

# **CITY OF WATSONVILLE RULES OF CIVILITY AND DECORUM FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS**

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## **1.0 PURPOSE AND APPLICATION**

- 1.1 The purpose of the City of Watsonville Rules of Civility and Decorum (the “Rules”) is to promote mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct in all public meetings. The Rules are not intended to deprive any person of their rights to public participation under applicable law.
- 1.2 The Rules shall apply to any public meeting of any City Council, commission, committee, board, or other public body.

## **2.0 CONDUCT AT PUBLIC MEETINGS**

- 2.1 No person attending a public meeting, in person or virtually, shall engage in disorderly, disruptive, disturbing, delaying, or boisterous conduct that substantially interrupts, delays, or disturbs the peace and good order of the public meeting, including but not limited to, yelling, handclapping, stomping of feet, whistling, use of threatening language, or use of profane language, such that the governing body is precluded from conducting business.
- 2.2 No person attending a public meeting shall make public comments or remarks to the City Council, commission, committee, board, or other public body holding the meeting, that pertain solely to matters outside the subject matter jurisdiction of the Council, commission, committee, board, or other public body holding the meeting.

## **3.0 ENFORCEMENT**

- 3.1 The Presiding Officer of the City Council, commission, committee, board, or other public body holding the meeting (“Presiding Officer”), or a designee of the Presiding Officer, may issue a warning to any member of the public violating these Rules and ask that the person cease all conduct in violation of the Rules. If present, the City Attorney or a designee of the City Attorney (“City Attorney”) may also issue a warning under these Rules.
- 3.2 If, after receiving a warning of conduct violating these Rules, a member of the public persists in conduct violating these Rules, the Presiding Officer or City Attorney may issue further orders against the violating member of the public, consistent with State law.
- 3.3 The Presiding Officer or City Attorney’s further orders may include instructing the violating member of the public to cease their comment, using videoconferencing software or other technology to mute audio and/

or hide video of the violating member of the public, and/or instructing the violating member of the public to leave the meeting.

- 3.4 These Rules do not address enforcement against public officials sitting on the City Council, commission, committee, board, or other public body during a meeting of such public body. Enforcement against elected and appointed public officials shall be as determined by the City Council.

#### 4.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 4.1 The procedures described in these Rules are not exclusive, and shall not preclude other rights, remedies, and procedures authorized by federal, state, or local law.
- 4.2 A breach of these Rules shall in no event be construed to invalidate any act taken by the City Council, commission, committee, board, or other public body holding the meeting at which a violation occurred, or to otherwise limit the authority of the Presiding Officer, the City Attorney, or their designees.