

From: [Freddie Park Wheeler](#)
To: [City Council](#); [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Public Comments On Items Not On The Agenda
Date: Sunday, October 10, 2021 6:28:49 PM

Dear Mayor Fligor, Vice Mayor Enander and Council Members Lee Eng, Meadows and Weinberg,

I wrote to you in February 2021 when supporters of Keenan Moos were calling to make public comments on items not on the agenda. These comments consumed an inordinate amount of time at the beginning of Council Meetings for approximately six months. The time required for these comments forced people who had business before the Council or were attending for items on the agenda to wait until much later in the evening than was reasonable, sometimes until 1:00am the next morning, before their item was taken up for consideration. It became apparent that the Council Meetings were completely out of control.

At that time I suggested that you limit the amount of time for public comments on items not on the agenda to 1/2 hour at the beginning of the meeting and then hear any remaining comments at the end of the meeting.

Had you enacted this policy you would have been able to maintain control over the Council Meetings. And you would have allowed people with business before the Council to be heard at a reasonable hour. Unfortunately it seemed that the majority of the Council were intent on encouraging the commentary no matter how much time it consumed rather than establishing control of the meetings.

I bring this to your attention again because other governmental bodies have enacted similar policies in order to maintain control of their meetings and prevent them from being hijacked by multiple speakers recruited to comment.

The City of Sunnyvale has enacted such a policy:

“ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

This category provides an opportunity for members of the public to address the City Council on items not listed on the agenda and is limited to 15 minutes (may be extended or continued after the public hearings/general business section of the agenda at the discretion of the Mayor) with a maximum of up to three minutes per speaker.”

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e38a3dd6f9db304821e8e5e/t/6064bf72cb445442e8fed7bd/1617215346436/MPSP_CC_StudySession_Agenda.pdf

Very recently VTA enacted this policy in response to ongoing disruptions of their meetings.

> <https://sanjosespotlight.com/vta-considers-limiting-public-comments-upsetting-san-jose-advocates-public-transit-transportation/>

I believe enacting this policy would allow future mayors to maintain control of Council Meetings and ensure that people with business before the Council are treated with the respect they are due which includes having their items heard at a reasonable hour. In addition, it will prevent city staff who are required to attend for items on the agenda from spending their valuable time waiting for the items to be brought up for consideration.

I respectfully request that you reconsider enacting such a policy in order to maintain control of Council Meetings and prevent public comments on items not on the agenda from disrupting future meetings.

Sincerely,

Freddie Wheeler

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)