

ORDINANCE NO. 19-M-28

AN ORDINANCE BY THE CITY OF SCHERTZ AUTHORIZING AND AMENDING CITY COUNCIL RULES OF CONDUCT AND PROCEDURE; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT WITH THIS ORDINANCE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Schertz has previously adopted Rules of Conduct and Procedure for the conduct of meetings of the City Council 18-M-30; and

WHEREAS, the City Council discussed the following changes at their meeting of October 22, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that it is in the best interest of the City to amend, update, and clarify the Rules of Conduct and Procedure as they relate to HB 2840 which became effective September 1, 2019.

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

Section 1. That the City Council Rules of Conduct and Procedure are amended as follows:

Article 12 Citizens' Rights

12.1 Addressing the Council. Any person desiring to address the Council by oral communication shall first secure the permission of the presiding officer.

12.2 Manner of Addressing the Council – Time Limit. Each person addressing the Council shall speak at the podium into the microphone (or at another designated location), shall give his/her name and address in an audible tone of voice for the record, and, unless further time is granted by the Council, shall, subject to Section 12.4 below, limit his/her remarks to three (3) minutes or less. A person who addresses the Council through a translator will limit his/her remarks to six (6) minutes or less. All remarks shall be addressed to the Council as a body, and not to any individual member thereof. No person, other than members of the Council or City staff (when requested by the presiding officer) and the person having the floor, shall be permitted to enter into any discussion, either directly or through the members of the Council, unless requested or approved by the presiding officer. No questions shall be asked the Councilmembers, except through the presiding officer. Responses to questions may be limited as required by State law.

12.3 Personal and Slanderous Remarks. Any person making personal, impertinent, or slanderous remarks, or who shall become boisterous, either while addressing the Council or otherwise while in attendance at a Council meeting, may be requested to leave the meeting, pursuant to Article 10 of these Rules, and may be removed from the meeting if necessary for the conduct of the remainder of the meeting. This is not intended to prohibit public criticism of the Council, including criticism of any act, omission, policy, procedure, program, or service unless such is otherwise prohibited by law.

12.4 Public Hearings. After being recognized by the presiding officer, interested persons, or their authorized representatives, may address the Council with respect to the subject matter of a public hearing being conducted. The presiding officer may establish procedures at a public hearing to limit the amount of time (which, unless modified by the presiding officer, shall be as set forth in Section 12.2 above) interested persons may speak, subject to the Councilmembers' right to appeal the presiding officer's ruling pursuant to Section 9.6. Subject to modification by the presiding officer, and subject to the Councilmembers' right of appeal pursuant to Section 9.6, the normal order of a public hearing is as follows: (i) the opening of the hearing and the establishment, if any, of a modified public hearing procedure by the presiding officer; (ii) address to the Council by any interested person(s); (iii) discussion by the Mayor and Councilmembers, including requests for information from City staff or any person(s) who addressed the Council; and (iv) action by the Council, if any is posted on the agenda relating to the hearing.

12.5 Written Communications. Interested persons, or their authorized representatives, may address the Council by written communication in regard to any matter concerning the City's business or over which the Council has control at any time by direct mail or by addressing the City Secretary, who shall, on the request of the writer, distribute copies to the Councilmembers.

12.6 Hearing of Residents. There shall be included on the agenda of each City Council meeting, prior to any items listed on the agenda for action to be taken, an item labeled "Hearing of Residents". After being recognized by the presiding officer, members of the public (giving precedence to residents of the City) may address the Council on items on or not on the agenda at that time, providing they have completed the "Hearing of Residents" form, unless authorized by the presiding officer. The form shall be made available to persons wishing to address the Council prior to the calling of the meeting to order and such completed form shall be made available to the presiding officer prior to the calling of the meeting to order. The persons signed up for "Hearing of Residents" must speak during the "Hearing of Residents" portion of the meeting. Councilmembers and members of City staff may not discuss unpasted items nor take any action thereon other than to (1) make a statement of factual information, (2) make a statement of existing City policy, or (3) discuss placing the item on a future agenda. Persons speaking shall be subject to the time limits set forth in Section 12.2, unless otherwise authorized by the presiding officer.

Section 2. The recitals contained in the preamble hereof are hereby found to be true, and such recitals are hereby made a part of this Ordinance for all purposes and are adopted as a part of the judgment and findings of the Council.

Section 3. All ordinances and codes, or parts thereof, which are in conflict or inconsistent with any provision of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict, and the provisions of this Ordinance shall be and remain controlling as to the matters resolved herein.

Section 4. This Ordinance shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas and the United States of America.

Section 5. If any provision of this Ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance shall be held to be invalid, the remainder of this Ordinance and the application of such provision to other persons and circumstances shall nevertheless be valid, and the City hereby declares that this Ordinance would have been enacted without such invalid provision.

Section 6. It is officially found, determined, and declared that the meeting at which this Ordinance is adopted was open to the public and public notice of the time, place, and subject matter of the public business to be considered at such meeting, including this Ordinance, was given, all as required by Chapter 551, as amended, Texas Government Code.

Section 7. This Ordinance shall be effective upon the date of final adoption hereof and any publication required by law.

PASSED ON FIRST READING AND FINAL READING, the 22ND day of October 2019.

Mayor, Michael R. Carpenter

ATTEST:

City Secretary, Brenda Dennis

(Seal of City)