

**RULES OF PROCEDURE AND DECORUM  
CITY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS  
BRainerd, MINNESOTA**

**Adopted April 4, 1994**

**Reaffirmed and Amended December 1, 2003; November 2, 2020**

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

- Subd. 1. General. It is recognized that in order to enhance the concept of effective and democratic government, it is essential that a legislative body establish formal rules of procedure and decorum so that a true deliberative process will be observed and not disturbed.

SECTION 2. GENERAL

- Subd. 1. Law. The City Charter, Ordinances and State Statutes governing the City Council shall be followed and supplemented by these Rules of Procedure and Decorum.
- Subd. 2. General Rules. In all matters of parliamentary procedures, the Council shall be governed by the latest printed edition of the Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure as published from time to time except as modified by these rules.
- Subd. 3. Applicability. These Rules also apply to committees of the Council as well as City boards and commissions, whether created by Charter or City Code. The term "Council" shall be substituted with "Committee," "Commission" or "Board," and terms "President" and "Vice President" shall be substituted with "Chair" and "Vice Chair", as appropriate.

SECTION 3. PRESIDING OFFICER

- Subd. 1. Who Presides. The Council President shall preside at all meetings of the Council. In the absence of the Council President, the Council Vice-President shall preside. The presiding officer shall have the power to preserve strict order and decorum at meetings, enforce the rules of procedure and determine without debate, subject to the final decision of the Council on appeal, all questions of procedure and order.
- Subd. 2. Appeal of the Ruling of the Presiding Officer. Any member of the Council may appeal from a ruling of the presiding officer. If the appeal is seconded, the member may speak once solely on the question involved and the presiding officer may explain the ruling, but no other Council member shall participate in the discussion. The appeal shall be sustained if it is approved by a majority vote.
- Subd. 3. Rights of the Presiding Officer. The presiding officer may speak on any question. The presiding officer may only make motions and second motions after stepping

down as presiding officer.

#### SECTION 4. AGENDA

Subd. 1. Matters for Consideration. Matters for Council action shall be submitted by members of the Council and residents to the City Administrator or to city staff representatives in the case of Committee business.

Subd. 2. Preparation. An agenda of business for each regular and special meeting shall be prepared in the Office of the City Administrator or by City Staff in the case of Committees and copies thereof delivered to each Council member as far in advance of the meeting as time for preparation will permit.

Subd. 3. Order of Business at Regular Meetings. At the hour appointed for the regular meeting of the City Council, the meeting shall be called to order by the presiding officer. If a quorum is present, the City Council shall then proceed with its business in the following order as applicable:

- \* Call to Order
- \* Roll Call
- \* Pledge of Allegiance
- \* Approval of Agenda
- \* Consent Calendar, including approval of minutes, licenses, reports, bills, fund transfers and other routine, non-controversial items needing little or no deliberation
- \* Presentations (if any)
- \* Council Committee Reports (Personnel & Finance; Safety & Public Works)
- \* Unfinished Business - action items including public hearings, ordinance readings and various other items requiring Council action
- \* New Business - action items including public hearings, ordinance readings and various other items requiring Council action
- \* Public Forum
- \* Staff Reports (Verbal: Any updates since the packet)
- \* Mayor's Report
- \* Council Member Reports
- \* Adjournment

Subd. 4. Varying Order of Business. The order of business may be varied by the presiding officer.

Subd. 5. Consent Calendar. Matters for the Council of a routine or non-controversial nature which need minimal Council deliberation shall be placed on the Consent Calendar. A motion to approve the Consent Calendar shall not be debated. At the request of any individual Council member, an item shall be removed from the Consent Calendar and placed upon the regular agenda for debate immediately following the Consent Calendar. The Consent Calendar shall only be adopted by a roll call vote of those Council members present at the meeting.

- Subd. 6. Items Not on the Agenda. The Council may consider items not appearing on the agenda as normal business if an objection is not raised by the Mayor or a Council member. If an objection is raised by the Mayor or a Council member to consider an item not appearing on the agenda, a vote shall be taken by the Council to determine the appropriateness of further consideration of the matter at that time.
- Subd. 7. Public Participation. Members of the public may address the City Council during:
- A: Public Hearings.
- B: Public Forum. This portion of the meeting shall be limited to fifteen minutes and individuals shall be requested to limit their comments to four minutes or less. If the majority of the Council determines that additional time on a specific issue is warranted, then discussion on that issue may be continued under New Business at the end of the agenda.
- C: Specific issues scheduled on the agenda but in accordance with Section 6, Subd. 6, of these rules entitled, Addressing the Council.
- Subd. 8. Written Communications on All Matters. All interested parties or their authorized representatives may address the Council by written communication regarding all matters under the Council's consideration. The City Administrator shall copy these communications to the Council and forward said communications with the Council meeting packet if possible. If written communications are received after meeting packets are delivered to the Mayor and Council, such communications will be handed out at the meeting.

## SECTION 5. VOTING

- Subd. 1. Procedure. The votes of the members on any ordinance or resolution pending before the Council shall be by roll call vote. The votes of the members on any motion shall be by voice vote unless the Mayor or any member of the Council requests that a roll call vote be taken. The presiding officer shall call for a roll call vote whenever a voice vote of the Council is not clear as to the disposition of the action before the Council.
- Subd. 2. Abstention. If a Council member does not vote, the abstention shall be recorded as Abstain - name.
- Subd. 3. Voting Order for Roll Call (applicable to City Council only). The City Administrator shall call for the vote in consecutive order of Wards, with Ward One voting first rotating one position every two months. The presiding officer shall always vote last.

## SECTION 6. RULES OF DECORUM

- Subd. 1. Members of Council. While the meeting is in session, the members must preserve

order and decorum. A member shall neither, by conversation or otherwise, delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the meeting nor disturb any member while speaking or refuse to obey the orders of the presiding officer.

