

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-279

**AMENDING CHAPTER 2 – ADMINISTRATION
TO UPDATE SECTION 2-111 IN ITS ENTIRETY**

WHEREAS, the City of Dothan Board of Commissioners desires to update the policy for decorum and public participation during City Commission meetings.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of the City of Dothan, Alabama, as follows;

Section 1. That Chapter 2 – Administration, Article II. – Mayor/Commissioners/City Manager, Division 3. – Commission, Section 2-111 is hereby amended and replaced in its entirety as follows:

ARTICLE II. – MAYOR/COMMISSIONERS/CITY MANAGER

DIVISION 3. – COMMISSION

Section 2-111. Policy for Decorum and Public Participation during Meetings of the City Commission.

(a) Purpose.

- (1) The purpose of the City of Dothan commission and administrative meetings is to conduct the business of the City of Dothan. Dothan residents are encouraged to attend and participate. To preserve order and ensure that the meetings are efficiently conducted, this section sets forth the decorum policy for individuals attending the meetings as either a spectator or to address the commission as set out below. Public participation in commission meetings shall be for the purpose of allowing Dothan residents to comment on agenda items or any city business. Public participation shall not serve as a forum for debate with the commission. Every petition, communication or address to the commission at either a public hearing or during privileges of the floor shall be in respectful language.
- (2) Residents are also encouraged to address the commission or individual commissioners in writing at any time. Residents who wish to have their written comments included in the meeting materials and made a part of the record of the meeting may do so by filing eight copies thereof with the city clerk by 5:00 p.m. on Monday prior to the regular meeting date. Written comments must relate to an issue on which the commission would have authority to act if brought forth as an agenda item.

(b) General Decorum.

- (1) The mayor is responsible for overseeing public participation and decorum, as well as the enforcement of the procedures and rules set forth in this section during commission meetings.
- (2) The city manager is responsible for overseeing public participation and decorum, as well as the enforcement of the procedures and rules set forth in this section during administrative meetings.
- (3) During commission meetings, no person, except the mayor, commissioners, or city officials may address the commission unless permission is first granted by the mayor.
- (4) During administrative meetings, no person except the city manager, mayor, commissioners, or city officials may address the commission unless permission is first granted by the city manager.

(5) Persons attending commission or administrative meetings will not be allowed to:

- a. Interrupt speakers or engage in any behavior that disrupts the meeting including but not limited to applause, cheers, jeers, yelling, shouting, etc.
- b. Engage in behavior that intimidates others or incites violence or disorder.
- c. Display signs, placards, banners, etc. from the audience.

(c) Public Participation.

(1) There are three opportunities for public participation in City of Dothan commission and administrative meetings: public hearings, comment on agenda items, and privileges of the floor to comment on non-agenda city business.

(2) Procedures for Public Participation.

- a. Any person wishing to speak at a public hearing may state their intent to do so by raising their hand when the mayor asks if there is anyone wishing to speak on that matter.
- b. Any resident wishing to speak on agenda items may state their intent to do so by submitting a written request to comment on an agenda item to the city clerk by 5:00 p.m. on Monday prior to the regular meeting date. The request shall include the speaker's name, address and the agenda item to be addressed. Any person wishing to speak on behalf of a group shall so-indicate and shall identify the name and address of the group or organization.
- c. Any resident wishing to speak on an issue of city business that is not on the agenda may state their intent by submitting a written request for privileges of the floor to the city clerk by 5:00 p.m. on Monday prior to the regular meeting date. The request shall include the speaker's name, address, and the topic to be addressed. Any person wishing to speak on behalf of a group shall so-indicate and shall identify the name and address of the group or organization. Comments are limited to issues on which the commission would have authority to act if brought forth as an agenda item. The maximum number of speakers who will be allowed to speak on non-agenda items is five.

(3) Rules for Public Participation.

