

RULES GOVERNING MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

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GENERAL

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

- Rule 1.1 All matters of procedure not covered specifically by Council rules, State, or Local law, shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.
- 1.2 The President or Chair shall decide all questions arising under these rules and general parliamentary practice, subject to appeal. The appeal shall be determined by a majority of the Councilpersons-elect.

SUSPENSION AND AMENDMENT OF RULES

- Rule 2.1 The rules may be suspended on the vote of two-thirds of the Councilpersons-elect.
- 2.2 The rules may be amended in accordance with Section 1-801 of the Flint City Charter.

ORGANIZATION

COUNCIL PRESIDENT; PRESIDING AT MEETINGS

- Rule 3.1 The Council shall have a President and a Vice-President, each chosen by a majority of the Councilpersons-elect for a one year term which shall end on the second Monday in November.
- 3.2 The President shall preside at the meetings of the Council and, in the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall preside. If both the President and Vice-President are absent, a Chairperson from a Council Committee shall preside in the following order: Finance, Governmental Operations, Legislative and Grants.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

- Rule 4.1 The President, unless otherwise directed by the Council, shall appoint all committee chairs and vice-chairs for a one-year term which shall end on the second Monday in November.
- 4.2 The standing committees of the Council are Finance, Legislative, Governmental Operations and Grants.

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

- Rule 5.1 All meetings of the City Council and all committees of the Council shall take place in the Council Chambers on the third floor of City Hall or at such other places as the Council may determine.
- 5.2 The regular meeting of the City Council is 5:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Monday of every month.
- 5.3 The Flint City Council may schedule other committee meetings as deemed necessary.
- 5.4 In the event of a call for a special meeting or a change in the time or place of a meeting, the Clerk shall be notified and shall see that each Councilperson and the public are informed.
- 5.5 The Mayor shall be notified of all meetings of the City Council.

AGENDA FOR COUNCIL

- Rule 6.1 Matters shall be placed on the agenda of any meeting of the City Council by action of any committee of the Council or at the request of the Mayor, Clerk or any Councilperson prior to the start of the meeting.
- 6.2 City Council agendas for regular and standing committees shall be available to Councilpersons 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- Rule 7.1 The order of business at meetings of the City Council shall be as follows:
- I Call to order and opening ceremonies
 - II Presentation of minutes
 - III Special Orders
 - IV Petitions and unofficial communications
 - V Communications from the Mayor and other City officials
 - VI Public Comment
 - VII Public Hearing
 - VIII Resolutions
 - IX Liquor Licenses

- X Introduction and first reading of ordinances
- XI Second reading and enactment of ordinances
- XII Adjournment

ACTION BY COUNCIL

FORM OF ACTION BY COUNCIL; DIVISION OF QUESTION

- Rule 8.1 All action of the Council shall be by ordinance or resolution, but decisions on parliamentary procedure may be made upon motion.
- 8.2 No motion may be debated by the Council until it has been stated by the presiding officer and it must be reduced to writing if requested by the presiding officer or any Councilperson.
- 8.3 If a question before the Council is susceptible of division, it shall be divided on the demand of any Councilperson.

VOTING

- Rule 9.1 The determination of any question at a regular City Council meeting shall require a roll call vote.
- 9.2 The determination of any question at a committee meeting shall be upon call of the Chair for a vote. If there is an objection, a roll call vote shall be taken.
- 9.3 The voting on all roll calls shall be rotated so that the Councilperson representing the First Ward shall cast the first vote on the first roll call of any meeting, the Councilperson from the Second Ward shall cast the first vote on the second roll call at any meeting, and so on throughout the meeting so that the first vote on a roll call shall be solicited from the succeeding Councilperson. Following the first vote on any roll call, the remaining Councilpersons shall be called in consecutive order until all nine Councilpersons have been afforded an opportunity to vote on any question.

INTRODUCTION AND ENACTMENT OF ORDINANCES

- Rule 10.1 Upon the introduction of any ordinance, the City Clerk shall proceed as directed in Section 3-302 of the Charter.
- 10.2 After a public hearing has been completed, any Councilperson may move the enactment of the ordinance.

