

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Public Comment Period Change
Date: Thursday, January 12, 2023 8:23:10 PM

Dear Mayor Hinton and Sebastopol City Council:

I was dismayed and disappointed to read today that you have changed the public comment period at your meetings from the beginning to the end of the meeting. I have lived in Sebastopol for eight years now and during this time have been impressed with the openness and transparency of the Council (with the exception of the smart water meter issue).

I believe that this change would effectively prevent the vast majority of Sebastopol residents, who wish to provide input at City Council meetings, from doing so, resulting in a kind of censorship. It would decrease citizen participation in the activities of the City Council whose job is to serve the residents of Sebastopol.

My observation has been that having the public comment period at the beginning of City Council meetings has been very manageable through the simple use of a 2-3 minute limit per person with a 30-minute cutoff time. Why does this need to change? If the City Council does make this change, I can only believe that you are not really interested in hearing what your constituents have to say.

Please reconsider!

Sincerely,

Pamela Gentry, MA