

Resolution No. 823-23

Introduced in Council:

Adopted by Council:

June 5, 2023

Introduced by:

Referred to:

**Chelsea Steelhammer, Beth Kerns,
Frank Annie, Joe Solomon, Shannon Snodgrass**

Ordinance & Rules

1 **Resolution No. 823-23** - Amending Rule No. 22 of the Rules of Council, relating to
2 increasing public participation at council meetings.

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4 WHEREAS, the City of Charleston values public participation in the democratic
5 process; and

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7 WHEREAS, the current limit of 5 speakers and total time allotment of 10 minutes
8 for public speakers at Charleston City Council meetings may not provide sufficient
9 opportunity for public input; and

10
11 WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to increase the number of allotted public
12 speakers as well as time allotted for public speakers at council meetings to allow for
13 greater public participation.

14
15 **Now, therefore, be it Resolved by the Council of the City of Charleston, West**
16 **Virginia:**

17
18 That Rule No. 22 of the Rules of Council be amended and reenacted to read as follows:

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20 **Rule No. 22. - Members of the public speaking before city council.**

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22 (a) A member of council may ask the floor for a member of the public to speak
23 before council, which said motion is nondebatabile. Upon such request, the presiding
24 officer shall inquire of the councilmember the subject matter of the inquiry and ask council
25 if there is any objection to the person speaking, and, if an objection is raised, then council,
26 by majority vote, shall determine whether or not the person shall be allowed to address
27 council. Any person addressing council shall be allowed no more than five minutes to
28 make remarks, unless by unanimous consent council allows a longer period of time.

29 (b) A maximum of ~~ten~~ thirty minutes shall be set aside at the outset of each meeting
30 of the council to permit members of the public, without leave of council, to address the
31 council on any matter pertaining to the city's business. Any member of the public wishing
32 to address the council shall first register with the clerk of the city council, or the clerk's
33 designated representative for such purpose, in the council's chambers not earlier than 15

34 minutes before the beginning of each meeting setting forth his or her name, the group, if
35 any, on whose behalf he or she wishes to speak, and the subject matter which he or she
36 wishes to address: Provided, that if the presiding officer exercises the authority contained
37 in rule 1(c) to hold a meeting electronically, then the city clerk may provide for an extended
38 and different period of time and manner for public speakers to sign up that will allow for
39 an efficient meeting of council and create ample opportunity for the public to participate,
40 as long as that period of time and manner are included on the publicly posted agenda for
41 the meeting. If more than ~~one person registers~~ six people register to address council,
42 such persons shall be allocated time on a prorated basis, and shall be permitted to speak
43 only for the time allotted. In no event shall more than ~~five~~ fifteen people be permitted to
44 address the council under this rule 22(b). Nothing in this rule 22(b) shall affect the ability
45 of a member of council to request that a member of the public be allowed to speak
46 pursuant to rule 22(a).