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- I. Call to Order – Roll Call
 - II. Mayor and City Council Discussion
 - a. Review of Rules of Decorum
 - III. Adjourn

Summary of changes to Rules of Decorum

- Persons can sign up to speak on any topic related to business of the City of Festus until 2 PM on day of the regular council meeting
 - Old rules was 5 PM Wednesday for non-agenda topics, 2 PM on day of meeting for agenda topics
- States where to pick up request to speak form on line or at Clerk's office
- Adds "Remarks to the Council must be for topics related to the business of the City of Festus."
- Amends disorderly conduct to include "using obscene or disruptive gestures; using load, threatening or abusive language;
- Provides for Sergeant at arms, rather than Mayor to enforce rules
- Prohibits firearms regardless of whether person has CCW, to be consistent with Missouri law
- Changes the time each public speaker has from 5 minutes to 3 minutes

Rules of Decorum

A. Council Intent for Rules of Decorum. The City's business is conducted at City Council meetings by the elected officials of the City. All council meetings are open to the public, but the public's participation is permitted only at formal council business meetings during the time and in the manner set forth in these rules. Public participation is generally not permitted during work sessions, special meetings, and other informal meetings, although the public is encouraged to express comments in writing or other communication prior to those meetings. In order for the Council to conduct its business in a manner completely open to the public, rules of decorum are necessary. The intent of these rules is to:

1. Provide a safe and secure setting for the Council and the public to attend to the City's business.
2. Enable the Council to conduct its deliberative process without interruption in a manner that can be heard and viewed by all in attendance.
3. Ensure that the public has a full opportunity to be heard during public hearings and open comment periods of Council meetings.
4. Facilitate transparency in the conduct of Council meetings so that all persons have the opportunity to observe and hear all of the Council discussion and votes.
5. State specific rules so that all may know the rules in advance and be subject to the same rules.
6. Limit interruptions, unreasonable delay, or duplication of comments, presentations, or discussion.
7. Develop an atmosphere of civility that is respectful of diverse opinions and allows presentation of positions that vary from the position of others at the meeting without insults or intimidation.
8. Balance the need for the Council to conduct effective meetings without the meetings extending late into the night or early morning with the need to give a full opportunity for the public to be heard.
9. Facilitate Council meetings as business meetings, therefore public comments should relate to the business of the City and, as such, be addressed to the Council as a whole, which conducts the business of the City.
10. Adopt these rules of decorum as the standard for conduct of meetings of the City Council and staff of the City.

B. Rules of Decorum for the Public. During all times a meeting of the City Council is being conducted, the following rules shall apply:

1. Prior to addressing the Council during "Visitor Remarks," a person shall sign-up providing information for the ~~council~~Council's record. A request may be made by contacting the City Clerk's office prior to the meeting, and by completing a request form as provided. ~~Items that may be discussed are in two main categories: Agenda items and Non-agenda items.~~ Requests to speak ~~on Agenda and Non-agenda items~~ must be submitted to the City Clerk no later than 4-2 p.m. on the ~~Wednesday prior today of~~ the regular session meeting. Citizens may submit Request to Speak forms on-line at <https://www.cityoffestus.org/FormCenter/City-Hall-8/Request-to-Speak-at-CouncilMeeting-64>. ~~All comments are limited to 5 minutes.~~
2. Remarks to the Council must be for topics rerealted to the business of the City of Festus. ~~on~~ Comments are limited to the topic that was indicated on the request to speak form. Remarks should be addressed to the Mayor/Presiding Officer at City Council meetings. ~~Speakers shall refrain from making personal attacks, or from making repetitive or irrelevant remarks.~~
3. All remarks to the Council shall be at the podium and only after the speaker is acknowledged by the Mayor/Presiding Officer. Speakers with special needs should contact City Hall at (636) 937-4694 to request appropriate accommodations.
4. Remarks are limited to 53 minutes.
5. While in attendance at a Council meeting, no attendee shall disrupt, disturb, or otherwise impede the orderly conduct of any Council meeting by any means in a manner that obstructs the business of the meeting. Disorderly conduct includes, but is not limited to; using obscene or disruptive gestures; using loud, threatening, or abusive language; personal attacks, repetitive comments, irrelevant comments, failing to obey any lawful order of the Mayor/Presiding Officer or Sergeant-at Arms to be seated, to leave the meeting room, and/or refrain from addressing the Council; or engaging in any other conduct that disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the meeting.
6. Remarks should not be repetitive of any prior speaker but should be new in nature. Multiple parties wishing to address the same issue are encouraged to appoint a spokesperson to advocate their position. If an earlier speaker has already spoken on a speaker's chosen topic, the latter speaker is encouraged to state that they join in the remarks of the earlier speaker, or to focus on aspects not previously presented by earlier speakers.
7. No attendee shall make threats or other forms of intimidation against any person in the Council chambers or meeting room, ~~or~~ No attendee shall possess any weapon or firearm while in the Council chambers or meeting room ~~unless the attendee possesses a valid permit.~~
8. To maintain the fire code occupancy limits and allow for safe exit, unless addressing the Council or entering or leaving the Council chambers or meeting room, all persons in the audience shall remain seated in the seats provided. No person shall stand or sit in the aisles, nor shall the doorways be blocked.

