



Memorandum

To: Town Council
From: Thomas Dansie, Town Manager
Date: September 4, 2026
Re: Resolution 2026-10: Public Body Code of Conduct, Rules of Procedure

Executive Summary

The Town of Springdale has adopted various iterations of a Conduct Policy, Rules of Procedure, and Meeting Protocol for Elected Officials and Public Bodies. The Town Council held a [work session in April](#) to discuss potential changes to the meeting protocol. At that meeting the Council gave staff direction on changes to make to the policy.

The Council reviewed a proposed update to the conduct policy in the August meeting. The Council gave staff direction to revise the policy in several ways, including:

- Revising the restriction on discussing administrative items with the public outside of a public meeting.
- Clarifying the protocol surrounding attendance at meetings of other public bodies.
- Changing the media policy to clarify that all members of a public body may speak to the media to express their personal opinions.
- Revising the permissible content of public comments during the open comment period of Town Council meetings.

Staff has made these changes to the policy.

Staff has also added language to section 1.4.2 clarifying the nature of legal opinion letters. Additionally, staff has made several formatting and stylistic changes which do not impact policy.

Council Action

The Council should discuss the proposed updated Code of Conduct, Rules of Order and Procedure for Public Meetings. If the Council finds this document is consistent with the Council's direction, the Council should adopt Resolution 2026-10.



RESOLUTION NO. 2026-10

**A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A CONDUCT POLICY FOR TOWN OFFICIALS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE
FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS**

WHEREAS, the Town of Springdale recognizes the need to enact a conduct policy for Town Officials, as well as rules of order and procedures to conduct effective public meetings and public hearings; and

WHEREAS, Utah Code Section 10-3-606(2) requires a municipal legislative body to adopt rules of order and procedures that govern a public meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Springdale strives to engage the public in a civil and democratic process that provides for and respects participation from all facets of the community; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Springdale finds efficient meetings are most productive, create an environment that fosters good decision making, and ultimately best serves the public with good local governance; and

WHEREAS, in order to more fully promote open and transparent government, effective public participation, and efficient meetings, the Town Council finds it necessary to adopt a code of conduct for Town officials and rules of procedure for public meetings as outlined in this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, with the adoption of this Resolution, the Town of Springdale intends to establish basic rules of order for its public bodies, and a format for conducting its public meetings and public hearings;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Springdale that these rules of order and procedures for public meetings and public hearings will be utilized to effectuate orderly, efficient, and fair public meetings. These rules of order and procedures replace any other previously adopted rules of order and procedure.

This resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage.

Passed and adopted this 9th day of September, 2026.

Barbara Bruno, Mayor

Attest:

Kyndal Sagers, Town Clerk

Town of Springdale

Conduct Policy for Elected Officials, Appointed Officials, and Town Staff and Rules of Order and Procedure for Public Meetings and Public Hearings

1.0 Conduct Policy

1.1 Conduct of Elected and Appointed Officials

1.1.1. General Conduct.

- a. Treat everyone with courtesy and civility.
- b. Act for the overall public good, not for specific neighborhoods, businesses, individuals, or interests.
- c. Do not engage in or condone bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, or discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or veteran status, and foster a respectful, inclusive environment in all official and related social settings.
- d. Avoid abuse of power, intimidation, and undue influence in interactions with each other, staff, and the public.
- e. Avoid offensive or negative personal comments at meetings and in broader social settings and contexts. Maintain civility and decorum and help set the tone for productive civil discourse in the community.

1.1.2. Conduct with Co-Officials

- a. Seek consensus through open dialogue. When consensus is not possible, accept majority decisions while respecting minority views.
- b. Respect each other's opportunity to speak and express different perspectives. If necessary, agree to disagree.

