



**City Manager's Office**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Rome City Commissioners  
**From:** Kelley Ledford, Director of Strategic Initiatives  
**Date:** March 9, 2026  
**Re:** Proposed Adjustment to Public Comment Order in Commission Meetings

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**Purpose:**

To recommend a change in the order of public comments during City Commission meetings to improve efficiency and maintain focus on agenda priorities.

**Recommendation:**

I propose the following structure for public comment periods:

1. Guests or members of the public speaking on items listed on the evening's agenda should be scheduled at the beginning of the meeting, immediately following any ceremonial items and approval of minutes.
2. General public comments on topics not included on the agenda should be scheduled at the end of the meeting, after all official business has been addressed.

**Additional Considerations:**

- The Commission may wish to consider establishing a total time limit for the general public comment period at the end of the meeting.
- The Commission may also consider requiring that individuals speaking—whether on agenda items or during general public comment—be residents of the City or owners of businesses located within the City limits. This approach would help ensure that public comment time is focused on those directly affected by City policies and decisions. This requirement would not, however, apply to public hearings such as rezonings, special use permits, or similar matters where broader participation may be necessary.

**Rationale:**

- Efficiency: Prioritizing agenda-related comments early ensures that discussions relevant to decision-making occur before deliberation.
- Focus: Keeps the meeting aligned with its primary purpose—addressing scheduled business—while still providing an opportunity for broader community input.
- Time Management: Reduces delays in addressing critical items and allows commissioners to allocate appropriate time for non-agenda topics without impacting core business.