at least eighteen (18) months from any such suspension.
- 4) Any such suspension may only be considered upon a request of a City Council Member, after notice and hearing, at a duly convened meeting.

5) Notice of the Rules of Decorum.

A printed summary of these rules shall be made available at speaker sign-in. Any and all speakers shall acknowledge at the sign-in that they have read and agree to abide by these rules.”

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SECTION 2. That all provisions of the ordinances of the City of Coppell in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance be and the same are hereby repealed and any provisions not so in conflict shall remain in force and effect.

SECTION 3. That should any sentence, paragraph, subdivision, clause, phrase or section of this ordinance be adjudged or held to be unconstitutional, illegal or invalid, the same shall not effect the validity of this ordinance as a whole, or any part or provision thereof other than the part so decided to be invalid, illegal or unconstitutional, and shall not effect the validity of the Code of Ordinances as a whole.

SECTION 4. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the City of Coppell that the sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, and phrases of this Article are severable and, if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, or section shall be declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and sections.

SECTION 5. An offense committed before the effective date of this ordinance is governed by the prior law and the provisions of the Code of Ordinances, as amended, in effect when the offense was committed, and the former law is continued in effect for this purpose.

SECTION 6. This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its passage and the publication of the caption as the law and charter in such cases provide.

DULY PASSED by the City Council of the City of Coppell, Texas, on the _____ day of _____ 2025.

APPROVED:

Wes Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:

Phoebe Stell, Interim City Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Robert E. Hager, City Attorney