1.1.3. Conduct with Staff

- a. Treat staff professionally and avoid public criticism of individual employees.
- b. Address concerns about departments or employees with the Town Manager, not with individual staff members.
- c. Do not give specific direction to the staff unless the entire public body (Council, Commission, etc.) has approved the direction or officially authorized you as the public body's representative on the issue.
- d. Follow the procedure below when seeking information from staff about specific issues outside of a public meeting:
 - i. First, coordinate with the Council Member assigned as liaison for the department responsible for the issue to see if they have the sought-after information, then

- ii. Ask the appropriate Department Head for the information, or
- iii. Contact the appropriate staff member directly when a specific staff member has been identified as the staff contact for a project or issue.

1.1.4. Conduct During Public Meetings

- a. Make the public feel welcome and treat all speakers fairly.
- b. Be impartial, respectful, and non-prejudicial; avoid debating with or criticizing the members of the community who speak at meetings.
- c. Listen courteously to public comment and let the public know you appreciate their comments through your body language and active listening. Do not ask questions during the public comment period.
- d. Help the Chair maintain order and decorum during meetings.
- e. Value each other's time by reviewing meeting materials in advance and coming to meetings prepared. Ask technical and background questions of staff prior to the meeting to be able to come to the meeting fully prepared to deliberate policy matters efficiently. If an agenda item includes a document such as a contract or policy that, in the opinion of a member of the public body, needs extensive clerical or clarifying revisions (not policy revisions), that public body member should discuss the revisions with the appropriate staff member prior to the meeting so that a corrected version can be presented in the meeting (or a subsequent meeting if necessary).
- f. Avoid unnecessarily prolonging meetings. Stay on the topic under consideration and be concise in expressing views and opinions.
- g. Include findings in motions but don't add unnecessary language.
- h. Keep electronic devices silent in meetings. Electronic messaging during meetings is discouraged and must not be used to evade open meeting requirements. If an official receives any electronic message during the meeting germane to any topic on the meeting agenda, the official shall disclose the message's content and sender to the rest of the body.
- i. Be fair, impartial, and unbiased when voting. Base decisions on law, the General Plan and other adopted plans and policies, information received through public comments, and the best interest of the Town. Do not base decisions on pressure from special interests or vocal advocates whose views and opinions may not be aligned with General Plan direction, established policies, the best interests of the Town, or the general sentiment of the community.

1.1.5 Conduct Outside of Public Meetings When Discussing Public Business:

- a. Use judgement when discussing items that are part of an upcoming meeting agenda or are likely to be part of an upcoming meeting agenda, outside of the public meeting. Avoid discussing upcoming agenda items with the applicant associated with that agenda item. Be prepared to disclose the nature of all discussions you have with members of the community regarding meeting agenda action items.
- b. Make no promises and no public statements on behalf of the body without express authority from a majority vote of the body.

1.1.5. Conduct with Other Agencies and Town Bodies

- a. Project a positive image of the Town in discussions with other agencies, show respect for other agencies, and agree to disagree when needed.
- b. Treat members of other boards, commissions, and agencies with appreciation and respect.
- c. Avoid attendance at or participation in the meetings of other Town public bodies with the intent to influence the outcomes of issues (directly or indirectly) for which your public body also has a role in reviewing. This includes communication with members of the other public body regarding pending agenda items, either in the public meeting or outside the public meeting.

1.2 Ethical conduct of public officials

- a. Officials shall receive at least two hours of annual training on ethics, conflicts of interest, open meetings, and meeting procedures, and public records, harassment and discrimination prevention, social media and technology use, and de-escalation/meeting management best practices.
- b. Officials shall conduct themselves consistently with this training and applicable state ethics laws.
- c. The Town Council shall review this Conduct Policy at least every four years, or sooner as needed, to incorporate changes in state law and best practices for local government governance, technology, and public engagement.