9. All persons in the Council chambers or other meeting room, including, without limitation, Council members, staff, and attendees, shall silence all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices to prevent disruption at the meeting.

10. No person at any Council meeting shall be in a state of intoxication caused by the person's use of alcohol or drugs.

11. No sign shall be displayed in Council chambers in a manner that blocks the view of another person or in a manner that would violate subsection 5 above.

12. Meetings conducted at venues other than the Council chambers shall be conducted in accordance with the rules and restrictions applicable to such venue. The Mayor/Presiding Officer may interrupt any speaker who is violating these rules of decorum or disrupting a meeting.

C. Enforcement of Decorum. The Mayor/Presiding Officer of the Council, with the assistance of the sergeant-at-arms, if any attending, Chief of Police, or his/her designee, shall act as Sergeant-at-Arms, and shall be responsible for maintaining the order and decorum of meetings. The Mayor/Presiding Officer may order removed from the Council chambers, or other room in which a meeting of the Council is occurring, any person who fails to observe these rules of decorum, in the following manner:

1. The Mayor/Presiding Officer may interrupt any speaker who is violating these rules of decorum or disrupting a meeting.

2. The Mayor/Presiding Officer shall attempt to provide a verbal warning to any attendee or particular speaker that may be violating these rules of decorum, but such verbal warning shall not be required as a condition of removing such person ~~an offender~~ from the Council chambers or meeting room. The Sergeant-at-Arms is authorized to remove from the Council chambers or meeting room, any person who violates the Rules of Decorum or who obstructs the business of the Council.

3. These enforcement provisions are in addition to the authority held by the ~~sergeant~~Sergeant-at-arms-Arms or any other peace officer in attendance, to maintain order pursuant to the officer's lawful authority.

4. Any person removed from the Council chambers or meeting room shall be excluded from further attendance at the meeting from which the person has been removed, unless permission to attend is granted upon the motion adopted by a majority vote of the Council members present.

5. In addition to any other authority of the Mayor/Presiding Officer, they may call a recess during which time the members of the Council shall leave the meeting room.

6. If necessary for the safety of the Council and public, the Mayor/Presiding Officer may order the Council chambers or meeting room cleared of all attendees until the business of the Council resumes. In such event, the meeting may continue only so long as the proceedings are televised or otherwise recorded so that the proceedings of the meeting are available to the public.

7. Any staff member may request that a police officer assess any person at a Council meeting for drug and/or alcohol intoxication. A police officer may also make such an assessment based on personal observation. If, in the officer's professional opinion, the officer has a reasonable suspicion that a person in attendance at a council meeting is intoxicated through the use of alcohol, the officer may exclude that person from further attendance at that meeting. A person excluded shall be readmitted if the person excluded submits to an alcohol breath test and produces a result below .05 blood alcohol level, or if the presence of illegal drugs is detected.

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FESTUS, MISSOURI, AMENDING THE RULES OF DECORUM AND AMENDING THE REQUEST TO SPEAK FORM; ADOPTING SUCH AMENDMENTS; AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Section 77.090, RSMo, provides that the Council may prescribe and enforce such rules as may be necessary to secure the attendance of its members and the expeditious transactions of its business; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has enacted Sections 115.160 and 115.170 of the Festus City Code, setting forth rules for the conduct of the Council's business, including visitor remarks for members of the public to express their thoughts on matters relevant to the City of Festus, in accordance with Rules of Decorum established by the Council; and

WHEREAS, Section 115.160(B) of the Festus City Code provides that the Council may adopt Rules of Decorum to apply at meetings of the City Council, and may amend such Rules of Decorum by Resolution, from time to time; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to amend its Rules of Decorum to modify the procedure for members of the public to sign up to speak on matters relevant to the City of Festus.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FESTUS, MISSOURI, as follows:

SECTION I. The City Council of the City of Festus hereby approves the Rules of Decorum, in substantially the form set forth in Exhibit A, attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

SECTION II. The City Council of the City of Festus hereby approves the Request to Speak Form, in substantially the form set forth in Exhibit B, attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

SECTION III. This City Clerk is directed to publish the Rules of Decorum and Request to Speak form on the City's website, and to make copies thereof available at City Hall during regular business hours.

