



POLICY AND PROCEDURE

CITY OF VANCOUVER WASHINGTON	INDEX			
	Administrative/Council/City Manager			
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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish formal procedures for the conduct of City Council meetings.

2.0 Organizations Affected

City Council/City Manager

3.0 References

- City Council Resolution M-3239, August 9, 1999
- City Council Resolution M-3258, November 22, 1999
- City Council Resolution M-3350, July 23, 2001
- City Council Resolution M-3412, December 12, 2002
- City Council Resolution M-3607, April 16, 2007
- City Council Resolution M- 3737, March 21, 2011

4.0 Presiding Officer

4.1. Presiding Officer

The Presiding Officer at all meetings of the Council is the Mayor, and in the absence of the Mayor, the Mayor Pro Tempore will act in that capacity. If both the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore are absent, the next ranking member shall act in that capacity.

4.2. Choosing Mayor Pro Tempore

The Mayor Pro Tempore shall be chosen according to *Section 2.04 of the Vancouver City Charter and Roberts Rules of Order*.

4.3. Obligations of Presiding Officer

The Presiding Officer shall:

- (1) Preserve order and decorum in the Council chambers in accordance with sections 5.6.3.7 and 5.6.3.8;
- (2) Observe and enforce all rules adopted by the Council;
- (3) Decide all questions on procedure and order, in accordance with these rules, subject to appeal by a Councilmember;
- (4) Recognize Councilmembers in the order in which they request the floor, giving every Councilmember who wishes an opportunity to speak. The Presiding Officer, as a Councilmember, shall have only those rights, and shall be governed in all matters and issues by the same rules and restrictions as other Councilmembers.
- (5) From time to time, appoint Councilmembers to serve on ad hoc committees.

5.0 Council Meetings

5.1. General Information

City Council meetings are held on the first, second, third, and fourth Mondays of a month in the City Council Chambers, 210 East 13th Street, Vancouver, Washington. Meetings are not scheduled on the fifth Monday of a month.

5.2. Quorum

At all meetings of the Council, a majority of the Council (four members, or five members for budget items and appropriations) constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business, but a lesser number may adjourn from day to day or until the time of the next regular meeting and may compel the attendance of absent members in such manner and under such penalties as the City Council shall prescribe. (*Section 2.02 of Vancouver City Charter*)

5.3. Council Seating

The Presiding Officer and six elected Councilmembers sit on a dais facing the public with the Presiding Officer seated in the middle. The Councilmembers are seated based on seniority, with the most senior Councilmember seated on the Presiding Officer's left side and continuing in decreasing seniority away from the Presiding Officer to the end of the dais. The order is continued at the far opposite side of the dais and progressing toward the Presiding Officer's right side, resulting in the least senior Councilmember seated on the Presiding Officer's right side.

5.4. Council Meeting Scheduled on Holiday

In the event a City-recognized holiday occurs on Monday, the Council meeting shall be cancelled. The Vancouver City Charter requires that Council conduct two "regular" meetings each month. Therefore, when such a Holiday falls on a first or third Monday (regular Council meeting nights), a regular Council meeting will be scheduled on the following Monday (second or fourth). The schedule for the entire year will be sent to the media, placed on the City's website and distributed to all City departments before January 1 of each year. City Council may, at any time, add or change a meeting date and time by a majority vote of the Council and proper notification to the press.

5.5. Recording Proceedings

The City Clerk or delegate shall maintain an account of all proceedings of the Council in accordance with statutory requirements, and such account shall be entered into a minute book constituting the official record of the Council according to Section 2.11 of the Vancouver City Charter. Such minutes will also be posted on the City's website. City Council meeting minutes can be corrected if in error but shall not be revised without a majority affirmative vote of the Council at a regularly scheduled Council meeting.

5.6. Regular Meetings

5.6.1. Meeting Dates

Regular meetings are held the first and third Mondays of each month at 7 p.m. and will adjourn no later than 11 p.m. To continue past this time of adjournment, a majority of the Council must concur.

A regular meeting may be canceled by a majority vote of the Council taken at least one week before said meeting.

5.6.2. Broadcasting

Regular meetings are cablecast live and replayed on CVTV-23.

5.6.3. Agenda

5.6.3.1. Placing Item on the Agenda

An item may be placed on a Council meeting agenda by any of the following methods:

- (1) A majority of the Council,
- (2) Council consensus,

- (3) By any two (2) Councilmembers
- (4) By the City Manager,
- (5) By a Council Committee,
- (6) By the Mayor.

