

October 6, 2026

To the Mayor and Members of the Taylor City Council:

My name is Willie Deon Carpenter. I'm submitting this letter for the record because I was not permitted to speak during tonight's public comment period, despite signing up to speak more than a week before the sign-up deadline. I'm asking that this letter be entered into the minutes of tonight's meeting.

Timing.

Tonight is the first regular council meeting since Mayor Lamb issued a pardon of Raymond Horn on October 1, 2026. I want that timing reflected in the record.

Under Ala. Code § 12-14-15, a mayor who pardons a person convicted of a municipal ordinance violation must report that action to the council, in writing, with his reasons, at the council's first regular meeting in the month following the pardon.

The pardon.

I am formally requesting a copy of the pardon. I have been told I am not entitled to see it. I'm asking the City to identify the specific legal basis for withholding a copy of an official act of the Mayor's office from a citizen who has requested it. This is a public records request under Alabama's public records law, Ala. Code § 36-12-40.

The speaking denial.

I was told I could not speak tonight because I had already spoken twice in the past three months. No one has been able to show me a written rule establishing that limit. Sofia Rogers has told me she would provide a copy of that written rule at tonight's meeting.

I have since been told by Sofia Rogers that she e-mailed all council members asking whether I should be allowed to speak tonight, and that four members responded that I should not be. I'm asking whether that exchange complied with the Alabama Open Meetings Act, Ala. Code §§ 36-25A-1 through 36-25A-11, which generally requires that deliberation by a quorum of a governing body take place at a properly noticed public meeting, not through private correspondence.

I was also told the speaking-limit rule was "enacted on May 5, 2026." When I asked further, I was told instead that it was brought up on May 5 and voted on at a later date, passing unanimously. I am requesting the official minutes or resolution showing when this policy was actually adopted, along with a copy of the written policy itself.

Requested records.

I'm asking the City to provide, within a reasonable time: (1) a copy of the October 1, 2026 pardon; (2) the minutes or resolution reflecting adoption of the speaking-limit policy and its effective date, including the individually signed copies from each council member approving those minutes; (3) a copy of that written policy; and (4) any written policy or procedure governing how decisions to deny a citizen's request to speak are made, including whether e-mail communication among council members has been used for this purpose on other occasions.

Respectfully,

Willie Deon Carpenter


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