

ORDINANCE NO. 2061

**ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 2-36 OF THE NORTHPORT MUNICIPAL CODE
PERTAINING TO ADDRESSING THE CITY COUNCIL**

WHEREAS, the Open Meetings Law grants citizens the right to be present at meetings of the City Council but does not grant citizens an absolute right to express their views at public meetings (See Opinion of the Attorney General 98-00134); and

WHEREAS, Citizens may be allowed to express their views at meetings of the City Council within the guidelines and restrictions established by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City wishes to allow public comment during City Council meetings, but do so in a constructive manner; and


WHEREAS, the City wishes to amend Section 2-36, pertaining to addressing the City Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTHPORT, ALABAMA AS FOLLOWS:

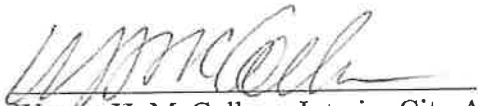
1. That Section 2-36 of the Northport Municipal Code is hereby amended as set forth in Exhibit "A" which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as if fully set out verbatim.
2. That this Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption and publication.

ORDAINED this the 14th day of December, 2020.


**CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF NORTHPORT**

BY: 
Jeff Hogg, Its President


ATTEST:


Warren H. McCollum, Interim City Administrator

APPROVED this the 14th day of December, 2020.


Bobby Herndon, Mayor

I hereby certify that the above and foregoing Ordinance was published on December 23, 2020 in the Northport Gazette, a newspaper of general circulation published in the City of Northport.


Warren H. McCollum, Interim City Administrator

1st Reading: November 16, 2020
By: Bobo
2nd Reading: December 14, 2020
Motion By: Bobo
Second By: Dykes
Publication: December 23, 2020

EXHIBIT “A”

Sec. 2-36. - Addressing the council.

- (a) No city official, employee, or staff member shall represent or appear for any other person in any matter pending before the council unless recognized by the council for such purpose.
- (b) No person, not a member of the council, shall be allowed to address the council while in session ~~until recognized to do so by the council president~~ unless placed on the printed Council Agenda under the Public Comment section using the procedures set out below:
 - 1. Any individual wishing to address the City Council shall submit the request form provided at City Hall, or on the City website, on or before noon on the Wednesday prior to the regular Council meeting so that it is received by the City Administrator on or before this deadline.
 - 2. The individual requesting to appear before the Council shall provide sufficient contact information so that the City may contact the individual to determine if the issue of concern may be resolved prior to the Council meeting. If not resolved prior to the Council meeting, the City can have the appropriate Department Head(s) at the Council meeting.
 - 3. The individual will be allowed to speak only on the issue described in the submitted request form.
 - 4. If sufficient information is not provided to the City by the applicant on the request form it will be returned to the individual with the deficiencies noted. Once corrected, the individual will be included on the Council Agenda at a later meeting.
 - 5. The comments shall be limited to approximately three minutes. There shall be no more than two speakers on the same subject to avoid repetition. If a group selects one spokesperson for the entire group, that spokesperson will be allowed additional time to address the City Council.
 - 6. The individual should address the Elected Officials as a group and not any specific Elected Official or any specific person in the audience.
 - 7. No personnel issues, complaints about City employees or personal issues with any individual is appropriate at a City Council meeting and will not be discussed in a public setting. Any item of this nature should be directed in private to the City Administrator.
 - 8. City employees shall not address the Council concerning any personnel or employment issues. These should be addressed through the employee's chain of command.
 - 9. There are other ways rather than addressing the Council at a Council meeting that citizens can let their thoughts be known. This would include speaking with City Officials either in person or by telephone, or by sending letters or emails. Often these forms of communication are more effective than briefly addressing the City Council about a matter at a City Council meeting. There is a form on the City web site for you to forward any concerns which you may have to any elected official, the City Administrator, the City Attorney, or a combination of all these individuals in a group email.
- (c) The council president, at his discretion, may call upon any person present to address the council or to discuss any matter at issue.