The Presiding Officer calls the meeting to order. The Presiding Officer will announce the attendance of Councilmembers and indicate any Councilmember who is not in attendance. A majority vote is required to excuse any Councilmember absence.

5.6.3.3. Roll Call

5.6.3.4. Agenda Item Order

The Presiding Officer may, with the concurrence of the Councilmembers, take agenda items out of order or change the order of the agenda.

5.6.3.5. Approval of Minutes

5.6.3.6. Formal Proclamations and Special Presentations

A proclamation is defined as an official announcement signed by the Mayor regarding a non-controversial event which will have a major citywide impact. Special presentations include, but are not limited to, retirements, commendations and recognition by the Mayor and City Council.

Proclamations will be briefly summarized by the Mayor and presented to the recipient(s). They will be allowed to make brief comments.

5.6.3.7. Citizen Communications on Agenda Items

The public is invited to speak for approximately three minutes about any item on that evening's Council Agenda that is not already scheduled for public hearing or which otherwise allows for public testimony.

5.6.3.8 Testimony to Council

Speakers who wish to testify before the City Council either during citizen communication on agenda items or as part of a scheduled public meeting or public hearing or during the Citizen Forum portion of the Council meeting as set forth in Section 5.8 are required to complete a "Testimony Registration Form" which provides their name, address, agency or group

they represent, the item they wish to testify on, and their position on the subject.

At the appropriate time, speakers are requested by the Presiding Officer to step up to the podium, give their name for the record, and asked to limit their remarks to approximately three minutes. (Council prefers lengthy written testimony to be submitted at least a week prior, so Council has a chance to fairly consider the comments.) All remarks will be addressed to the Council as a whole. Each person who addresses the Council shall do so in an orderly manner and shall not make slanderous or profane remarks to any member of the Council, staff or the general public. Any person who makes such remarks or who becomes boisterous, threatening or personally abusive while addressing the Council and which disrupts or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of any Council meeting may be requested to leave the meeting.

The Presiding Officer and City Manager have the authority to preserve order at all meetings of the Council, to cause the removal of any person from any meeting for disorderly conduct as described herein and which disrupts or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of a Council meeting and to enforce the Rules of the Council. The Presiding Officer and City Manager may command assistance of any peace officer of the City to enforce all lawful orders to restore order at any meeting.

5.6.3.9. Consent Agenda

These are routine items voted on by a single motion. Typical items include payment of bills, awarding contracts, adoption of resolutions, and first reading of ordinances. Any Councilmember may remove any item from the consent agenda for discussion.

Ordinances for First Reading: The City Manager presents information on a proposed new city law or practice, or a change to an existing law or practice. Council then sets a date for second reading and public hearing.

5.6.3.10. Public Hearings

Citizens are invited to present their views on specific issues being considered by Council. Speakers are asked to limit their testimony to approximately three minutes. The Presiding Officer will state the public hearing procedures before each public hearing.

Public testimony is subject to the provisions of section 5.6.3.8.

5.6.3.11. Ordinances for Second Reading and Public Hearing

Citizens are invited to present their views on proposed ordinances before a final vote by Council. All public hearings on proposed ordinances are advertised in The Columbian at least three days in advance and information is posted on the City's website. (In an emergency, a public hearing can be called within 24 hours with proper media notification.) Public testimony is subject to the provisions of section 5.6.3.8.

5.6.3.12. Council and City Manager Communications

City Councilmembers, Mayor and the City Manager make special announcements or provide updates on current issues or items of Council interest.

5.6.3.13. Unfinished Business

Council discusses ongoing issues or items continued from earlier meetings.

5.6.3.14. New Proposals and Reports

These are presented by the Councilmembers for a brief discussion. They can include policy changes, new laws, regulations and resolutions. Action is not taken on items at this time.

5.6.3.15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Presiding Officer adjourns the meeting.

5.7. Consent Agenda Meetings

Consent agenda meetings are held the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 6:30 p.m. Consent agenda items - such as first reading of ordinances, payment of bills and awarding of contracts - are considered at these meetings. Public comment regarding any item on that evening's agenda is taken at the beginning of the meeting. Comments are limited to approximately three minutes per speaker.

5.8 Citizen Forum

A Citizen Forum will be held at the end of the first and second Consent Agenda meetings of the month. A Citizen Forum includes up to ninety (90) minutes of public testimony or

less depending on the number of speakers. Citizens may speak on any issue of concern or interest. Speakers are asked to fill out testimony cards as provided for in section 5.6.3.8 and to limit their comments to approximately three minutes. Each speaker shall have one opportunity to address the Council. During Citizen Forum, Councilmembers have the ability to ask questions and reply to speakers.

