



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**From:** Kent Collins, P.E., Deputy City Manager

**Date:** September 9, 2025

**Reference:** Consider approval of a Resolution Requesting that the Texas Municipal League (TML) Seek Legislation Providing Clarity for Municipal Actions to Maintain Order and Decorum During Citizen Comment Periods While Upholding Constitutional Protections; Providing an Effective Date; and Providing for Severability.

**2040:** **Sustainable City Government**

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### Introduction:

The proposed resolution requests TML support for legislation that would clarify the ability of local governments to maintain order and decorum during the required Citizen Comment period during Council Meetings.

### Background:

Public comment is a vital component of democratic governance, and the City of Coppel is committed to protect free speech and provide residents a forum to address their elected officials. Cities across Texas have experienced increasing challenges with individuals who attend public meetings solely to provoke, disrupt, or engage in conduct inconsistent with constructive civic input and feedback. The City has adopted local ordinances establishing rules of decorum for citizen comments, including prohibitions on personal attacks, obscenity, harassment, and disruptive behavior, all of which are not aligned with constructive public comment. There remains legal uncertainty regarding the authority of presiding officers and governing bodies to act when individuals abuse the citizen comment process, raising concerns for both the preservation of constitutional rights and the integrity of public meetings. This resolution seeks TML support for legislative clarity for municipalities with explicit statutory authority to maintain order and decorum during citizen comment periods while ensuring constitutional protections of free expression.

**Benefit to Community:**

The proposed resolution would provide clarity to cities regarding ensuring orderly public input, while upholding constitutional protections, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of Council meetings.

**Legal Review:**

The City Attorney prepared the resolution.

**Fiscal Impact:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

**Recommendation:**

This is a Council-initiated item.