- 10.3 If the ordinance is amended to the extent that there has been inadequate notice to the public of the content of the ordinance, it shall not be enacted until the procedures of Section 3-302 are complied with.
- 10.4 Every ordinance must state the date that it becomes effective. After the vote on the enactment of the ordinance, any Councilperson may move that it be given immediate effect upon publication, rather than the date stated. Any effective date earlier than thirty days after enactment requires a two-thirds vote of the Councilpersons-elect.
- 10.5 Every ordinance shall be submitted to the Chief Legal Officer of the City for review prior to enactment.

MOTIONS

CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS

Rule 11.1 When a question is under debate, the Chair will receive only the following motions:

- Rule 13 to adjourn
- Rule 14 to recess
- Rule 15 to postpone temporarily (lay on the table)
- Rule 16 to vote immediately (previous question)
- Rule 17 to limit debate
- Rule 18 to postpone definitely
- Rule 19 to refer (commit)
- Rule 20 to amend
- Rule 21 to postpone indefinitely

11.2 If more than one of the above motions are made, they shall be considered in the order listed.

SUPPORT FOR MOTIONS

Rule 12.1 No motion may be considered or debated unless it has the support of at least one other Councilperson and has been properly stated by the Chair.

12.2 Nominations need not be seconded.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

- Rule 13.1 A motion to adjourn is always in order. If it is made during the count of a vote, it will not be considered until after the vote is announced.
- 13.2 A motion to adjourn will be decided without debate. However, the issue of the time to reconvene may be debated if it is introduced by the maker of the motion or by amendment.

MOTION TO RECESS

- Rule 14.1 A motion to recess shall state the length of the recess and shall be decided without debate.
- 14.2 When a recess is taken during the pending of any question, the consideration of the question shall be resumed upon the reassembling of the Council.
- 14.3 The Chair may order a recess without objection.

MOTION TO POSTPONE TEMPORARILY (LAY ON THE TABLE)

- Rule 15.1 The Council may decide to postpone temporarily any matter pending before it. The motion may be referred to as a motion to lay on the table.
- 15.2 A decision to lay upon the table shall have the effect of postponing the question involved, all pending amendments, and other adhering motions.
- 15.3 If a decision is made to resume consideration of a matter or to take up from the table, it shall return in exactly the same form as when it was postponed temporarily. A motion to resume consideration must be made at the same meeting.
- 15.4 All matters postponed temporarily shall be considered at the meeting at which they were postponed. If the motion to take up from the table fails, the issue is considered to have failed.
- 15.5 A motion to postpone temporarily or to resume consideration shall be decided without debate.

MOTION TO VOTE IMMEDIATELY (PREVIOUS QUESTION)

- Rule 16.1 Any Councilperson may move to vote immediately. If the motion is supported, debate will cease.

- 16.2 If the motion receives a majority of the votes of the Councilpersons-elect, in accordance with Section 3-204(a) of the Charter, the Council shall vote on the pending question or questions in their regular order.

MOTION TO LIMIT OR EXTEND DEBATE

- Rule 17 The Council may decide to limit or determine the time that will be devoted to discussion of a pending motion or to modify or remove limitations already imposed on its decision.

MOTION TO POSTPONE DEFINITELY

- Rule 18.1 The Council may decide to put off consideration of a pending main motion and to fix a definite time for its consideration.
- 18.2 The debate on the motion to postpone definitely shall be limited to the reasons for the postponement and the time the main motion shall be taken up.

MOTION TO REFER (COMMIT)

- Rule 19.1 If a motion to refer a matter to a committee or other agency has been made, the Council shall proceed to decide the question of the referral.
- 19.2 There shall be no further debate on the merits of the main motion or amendments to the main motion until the referral motion is decided.

MOTION TO AMEND

- Rule 20.1 A motion to amend must be germane to the main motion.
- 20.2 An amendment may be amended but an amendment to an amendment may not be amended.