5.9. Workshops

At the discretion of Council, Council workshops are held Mondays from 4 to 6 p.m. During these meetings, items needing in-depth discussion are introduced and reviewed. No formal action is taken at workshops. Formal action is defined as a collective positive or negative decision following an actual vote by a majority of the Council upon a resolution, order or ordinance. Workshops are open to the public. Workshops are cablecast live and replayed on CVTV-23.

Council will, on a regular basis, be provided with an on-going preview of up coming workshops.

5.10. Executive Sessions

An Executive Session is a council meeting or portion of a council meeting that is closed except to the Council, City Manager and authorized staff members and/or consultants authorized by the City Manager. The public is restricted from attendance. Executive Sessions may be held during Regular or Special council meetings and will be announced by the Mayor. Before convening an Executive Session, the Mayor shall announce the purpose of the meeting and the anticipated time when the session will be concluded. Should the session require more time, a public announcement shall be made that the meeting is being extended. Executive Sessions shall be held in accordance with the provisions of the Washington State Open Meetings Act.

5.11. Special Meetings

The city clerk shall call public meetings of the City Council upon the approval of the Mayor or of any two members. Any request shall state the subjects to be considered at such special meeting and no other subject shall there be acted upon. (Section 2.10 of the Vancouver City Charter)

Notice of every special meeting shall be given in writing to every Councilmember, to the City Manager, to the City Attorney, and to all local news media representatives who have on file with the city clerk a request for such notices. The notice shall be delivered personally, by mail, or otherwise, so as to be received at least 24 hours before the meeting. The notice shall state the place and time of the meeting and the business to be conducted. The Council shall not make final disposition of any matter not included in the notice.

6.0 Agenda Preparation

6.1. General Information

The City Manager's office will prepare an agenda for each Council meeting specifying the time and place of the meeting and set forth a brief general description of each item to be considered by the Council. The agenda is subject to approval by the Mayor and the City Manager.

6.2. Adding an Item to a Published Agenda

An item may be placed on a regular Council meeting agenda after the agenda is closed and the notice published if the Councilmember or City Manager explains the necessity and receives a majority vote of the Council at a public meeting.

6.3. Agenda Finalization Schedule

Agenda materials will be available at City Hall and on the City's website for City staff, the media and public on Friday prior to the meeting. Agenda materials will be available for Councilmembers on Thursday prior to the meeting.

7.0 Councilmember Attendance at Meetings

Councilmembers shall inform the Mayor or City Manager if they are unable to attend any Council meeting, or if they will be late to any meeting. A majority vote is required to excuse any Councilmember absence.

8.0 Council Meeting Staffing

The City Manager shall attend all meetings of the Council unless excused. At the discretion of the City Manager, the Assistant City Manager, department heads, and other staff members shall attend. The City Manager may make recommendations to the Council and shall have the right to take part in the discussions of the Council but shall have no vote.

9.0 Media Representation at Council Meetings

All public meetings of the City Council and its advisory committees shall be open to the media, freely subject to recording by radio, television, electronic, and photographic services at any time, provided that such arrangements do not interfere with the orderly conduct of the meeting.

10.0 Council Discussion

All Council discussion shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. The City Attorney is the Parliamentarian. Every Councilmember shall be provided with a copy of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised when first joining the Council.

11.0 Voting

11.1. Roll Call Votes

The City Clerk will take a roll call vote, if requested by the Presiding Officer, a Councilmember, or as required by law. The roll call vote shall be by seniority with the least senior member voting first.

11.2. Tie Vote

The passage of a Motion, Resolution or Ordinance is lost by a tie vote, provided that the question may be brought forward again at the request of any member at the same meeting or at the next meeting when any members who were absent or disqualified at the time of the tie vote are present.

11.3. Votes on Questions

Each member present shall vote on all questions put to the City Council except on matters on which he or she has been disqualified for a conflict of interest or under the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine. Such a member shall disqualify himself or herself prior to any discussion of the matter. If abstaining, the council member must state the reasons for abstaining, identifying one or more of the following: (1) an excused absence from the prior council meeting and/or (2) a conflict of interest and/or (3) an Appearance of Fairness issue. See Policy 100-39. A council member, who abstains but fails to identify the absence, conflict of interest and/or Appearance of Fairness issue, will be considered to have voted for the majority's position in respect to questions before the council and have their vote so recorded. When disqualification of a member or members results, or would result, in the inability of the council to act on a matter on which it is required by law to take action, any member who is absent or who is disqualified under the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine may subsequently participate, provided such member first shall have reviewed all materials and listened to all tapes of the proceedings in which the member did not participate.