



To: Mayor and Commissioners

From: Craig E. Leen, City Attorney for the City of Coral Gables

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "C. Leen", is written over the name of the City Attorney.

RE: Rules of Public Participation and Decorum

Date: October 20, 2015

---

The following rules of public participation and decorum, based on sections 2-68, 2-70, and 2-73 of the City Code, shall be observed by all speakers and members of the public during City Commission and City Board meetings. For purposes of these rules, the Mayor is the Chair of the City Commission and the City Attorney is the Parliamentarian.

CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

RULES OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND DECORUM  
FOR CITY COMMISSION AND BOARD MEETINGS

The following rules of public participation and decorum, based on sections 2-68, 2-70, and 2-73 of the City Code, shall be observed by all speakers and members of the public during City Commission and City Board meetings. For purposes of these rules, the Mayor is the Chair of the City Commission and the City Attorney is the Parliamentarian.

1. The City encourages public participation. Anyone who wishes to speak on a public hearing item, or other matter where comment is either required by law or permitted in the discretion of the Chair, should fill out a speaker card provided by the City Clerk. If the speaker is a lobbyist as defined by applicable law, then the appropriate registration must be filed.
2. When the speaker's name is called, the following information should be provided: name; residential or business address; and whether the person is speaking on behalf of a group or third party (if representing an organization, the speaker should indicate whether the view expressed represents an established policy or position approved by the organization, and whether the speaker is being compensated by the organization);
3. The remarks of each speaker shall be limited to no more than three minutes. The Chair has the discretion to either extend or reduce time limits where warranted; for example, where there are many speakers, in order to ensure everyone has the opportunity to speak, the time limit may be reduced to two minutes per speaker;
4. No speaker or other member of the public shall refuse to obey the orders of the Chair, or of the Commission or the Board when acting as a body;
5. The Parliamentarian may assist in interpreting and applying parliamentary law, rules of procedure, and rules of public participation and decorum.
6. All remarks shall be addressed to the Commission or Board as a body and not to any member thereof (directing remarks to or through the Chair is an appropriate way to address the Commission or Board as a body);
7. No person, other than a member of the Commission or Board, and the speaker having the floor, may be permitted to enter into any discussion without permission of the Chair. No question may be asked except through the Chair.
8. Speakers should make comments concise and to the point, and present any data or evidence for consideration to the City Commission or City Board;
9. No person may speak more than once on the same subject unless specifically granted permission by the Chair;
10. No speaker or other member of the public shall delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the Commission or Board, or disturb any person having the floor; anyone

making irrelevant, impertinent, or slanderous remarks or who becomes boisterous while addressing the Commission or Board shall not be considered orderly or decorous;

11. Anyone who becomes disorderly or who fails to confine remarks to the identified subject or business at hand shall be cautioned by the Chair and given the opportunity to conclude remarks on the subject in a decorous manner and within the designated time limit;
12. Anyone failing to comply as cautioned shall be barred from making any additional comments during the meeting by the Chair, unless permission to continue or again address the Commission or Board is granted by the majority of the Commission or Board members present;
13. If the Chair, the Commission, or the Board declares an individual out of order, the individual will be requested to relinquish the podium. If the person does not do so, the individual is subject to removal from the commission chambers or other meeting room;
14. Any person who becomes disruptive or interferes with the orderly business of the Commission or Board may be removed from the commission chambers or other meeting room for the remainder of the meeting;
15. The City's ultimate goal is to protect the ability of speakers to be able to address the Commission or Board on the identified subject or business at hand without interruption and in a manner that facilitates review of the matter by the Commission or Board.