MOTION TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY

- Rule 21.1 The Council may decide to prevent discussion or further discussion on a question by voting to postpone it indefinitely.
- 21.2 A motion that has been postponed indefinitely cannot come up again at the same meeting. If it is reintroduced at a later meeting, it shall be treated as a new motion.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER

- Rule 22.1 A motion to reconsider any decision of the City Council may be made by any Councilperson that voted in the affirmative on the motion in question.
- 22.2 A motion to reconsider may be made at the same meeting or not later than the next succeeding regular meeting of the Council provided that notice has been given to the Council prior to the start of the meeting.
- 22.3 No question may be reconsidered more than once.
- 22.4 If a decision of the Council has gone into effect, the motion to reconsider shall not be in order.

MOTION TO RESCIND

- Rule 23.1 Action to rescind, repeal or annul a previous action may be by resolution unless the previous action is an ordinance. Action to repeal a published ordinance may only be by ordinance regardless of whether the ordinance has gone into effect.
- 23.2 Notice of a motion to rescind a previous action must be given to the Clerk at least two days prior to the meeting at which the motion is to be made. However, the Council may vote by two-thirds of Councilpersons-elect to waive the notice.
- 23.3 Motions to rescind may be reconsidered regardless of whether the vote was affirmative or negative.

REQUEST TO WITHDRAW A MOTION

- Rule 24.1 Any Councilperson may withdraw his or her motion before it has been restated by the Chair and placed before the assembly. The Councilperson need not obtain concurrence of any other person.
- 24.2 After the motion has been placed before the assembly, it may only be withdrawn by majority consent of all Councilpersons present.
- 24.3 No request to withdraw a motion may be made after the vote on the motion has commenced.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND MAINTENANCE OF ORDER

MAINTENANCE OF ORDER

- Rule 25.1 No Councilpersons shall leave a meeting of the Council without first having obtained leave to do so from the President or Committee Chair.
- 25.2 When a member has been called to order, the Chair shall determine whether or not he or she is in order. Every question of order shall be decided by the Chair subject to an appeal to the Council by any member. If a member is called to order for words spoken, the exceptional words shall be immediately taken down in writing so that the presiding officer or Council may be better able to judge the matter.

RIGHT TO SPEAK IN DEBATE

- Rule 26.1 Every Councilperson and every person granted the privilege of speaking to the Council shall address all remarks to members of the Council and shall not speak until recognized.
- 26.2 When two or more Councilmembers address the Chair at the same time, the Chair shall name the Councilperson who is first to speak.

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PARTICIPATION BY PUBLIC

- Rule 27.1 All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public in accordance with law.
- 27.2 If a member of the public wishes to address the City Council, they may do so at the regular City Council meeting. He or she shall submit, prior to the start of the meeting, a statement in writing containing his or her name and address and the topic to be covered. A box will be placed at the entrance to the Council Chambers for the collection of the statements.
- 27.3 Members of the public shall have no more than 5 minutes during public comment to be heard at a regular City Council meeting.
- 27.4 If a member of the public is addressing the Council at a scheduled public hearing, he or she shall stand to obtain recognition by the President at the opening of the hearing or at the conclusion of the remarks of the previous speaker.
- 27.5 Members of the public shall have no more than 10 minutes to address the City Council during a public hearing.
- 27.6 Any person while being heard at a Council meeting may be called to order by the President or any Councilperson for failure to be germane, for vulgarity, for personal attack of persons or institutions, or for speaking in excess of the allotted time.

- 27.7 Any person who is called to order shall thereupon take his or her seat until the President shall have determined whether he or she is in order. Every question of order shall be decided by the President subject to an appeal by any Councilperson to the Council. If a person so engaged in presentation shall be determined by the Council to be out of order, that person shall not be permitted to continue at the same meeting except on special leave of the Council.

REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL RULES

REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL RULES

- Rule 28 Every December, the City Council shall place an item on the Governmental Operations Committee agenda for a review of these rules.

Rules Originally Adopted: May 10, 1976

1st Amendment Adopted: May 24, 2010