SECTION IV. This Resolution shall be and become in full force and effect from and after its date of passage by the City Council and the approval of the Mayor.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2026

President of the City Council

Mayor of the City of Festus

ATTEST:

City Clerk

EXHIBIT A

Rules of Decorum

A. Council Intent for Rules of Decorum. The City's business is conducted at City Council meetings by the elected officials of the City. All council meetings are open to the public, but the public's participation is permitted only at formal council business meetings during the time and in the manner set forth in these rules. Public participation is generally not permitted during work sessions, special meetings, and other informal meetings, although the public is encouraged to express comments in writing or other communication prior to those meetings. In order for the Council to conduct its business in a manner completely open to the public, rules of decorum are necessary. The intent of these rules is to:

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1. Prior to addressing the Council during "Visitor Remarks," a person shall sign-up providing information for the Council's records. A request may be made by contacting the City Clerk's office prior to the meeting, and by completing a request form as provided. Requests to speak may be submitted for any topic related to business of the City of Festus. Requests to

Speak must be submitted no later than 2 p.m. on the day of the regular Council meeting. Citizens may submit Request to Speak forms on-line at <https://www.cityoffestus.org/FormCenter/City-Hall-8/Request-to-Speak-at-CouncilMeeting-64>.

2. Remarks to the Council must be for topics related to the business of the City of Festus. Comments are limited to the topic that was indicated on the request to speak form. Remarks should be addressed to the Mayor/Presiding Officer at City Council meetings.
3. All remarks to the Council shall be at the podium and only after the speaker is acknowledged by the Mayor/Presiding Officer. Speakers with special needs should contact City Hall at (636) 937-4694 to request appropriate accommodations.
4. Remarks are limited to 5 minutes.
5. While in attendance at a Council meeting, no attendee shall disrupt, disturb, or otherwise impede the orderly conduct of any Council meeting by any means in a manner that obstructs the business of the meeting. Disorderly conduct includes, but is not limited to: using obscene or disruptive gestures; using loud, threatening, or abusive language; personal attacks; repetitive comments; irrelevant comments; failing to obey any lawful order of the Mayor/Presiding Officer, or Sergeant-at-Arms to be seated, to leave the meeting room, and/or refrain from addressing the Council; or engaging in any other conduct that disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the meeting.
6. Remarks should not be repetitive of any prior speaker but should be new in nature. Multiple parties wishing to address the same issue are encouraged to appoint a spokesperson to advocate their position. If an earlier speaker has already spoken on a speaker's chosen topic, the latter speaker is encouraged to state that they join in the remarks of the earlier
7. No attendee shall make threats or other forms of intimidation against any person in the Council chambers or meeting room. No attendee shall possess any weapon or firearm while in the Council chambers or meeting room.
8. To maintain the fire code occupancy limits and allow for safe exit, unless addressing the Council or entering or leaving the Council chambers or meeting room, all persons in the audience shall remain seated in the seats provided. No person shall stand or sit in the aisles, nor shall the doorways be blocked.
9. All persons in the Council chambers or other meeting room, including, without limitation, Council members, staff, and attendees, shall silence all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices to prevent disruption at the meeting.
10. No person at any Council meeting shall be in a state of intoxication caused by the person's use of alcohol or drugs.
11. No sign shall be displayed in Council chambers in a manner that blocks the view of another person or in a manner that would violate subsection 5 above.
12. Meetings conducted at venues other than the Council chambers shall be conducted in accordance with the rules and restrictions applicable to such venue.

C. Enforcement of Decorum. The Chief of Police, or his/her designee, shall act as Sergeant-at-Arms, and shall be responsible for maintaining the order and decorum of meetings in the following manner:

1. The Mayor/Presiding Officer may interrupt any person who is violating these rules of decorum or disrupting a meeting.
2. The Mayor/Presiding Officer shall attempt to provide a verbal warning to any person that may be violating these rules of decorum, but such verbal warning shall not be required as a condition of removing such person from the Council chambers or meeting room. The Sergeant-at-Arms is authorized to remove from the Council chambers or meeting room, any person who violates the Rules of Decorum or who obstructs the business of the Council.
3. These enforcement provisions are in addition to the authority held by the Sergeant-at-Arms or any other peace officer in attendance, to maintain order pursuant to the officer's lawful authority.
4. Any person removed from the Council chambers or meeting room shall be excluded from further attendance at the meeting from which the person has been removed, unless permission to attend is granted upon the motion adopted by a majority vote of the Council members present.
5. In addition to any other authority of the Mayor/Presiding Officer, they may call a recess during which time the members of the Council shall leave the meeting room.
6. If necessary for the safety of the Council and public, the Mayor/Presiding Officer may order the Council chambers or meeting room cleared of all attendees until the business of the Council resumes. In such event, the meeting may continue only so long as the proceedings are televised or otherwise recorded so that the proceedings of the meeting are available to the public.
7. Any staff member may request that a police officer assess any person at a Council meeting for drug and/or alcohol intoxication. A police officer may also make such an assessment based on personal observation. If, in the officer's professional opinion, the officer has a reasonable suspicion that a person in attendance at a council meeting is intoxicated through the use of alcohol or drugs, the officer may exclude that person from further attendance at that meeting. A person excluded shall be readmitted if the person excluded submits to an alcohol breath test and produces a result below .05 blood alcohol level, or if the presence of illegal drugs is detected.