1.3 Conduct policy for Town Staff

1.3.1. General Conduct

- a. Treat everyone with courtesy and civility and avoid inappropriate behavior or derogatory comments.
- b. Prepare clear, well-written staff reports with supporting documents for items on public body agendas.
- c. Be available for questions from officials before and during meetings.
- d. Respond to public questions prior to meetings, as well as during meetings when requested by officials.
- e. Avoid arguing with the public or members of the public body during public meetings.
- f. Display professionalism in conduct and performance of town duties.
- g. Follow the ethical codes of relevant professional organizations (such as ICMA, AICP, UMTA, UMCA).
- h. Keep electronic devices (phones, pagers, etc.) on silent or off during public body meetings. Electronic messaging during meetings must not be used to evade open-meeting requirements.
- i. Staff shall remain objective on issues and give impartial information to members of the public body.
- j. Staff should advocate for the goals, objectives, and action strategies contained in the Town's adopted plans and policies, while deferring to direction from public officials regarding the priorities of which specific goals, objectives, and action strategies should be implemented.

- k. Staff shall promptly report to the Town Manager any information that may reflect positively or negatively on the Town or compromise the Town's well-being; the Town Manager shall promptly report such information to the Mayor and Town Council.
- l. State law (Utah Code Title 67, Chapter 16, Public Officers' and Employees' Ethics Act) also applies and makes certain unethical conduct by public officers and employees punishable by law, including improperly using or disclosing information gained through their official position.
- m. Staff shall not engage in or condone bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, or discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or veteran status, and shall foster a respectful, inclusive environment in all official and related social settings.
- n. Staff shall avoid abuse of power, intimidation, and undue influence in interactions with each other and the public.

1.4 Conduct of Town Officials in Specialized settings

1.4.1 Social Media and Electronic Communication

- a. Only designated officials or staff may speak on behalf of the Town on official social media or electronic platforms; all others shall clearly distinguish personal views from official Town positions.
- b. Officials and staff shall keep all online communication professional, non-confrontational, and consistent with this conduct policy, and shall not use social media to conduct deliberations that should occur in noticed public meetings.
- c. Official Town social media pages shall be administered under written "terms of use" that define prohibited content, moderation practices, and public records retention; such terms shall be applied consistently and without regard to viewpoint.
- d. Officials are discouraged from using personal social media accounts as public forums for Town business. If they do, they shall comply with applicable open government, records, and First Amendment requirements.

1.4.2 Media Policy

- a. The Mayor is the Town's appointed media contact for media inquiries directed to elected and appointed public officials. If an elected or appointed public official receives a media request at any time, the official shall coordinate with the Mayor prior to making any comments to the media. Officials are free to express their own ideas and perspectives to the media, if they clearly indicate they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of the Town in general. The Mayor may designate a Public Information Officer (PIO) or other spokesperson to respond to specific media inquiries directed to elected and appointed officials, and such designee shall coordinate with the Mayor regarding messaging on behalf of the Town's elected and appointed officials.

1.4.2 Cybersecurity and Data Privacy

- a. Officials and staff shall protect confidential, controlled, or sensitive information obtained through their official roles, including in digital form, and shall not disclose such information or the existence of such information through email, social media, cloud services, or personal devices except as permitted by law. Legal opinion letters are confidential Attorney-Client privileged information. These letters should not be distributed, discussed, or referred to in communication with anyone to whom the letter was not addressed.
- b. Officials and staff shall comply with Town information-security and records-management policies, including password protection, use of official email for Town business, and retention of communications subject to public records laws.

1.4.3 Safety, De-escalation, and Protection of Staff

Given current climates around public meetings:

- a. Officials and staff shall use de-escalation techniques and avoid retaliatory or inflammatory behavior when confronted with hostile or disruptive conduct from members of the public and may temporarily recess or adjourn meetings when safety or order cannot be maintained consistent with law.
- b. The Town shall maintain protocols to protect officials and staff from harassment or threats related to their public duties, including documentation, referral to law enforcement where appropriate, and support for affected individuals.