- a. To comment on an agenda item or to address the commission on a non-agenda item during privileges of the floor, the speaker must be a resident of the city of Dothan.
- b. There shall be a time limit for each individual speaker of three minutes.
- c. No speaker's time shall be extended except with the consent of a majority of the commission members present.
- d. Speakers are not permitted to donate time to other speakers.
- e. Each speaker shall clearly state his or her name, address, and topic and shall remain at the podium while addressing the commission.
- f. Remarks shall be addressed directly to the commission and not to staff, the audience, or the media.
- g. There shall be no comment on a matter that has already been the subject of a previous public hearing where no final vote has been taken.

- h. There shall be no additional comment, after the conclusion of a public hearing, on a matter for which a public hearing is scheduled during the same meeting.
- i. Once an individual or organization addresses the commission on a particular subject, that individual or organization may not address the commission on the same particular subject within three months of the first address, unless permitted by the city manager.
- j. Persons appearing before the commission will not be allowed to:
 - 1. Campaign for public office.
 - 2. Promote private business ventures.
 - 3. Use profanity or vulgar language or gestures.
 - 4. Use language which insults or demeans any person.
 - 5. Make statements unrelated to the current public hearing or agenda item, or unrelated to the non-agenda city business issue that they signed up to speak on.
 - 6. Address the commission on non-agenda items unrelated to city business or on which the commission would not have authority to act if brought forth as an agenda item.
 - 7. Make unduly repetitive statements.
 - 8. Refuse to stop talking after the allotted time has expired.
 - 9. Address the commission on a matter currently pending before a court, quasi-judicial body, board, or administrative forum, where the speaker is a party or the representative of a party involved therein.

(4) Enforcement and Appeal.

- a. The mayor shall be responsible for preserving order and decorum and for enforcing these rules during commission meetings. Any speaker who fails to comply with the directive of the mayor to comply with these rules may be held by the mayor to be out of order and ordered to leave the speaker's podium. The mayor may order the expulsion of any person who fails to comply with the mayor's directive or who engages in disruptive behavior. Any person so expelled shall not be readmitted for the remainder of the meeting from which he/she was expelled.
- b. The city manager shall be responsible for preserving order and decorum and for enforcing these rules during administrative meetings. Any speaker who fails to comply with the directive of the city manager to comply with these rules may be held by the city manager to be out of order and ordered to leave the speaker's podium. The city manager may order the expulsion of any person who fails to comply with the city manager's directive or who engages in disruptive behavior. Any person so expelled shall not be readmitted for the remainder of the meeting from which he/she was expelled.
- c. Any person who has been so expelled and who within five years again engages in behavior justifying expulsion may be barred from speaking at future commission and administrative meetings for a specified and reasonable period of time not to exceed six months, or upon a third or subsequent expulsion for a period not to exceed one year.

- d. The city attorney shall notify the person so barred in writing. Said notice shall be mailed to the person's residence. Service of said notice may also be accomplished by sending it to a known email address of the person or by personal service upon them. The notice shall state the reasons for the bar and the procedure for filing an appeal.
- e. A person so barred may file an appeal with the city clerk within seven business days of the notice thereof. The appeal shall include the person's name, address, and telephone number or email address, and shall state the reason why the bar from speaking should be set aside or modified. The appeal will be placed on the next commission agenda for hearing. The person so barred shall have the opportunity to address the commission and present argument as to why the bar from speaking should be set aside or modified. The commission shall then vote on whether the bar from speaking at commission and administrative meetings should be set aside, modified, or upheld.

Section 2. That the City Clerk of the City of Dothan is hereby ordered and directed to cause this ordinance to be published.

Section 3. That this ordinance and the rules, regulations, provisions, requirements, orders and matters established and adopted hereby shall take effect and be in full force and effect immediately from and after the date of its final passage and adoption.

PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED ON OCTOBER 21, 2025.

ATTEST:

Wendy Shiver
City Clerk

[Signature]
Mayor

Vivian K. Daniels
Associate Commissioner District 1

Phillip P. Hubert
Associate Commissioner District 2

[Signature]
Associate Commissioner District 3

[Signature]
Associate Commissioner District 4

[Signature]
Associate Commissioner District 5

[Signature]
Associate Commissioner District 6

BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS

I hereby certify that the above Ordinance was published in THE DOTHAN EAGLE, a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Dothan, Alabama, on October 25, 2025.

Wendy Shiver
Wendy Shiver
City Clerk