



# 2025 City Rules of

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City of Coburg, OR  
[coburgoregon.org](http://coburgoregon.org)

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## INTRODUCTION AND AUTHORITY

The 2022 Coburg Charter requires the Council to adopt Rules of governance for its members and meetings. The following rules will be in effect upon adoption by the Council until they are amended or new rules are adopted via resolution.

# Section 1 - General Rules

## 1.1 Rules of Procedure

Unless otherwise provided by these rules, the procedure for council meetings, and any committee or subcommittee of the council, shall be guided by Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised.

Members of the council are encouraged to avoid invoking the finer points of parliamentary procedure found within Robert's Rules of Order when such points will obscure the issues before the council and confuse members of the public.

Whenever these rules and Robert's Rules of Order conflict, these rules shall govern. Whenever these rules and Robert's Rules of Order are silent on an issue or question, the Mayor, or presiding officer, shall decide the issue or question.

## 1.2 Quorum

A majority of the number of persons holding the office of council shall constitute a quorum as outlined in the charter. Vacancies in an office count towards determining a quorum.

In the event a quorum is not present, the members of the council present shall adjourn the meeting.

## 1.3 Presiding Officer

The Mayor shall preside over all meetings. The Mayor shall retain all rights and privileges of the office of the Mayor as set out in the city charter when acting in this capacity.

In the Mayor's absence, the council president shall preside over the meeting.

If both the Mayor and the council president are absent from the meeting, the following procedure shall be utilized to determine who is the presiding officer:

1. The city recorder shall call the council to order and call roll call.
2. The first order of business will be to elect a temporary presiding officer for the meeting by a vote of a majority vote of the quorum.
3. Should either the Mayor or the council president arrive, the temporary presiding officer shall relinquish control of the meeting immediately upon the conclusion of the item being discussed.
4. Any councilor acting as the presiding officer in this instance shall retain all rights and privileges of a member of the council.

## 1.4 Appointed Officers

A. The City Administrator serves as the chief administrative officer. The city administrator is required to attend all Council meetings and is permitted to participate in any discussion; however, the city administrator has no authority to cast a vote in any decision rendered by the Council. The city administrator shall act as parliamentarian and advise the presiding officer on questions of order.

B. The City Recorder serves as the clerk of the Council and is required to attend all meetings of the Council unless excused by the Mayor. The City Recorder is responsible for preparing meeting notices and for creating the official record of the meeting in compliance with Oregon Public Meeting Laws.

## 1.5 Agendas and Packets

The Mayor and City administrator meet regularly to review and schedule agenda items.

1. The presiding officer may change the agenda after the start of the meeting.
2. The City Administrator may change the agenda at any time prior to the start of the Meeting while maintaining compliance with all required public notice requirements.
3. No Council approval shall be required for an agenda of any meeting.
4. A packet including the agenda and supporting material will typically be available three business days prior to the meeting.

## 1.6 Order of Business

Regular Council meetings will generally include the following categories, unless the presiding officer or a majority of the Council changes the agenda as doing so appears to be in the best interest of the public. Any changes in the agenda will be announced by the presiding officer.

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Mayor Comments
5. Agenda Review
6. Public Comment
7. Consent Agenda
8. Special Guests
9. Ordinance & Resolutions
10. Contracts
11. Council Action Items
12. Administrative Reports

13. Council Liaison Updates and Comments

14. Adjournment

### 1.7 Notice

The City Recorder shall provide notice of all meetings following ORS 192.640 and OAR 199-050-0040. Notices will include the date, time, location, and subjects of discussion.

## **Section 2 – Council Meetings**

### 2.1 Regular Meeting

The Council shall meet every second Tuesday of each month, except on designated holidays and/or Council recesses.

1. Meetings shall begin at 6:00 p.m.
2. Meetings shall adjourn at 8:30 p.m., allowing up to two extensions of thirty minutes upon a majority vote of the quorum.

### 2.2 Special Meetings

The Mayor or City Administrator may schedule special meetings as needed to conduct City business. Special meetings are public meetings and shall be held and noticed in accordance with Oregon Public Meetings law.

### 2.3 Work Session

The Mayor or City Administrator may schedule work sessions as needed. Work sessions are generally scheduled on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Work sessions are intended for information gathering, staff presentations, or preliminary discussions. The Council cannot take formal or final action on any matters at a work session. Public Comment is not taken, unless determined by the presiding officer before the meeting. Public notices that meet ORS 192.640 & OAR 199-050-0040 will be done at least 48 hours in advance.

### 2.4 Emergency Meeting

The Mayor or City Administrator may call an emergency meeting of the City Council with less than 24 hour notice. Emergency meetings are public meetings shall be held and noticed per Oregon Public Meeting Law. The agenda and minutes of the meeting must describe the emergency and justify the notice being less than 24 hours. Only the emergency matter(s) are to be discussed and considered during the meeting.

### 2.5 Executive Sessions

The Mayor or City Administrator may call an executive session for any purpose authorized by ORS 192.660. Executive Sessions are generally held prior to or at the end of a regular or special

Council meeting. Executive Sessions are closed to the public, except recognized news media consistent with relevant state statutes, shall be allowed to attend most sessions. The City Council and staff in attendance shall not disclose to any person the content of any discussions in an executive session.

The Mayor, Councilors, City Administrator, and persons invited by the Mayor or City Administrator are allowed to attend. No elected official who declares an actual conflict of interest on a topic to be discussed in executive session shall remain in the room during the discussion.

No executive session may be held to take a final action or make a final decision. Decisions must be taken by a vote in an open session to allow the public to know the results of the discussions in executive session.

