



City Council Rules Discussion

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – March 5, 2024

City Staff Representative: Alicia R. Calderón, City Attorney

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Outline of Rules

1. Rule 1 restates the Charter and state statutes.
2. Rule 2 addresses meeting procedure.
3. Rule 3 involves resolutions and ordinances.
4. Rule 4 summarizes parliamentary procedure (Robert's Rules).
5. Rule 5 is officers and process to challenge the qualifications to hold office.
6. Rule 6 addresses the duties and privileges of council members.
7. Rule 7 is about the City Council Chamber.
8. Rule 8 allows for amendment or suspension of the rules.





Previous Amendments

- 2022 Amended the following:
 - Simplification of hearing procedures
 - Council meeting procedures updated
 - Removed list of holidays
 - Decorum section update to prohibit intoxication at meetings and clarified that the sexual harassment policy applies to council members.
- Prior updates have amended and clarified the following:
 - Beginning and end times of the meeting
 - Removed executive sessions from study session meetings
 - Clarified that public comments are for items not on the agenda
 - Addressed electronic participation.



What is the purpose of the rules?

- To provide an outline and consistency for meetings and hearings
- To override or provide specific details where Robert's Rules are not sufficient or do not adequately provide rules (public hearings, executive sessions)
- To create explicit expectations for each other in your role as council members and for the mayor
- To provide key motions from Robert's Rules for use by members



Prior to Rule 1

Addition of the following:

While the Municipal Code has adopted Robert's Rules of Order as the procedural rules for the conduct of meetings of the City Council, the City Council Rules of Procedure hereby modify Robert's Rules as set forth herein. Robert's Rules does not address public hearings, executive sessions, or the procedure for adoption of ordinances and resolutions. These City Council Rules provide the specificity and clarification required for the conduct of City business at City Council meetings.



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Possible Changes/Updates

- Allow the mayor or the city manager to change the date/time/location of a regular meeting or a study session without a council vote
- Public hearing – close it after all questions but before deliberation by council members (or after all deliberations?)
- Clarify procedure for ordinances and resolutions – presentation first, questions and discussion, and then a motion before the vote





Rule 6: Duties and Privileges – Amend?

- Representation of the City on boards and commissions. Each council member and mayor have a duty to represent the City on boards and commissions.
- Expectations: Be prepared for meetings. Be respectful. Members will make fair decisions based upon information presented.
- No member of Council, employee of the City, or Council appointee shall state a position or policy of the City until said position or policy has been adopted by affirmation or resolution of Council. No restraint on individual expression is hereby intended, so long as the narrator clearly indicates that the position expressed is his or her individual opinion and not the position or policy of the City.



Other Ideas

- Public Comment: A response to public comment by council members or staff is out of the ordinary and discouraged. As such, if follow up is desired, the council member's or staff member's business card may be offered to a speaker to obtain more information or have further discussion.
- Non-interference with staff. City Charter 7.4 requires that city council not dictate or interfere with the duties of any City employee subordinate to the City Manager. Each council member "shall deal with such employees solely through the City Manager, the City Attorney, or the Municipal Judge." City council members should go to the City Manager first before reaching out to directors or other staff.
- Leaving the dais during a meeting: should this be only for a personal need or emergency, not to engage with a resident?



Questions and Discussion