EXHIBIT B

City of Festus, Missouri Request to Speak Form

Setting an Appointment

Residents wishing to speak to the City Council on matters relevant to business of the City of Festus during “Visitor Remarks” must register in advance. Requests to speak on any topic related to business of the City of Festus must be submitted no later than 2 p.m. on the day of the regular Council meeting.

Rules of Decorum at the Council Meeting

During Public Comment, The names of those persons who have submitted a complete request to speak will be called. When you are called, please step to the lectern, state your name and address, and appropriate comments. Please consult the Rules of Decorum for guidance:

<https://www.festusmo.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1023/Rules-of-Decorum>

Name	Email Address	
Address		
City	State	Zip
Phone Number	Fax Number	
Agenda or Non-Agenda Topic Please indicate if you wish to speak about an Agenda or Non-Agenda topic.		
Topic you wish to speak about:		

Public Information

Only name and address of request will appear publicly. Email and phone numbers will be redacted.

☐ Receive an email copy of this form.

Email address

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This field is not part of the form submission.

Draft Language — Total Time Cap and Overflow Provisions

I've been asked a few times whether a maximum time limit could be established for public comment periods. The language below is a rough workup of what a time cap and overflow program could look like if Council was interested in putting it into the rules of decorum. This also assumes a modification of the speaker's time to 3 minutes to allow 20 or so comments within an hour.

-Ben

1. Time for Individual Remarks. Remarks are limited to three (3) minutes per speaker. Speaking time may not be transferred, donated, yielded, or shared between speakers. No person shall address the Council more than once during the Visitor Remarks period of any single meeting. The City Clerk shall operate a timing device positioned so that the remaining time is visible to the speaker.

2. Total Time for Visitor Remarks. The Visitor Remarks period shall not exceed sixty (60) minutes at any regular session meeting. Speakers shall be called in the order in which the City Clerk received their Request to Speak forms.

- If the sixty (60) minute period expires before all persons who timely submitted a Request to Speak have been heard, the Mayor/Presiding Officer shall close the Visitor Remarks period and shall cause the names of the persons not reached to be read into the record in the order in which they would have been called.
- By motion adopted by a majority vote of the Council members present, the Council may extend the Visitor Remarks period by a stated additional period of time, or may reopen the Visitor Remarks period after the remaining items on the agenda have been concluded. Any extension or reopening under this subsection shall be granted or denied without regard to the identity of the remaining speakers or the subject or viewpoint of their anticipated remarks.

3. Carryover of Speakers Not Reached. A person who timely submitted a Request to Speak and who was not reached before the close of the Visitor Remarks period shall, without submitting a new request, be placed at the head of the speakers' list for the next regular session meeting in the same relative order, and shall be called before persons submitting requests for that meeting. A person carried over under this subsection may withdraw the request by notifying the City Clerk.

4. Written Comments. Nothing in this section limits the right of any person to submit written comments to the Council. Written comments received by the City Clerk no later than 2 p.m. on the day of a regular session meeting shall be distributed to each member of the Council before the meeting and subsequently summarized for insertion into the minutes in the same manner as oral comments.

5. Public Hearings Not Affected. This section governs the Visitor Remarks period only. It does not apply to any public hearing required by statute, ordinance, or the Constitution.

Suggestions from Councilman Belleville

I want to make a suggestion for our City Council Meeting's Rules of Decorum.

A slight adjustment/addition to;

CURRENT

#2. Enable the Council to conduct its deliberative process without interruption in a manner that can be heard and viewed by all in attendance.

It seems that everyone is very angry at every meeting. However, the visitors should show some respect to the proceedings. Several residents have reached out to me saying things have gotten out of hand during our meetings. I just want to add the following;

#2. (continued) If anyone shouts out to disrupt or talks over a council member who is speaking, they get 1 warning. On the 2nd warning, they will be asked to move into the outer lobby and can stay there to listen to the remainder of the meeting. Failure to do so, they will be asked to leave the council meeting.

Regarding visitor's comments. Can we give actual Festus residents 1st priority to speak. Then anyone with a Festus mailing address. Lastly the out-of-town protesters.