- Subd. 2. Recognition. No person or member shall address the other members without being recognized by the presiding officer.
- Subd. 3. Discussion. No member of the Council shall speak more than twice on any question, nor more than five minutes each time without consent of the Council.
- Subd. 4. Staff. Members of the City staff shall observe the same rules of order and decorum as are applicable to the City Council.
- Subd. 5. Pertinent to Matter Under Debate. Members, staff and public shall confine remarks to the matter under debate.
- Subd. 6. Addressing the Council. Each member of the public addressing the Council shall step up to a microphone provided for the use of the public after being recognized by the presiding officer and give his/her name and address in an audible tone of voice for the records, state the subject to be discussed and state who the speaker is representing if representing an organization or other persons. Unless further time is granted by a majority vote of the Council, remarks from the public shall be limited to four (4) minutes. All remarks shall be addressed to the Council as a whole and not to any member thereof. No person other than members of the Council and the person having the floor shall be permitted to enter into any discussion, either directly or through a member of the Council, without permission of the presiding officer. No question may be asked of a member or a member of the staff without the permission of the presiding officer.
- Subd. 7. Spokesperson for Group of Persons. In order to expedite matters and to avoid repetitious presentations, whenever any group of persons wishes to address the Council on the same subject, it shall be proper for the presiding officer to request that a spokesperson be chosen by the group to address the Council and, in case additional matters are to be presented by any other member of said group, to limit the number of such persons addressing the Council.
- Subd. 8. After Motion. After a motion has been made or a public hearing has been closed, no member of the public shall address the Council from the audience on the matter under consideration without first securing permission to do so by a majority vote of the City Council.
- Subd. 9. Conduct. Any member of the Council, staff or person indulging in personalities or making impertinent, slanderous or profane remarks or who willfully utters loud, threatening or abusive language, or engages in any disorderly conduct which would impede, disrupt or disturb the orderly conduct of any meeting, hearing or other proceeding, shall be called to order by the presiding officer and, if such conduct

continues, may at the discretion of the presiding officer, be ordered barred from further audience before the Council during that meeting.

- Subd. 10. Members of the Audience. No person in the audience shall engage in disorderly conduct such as hand clapping, stamping of feet, whistling, using profane language, yelling and similar demonstrations, which conduct disturbs the peace and good order of the meeting.

## SECTION 7. ENFORCEMENT OF DECORUM

- Subd. 1. Warning. All persons shall, at the request of the presiding officer, be silent. If, after receiving a warning from the presiding officer, a person persists in disturbing the meeting, said officer may order this person removed from the meeting. If this person does not leave willingly, the presiding officer may call a recess and order that the person be removed by the Sergeant-at-Arms.

- Subd. 2. Sergeant-at-Arms. The Chief of Police, or such member or members of the Police Department, shall be Sergeant-at-Arms of the Council meetings or as asked to be present at a Committee meeting. The Chief or other Police Department representative shall carry out all orders and instructions given by the presiding officer for the purpose of maintaining order and decorum at the Council meeting. Upon instruction of the presiding officer, it shall be the duty of the Sergeant-at-Arms to remove from the meeting any person who intentionally disturbs the proceedings of the Council.

- Subd. 3. Resisting Removal. Any person who resists removal by the Sergeant-at-Arms may be charged with violating City Ordinance.

- Subd. 4. Motions to Enforce. Any Council member may move to require the presiding officer to enforce these rules and the affirmative vote of a majority of the Council shall require the presiding officer to do so.

- Subd. 5. Adjournment. In the event that any meeting is willfully disturbed by a group or group of persons so as to render the orderly conduct of such meeting unfeasible and when order cannot be restored by the removal of individuals who are creating the disturbance, the meeting may be adjourned with the remaining business considered at the next regular meeting.

- Subd. 6. Special Meetings. If the matter being addressed prior to adjournment is of such a nature as to demand immediate attention, the presiding officer may adjourn the meeting to another date.

## SECTION 8. CAMERAS AND RECORDING DEVICES

- Subd. 1. Use of Cameras and Recording Devices Limited. Cameras, including television and motion picture cameras, electronic sound recording devices and any other mechanical, electrical or electronic recording devices may be used in the Council

Chamber, but only in such a manner as will cause a minimum of interference with or disturbance of the proceedings of the Council and at the discretion of the presiding officer.

## SECTION 9. SEVERABILITY

Subd. 1. General. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of these Rules of Procedure and Decorum is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof.

## **CITY MEETINGS**

### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES**

The City Council is meeting as a legislative body to conduct the business of the City. Unless so ordered by the Council President, citizen participation is limited to the following times and always within the prescribed rules of conduct for public input at meetings.

A) **Public Hearings.** Public hearings are conducted so that the public affected by a proposal may have input into the decision. During hearings, all affected residents will be given an opportunity to speak.

B) **Public Forum.** Any member of the public may speak at this time on any item **NOT** on the agenda. In consideration for the public attending the meeting for specific items on the agenda, this portion of the meeting will be limited to fifteen (15) minutes. Individuals are requested to limit their comments to four (4) minutes or less. If the majority of the Council determines that additional time on a specific issue is warranted, then discussion on that issue may be continued under New Business at the end of the agenda.

Before addressing the City Council, members of the public are asked to step up to the microphone, give their name, address and state the subject to be discussed. All remarks shall be addressed to the Council as a whole and not to any member thereof. No person other than members of the Council and the person having the floor shall be permitted to enter into any discussion without permission of the presiding officer. No question may be asked of a member or a member of the staff without permission of the presiding officer.

Your participation, as prescribed by these rules, is welcomed and your cooperation is greatly appreciated.