1.4.4 Enforcement, Reporting, and Consequences

- a. Alleged violations of this Conduct Policy may be reported by any official, staff member, or member of the public to the Mayor, Town Manager, or designated ethics/compliance officer. Reports should be documented in writing when practical.
- b. The Town Council (for elected and appointed officials) and Town Manager (for staff) shall establish fair, transparent procedures for reviewing alleged violations and determining appropriate responses, which may include counseling, training, formal censure or reprimand, removal from appointments where legally allowed, or employment discipline consistent with Town policy and law.
- c. Retaliation against any person who makes a good-faith complaint or participates in an investigation is prohibited and itself constitutes a violation of this policy.

2.0 Rules of Order for Public Meetings

All public meetings of Springdale Town Public Bodies shall follow the rules or order outlined below:

2.1 RULES OF ORDER

- All members of the public attending the meeting are requested to sign the attendance record. Those members of the public who intend to address the public body at any point in the meeting must sign the attendance record so there is a record of their attendance

and the proper spelling of their name.

- Time will be allotted on the agenda of each open public Town Council meeting to allow a reasonable opportunity for the public to provide verbal comment that is germane to the purpose of the Town Council. This time is referred to as the “public participation” part of the meeting in these rules of order and on the meeting agenda.
- During the Public Participation part of the meeting, community members may: 1) make comments directed to the Town Council regarding any topic germane to the Council’s function, and 2) ask clarifying, non-rhetorical questions of staff regarding any topic on the agenda or any other topic of current interest in the town. Staff may elect to follow up with the community member(s) outside of the meeting if answers to questions are not readily available.
- If a public meeting includes a public hearing, the public hearing process will include an opportunity for community members to ask clarifying, non-rhetorical questions of the staff and the applicant at that time.
- If no public hearing is included on a meeting agenda, public comment is allowed only during the public participation portion of the agenda. When an agenda item includes a public hearing, public comment on that item shall be taken only during the public hearing for that item, and not during the general public participation portion of the agenda.
- Public comment, whether during the public participation segment of the agenda or during a scheduled public hearing, shall be limited to three (3) minutes per person, or at the discretion of the public body chair.
- If others have already expressed the same views as your own, you may simply indicate that you agree with the previous speaker. If appropriate, a spokesperson may present the views of a group.
- To encourage and respect the expression of all views, meeting rules prohibit clapping, booing, or shouts of approval or disagreement from the audience.
- Attendees leaving a meeting before it is adjourned must leave in a quiet and orderly manner until outside the meeting room so as not to disrupt the meeting.

2.2 PUBLIC HEARING FORMAT

1. **Review of Procedure and Instruction from the Mayor/ Chair:** The Mayor or Chair provides a brief overview of the hearing format and general instructions to the public to help them be aware of the appropriate time and manner of their participation in the meeting.
2. **Staff introduction and explanation:** Staff provides a brief background and summary of the agenda item.
3. **Applicant presentation:** The applicant, if other than the Town of Springdale, presents the application, including any additional information not initially shared in the original application.
4. **Questions from public body members:** Opportunity for public body members to ask clarifying

questions of the staff and/or the applicant.

5. **Questions from the public:** Opportunity for the public to ask clarifying, non-rhetorical questions of the staff and/or the applicant. This is not the time for public comment.
6. **Motion to open the public hearing:**
7. **Public comment period:** Members of the public provide their comments for consideration by the public body and for the record. Speaking time is limited to three minutes.
8. **Motion to close the public hearing:** No further public comment will be taken after the public hearing is closed.
9. **Response from the applicant:** Applicants are provided time to respond to any comments, correct misinformation, and/or provide a summary before public body deliberation.
10. **Public body deliberation:** Public body members accept no further questions or comments. This is their time to discuss the agenda item and consider the application, the presentation, and the comments from the public.
11. **Public body decision or action:** Motion to approve, deny, adopt, direct, amend, etc.