



City of Gainesville

Office of Ed Book
City Commissioner District II

February 7th, 2023

Re: 2023-09 Community Input Procedure

Mayor and City Commissioners,

This item was designed with an overall goal of improving community input and creating an environment that builds better relationships between citizens and City leadership and increases civility.

This aligns with Gainesville’s mission. ***“Gainesville’s mission is to build community. We partner and engage with our neighbors and community builders. This helps us provide responsive services that are financially responsible and neighbor-focused.”***

Much of the feedback of this agenda item appeared to focus on just “citizen comments” at publicly noticed meetings, however, this agenda item is much broader in scope.

Alphabetically Listed:

- Access and Accommodation
 - Ensure that citizens are informed on accessibility, accommodations, and alternative language and interpretation services for publicly noticed meetings.
 - Components are lobby signage, website access ease, and knowledgeable staff.
 - Any non-English speaker using a translator would receive 6 minutes to speak during public comment.
- Agenda Rule Compliance
 - Comply with agenda back-up and items in accordance with already established rules.
 - Agenda items that do not comply with rules will be rescheduled.
- City Commission Email Response
 - *In progress.* A plan to ensure that emails to the whole City Commission either receive a response from a CC member and/or are forwarded to the appropriate Charter officer.
 - This ensures that emails to the CC body receive at least one direct response in most cases.
- City Hall Lobby Customer Service
 - *In progress.* Redesign with front line City staff member in the lobby to assist visitors.
 - Allow security to focus on safety specifically.



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- Email Access Enhancement
 - Email links under City Commissioners pages – *Exists Now* similar to County Commission capabilities.
 - *Completed.* Archived emails link displayed on new website on “Public Records” page.
- General Public Comment at City Commission meetings
 - Many citizens are unable to attend during day / business hours and comment then.
 - Evening agenda items are those required by Statute.
 - An additional General public comment period would be allowed if there’s an evening session.
- MyGNV
 - Continue promoting.
 - Add a compliment section more prominently on the MyGNV app.
- Pooling of Public Comment Time
 - Individuals or groups may designate a spokesperson on their behalf. Speaking time is 1 minute for each additional speaker up to a maximum of ten minutes.
- Printed Rules of Engagement at Publicly Noticed Meetings
 - Have copies of Neighborhood Guide to City Commission Meetings available at each meeting.
 - Ensure availability on the Public Meeting Participation page www.gainesvillefl.gov/files/assets/public/city-commission/documents/neighbors-guide-to-city-meetings.pdf
 - This helps inform new attendees of the process, can assist in time management and potentially avoids repeated verbal reminders of these rules.
- Digital Monitors in Lobbies
 - Listing the Weeks Events and publicly noticed meetings in prominent front line positions
 - Examples: City Hall, GRU, and Thomas Center lobbies
- Recording Public Meetings
 - Record and stream public meetings if at all possible.
- Role Modeling and Civility
 - Setting the example for respectful discourse.
- Sign in cards for City Commission speakers
 - Reduce information needed to only information essential for agenda/speaker management.
- Standing Committees Engagement
 - In process. A Public Safety standing committee has been created.
 - Two other ad-hoc committees recently ended.



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- This allows for more focused and additional engagement on specific topics by citizens.
- Website Enhancement - Organizational chart with hyperlinks to Departments

Sources:

Alachua County Website

City Commission Resolution 210548 – December 2021

City Commission Resolution 180943 – December 2019

City of Gainesville Website

Gainesville Charter 2.06

Memorandum titled “City Commission Rules – Civility and the First Amendment” – August 6 2019

Policy Program Preliminary Research & Analysis
Deferral and Pooling of Public Comment Time – February 2 2023

Policy Program Preliminary Research & Analysis
Public Meeting Improvement Research, Supplemental – February 1 2023

Policy Program Preliminary Research & Analysis
Improving Communication Opportunities between the Commission and the
Community - Updated July 25 2019

Robert’s Rules of Orders

Written and verbal feedback to City Commission – January-February 2022

Sincerely,

Ed Book
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