## 2.6 Retreats

Retreats and similar goal-setting sessions are a special type of work session that usually happen once a year. It is a more extended work session to review the city goals and work plan and discuss potential additions or amendments. The Mayor and Council can determine in advance whether any portion of the session will include public comment. All retreats and goal-setting sessions are public meetings and will be noticed and operated as such.

## 2.7 Meeting Location and Electronic Meetings

Meetings are held at the Ray Smith Chambers located at Coburg City Hall. The mayor or City Administrator may choose to have a meeting at an alternate location. All meetings will be held within the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Coburg and be accessible to individuals with disabilities and meet all applicable Oregon Public Meetings law.

All meetings of the City Council are live-streamed on the City website, excluding executive sessions. If in-person testimony is allowed during the meeting during public comment or a public hearing, the public may provide oral or written testimony electronically by pre-registering with the City by 3 PM the day of the meeting.

## 2.8 Council Recess

The Charter permits the Council to take up to two recesses per calendar year when agreed upon by a majority vote. Depending on deadlines and workloads, August is typically designated as a month of recess for the Council and advisory committees.

## 2.9 Cancellation of meetings

The Charter permits the Mayor or the Council President to cancel any Council meeting due to an emergency or a lack of agenda items.

## 2.10 Attendance

Councilors should inform the Mayor, City Administrator, and City Recorder if unable to attend a Council meeting. The Mayor may excuse the attendance of a member of the Council at any meeting for illness, vacation, or other reasonable cause. The Mayor shall determine if an absence is unexcused. The absence of a member of the Council shall be recorded in the minutes as either excused or unexcused.

The Council may vote to vacate the office if a Councilor is absent from all Council meetings within 60 days or has four absences (excused or unexcused) from all Council meetings in 12 months by Charter.

## Section 3 – Motions, Debate, Public Comment, and Voting

### 3.1 Motions

All motions shall be distinctly worded for the record.

1. If a motion does not receive a second, it dies.
2. The presiding officer will state the motion for the record with the name of the councilor who made the motion and the name of the councilor who seconded.
3. The council will discuss a motion only after it has been moved and seconded. (Nothing prevents general discussion or expression of opinions before a motion is made.)
4. A motion to amend can be made to a motion that is on the floor and has been seconded.
5. A motion may be withdrawn by the mover at any time without the consent of the council.
6. Amendments are voted on first, followed by the main motion if it is voted on as amended.
7. A call for the question is intended to close the debate on the main motion; does not require a second and is not debatable.
  - a. A call for the question fails without a majority vote.
  - b. Debate on the main subject resumes if the motion fails.
8. When the discussion is concluded the presiding officer restates the motion and calls for the vote.
9. The mayor only votes to break a tie.
10. The presider announces the results of the vote, indicating whether the motion has passed or failed.

### 3.2 Debate

The following rules shall govern the debate of any item the Council discusses.

1. Every Councilor desiring to speak shall address the presiding officer and, upon recognition by the presiding officer, shall confine him/herself to the question under debate, at all times acting and speaking in a respectful manner.
2. A member, once recognized, shall not be interrupted when speaking unless it is to be called to order.
3. The member of the council making the motion shall have the privilege of speaking first and also of closing the debate.

### 3.3 Public Comment & Public Hearings

The public is entitled to address the council on a matter of public concern. The council recognizes that public input into the governmental process is an invaluable aid to informed decision making. Therefore, it is the policy of the council that all citizens shall have the right to speak before the council on matters of public concern.

1. Each member has (3) three minutes to provide public comment unless extended by the presiding officer.
2. Public comment is limited to a maximum of 30 minutes unless extended by the presiding officer.
3. Each person desiring to give a public comment or testimony must sign with city recorder before the meeting is called to order. The presiding officer will call on individuals who have signed up. You will be ask to provide your name and the City you reside in.



4. Public comment is a time for comment; it is not a time for debate, nor is it a time for members of the public to ask questions of and receive answers from the council or city staff. The Mayor may direct follow-up on public comments to the City Administrator either in the meeting or at another time with a request for the City Administrator to report back to the Council as appropriate.
5. Flags, signs, posters, and placards are not permitted at city council meetings. Arm bands, emblems, badges, and other articles worn on personal clothing, so long as such items do not extend from the body in such a way to cause injury to another, are permitted.

Public hearings may be required for legislative, quasi-judicial, administrative, and land use matters. The City follows the process policies and all legal requirements in the ORS and Coburg Ordinances.

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### 3.4 Voting

The results of all votes, including ballots, will be recorded, including the vote of each councilor by name.

A vote passes with the majority of a quorum unless the Charter or Oregon Revised Statutes require a majority of the council.

Examples that require a Majority of Council:

1. Council to take a recess (charter)
2. Declaration of Mayor or Councilor vacancy (charter)
3. Adoption of Ordinance (charter)
4. Pro Tem appointment (charter)
5. Appoint or remove City (charter)
6. Motion relating to fee's or fines (ORS)
7. Budget (ORS)
8. Franchise Agreements (Charter & ORS)

### 3.5 Abstain

Every member present when a question is called shall vote either aye or no, unless the council, by unanimous consent, excuses a member for a special reason or unless a member has a conflict of interest under applicable law, in which case no permission is required. There shall be

no debate on such a request. If any member declines to vote, it will be noted on the record and will not be counted toward the number of votes (majority of council or quorum) to pass or reject the motion.

## Section 6 – Liaison Roles and Responsibilities

Councilor Liaisons assignments are a mayor-appointed and are reviewed and potentially reassigned annually. The role is typically collaboratively discussed and determined each January/February and formally appointed in March of each year.

**Definition of Liaison** “Liaison”: a person who establishes and maintains communication for mutual understanding and cooperation (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

- Serves as point of contact between the Committee and the Council
- Assists in communication between the Committee and the Council
- Non-voting, limited participation committee representative
- Opportunity to listen, learn, and gain context on issues and requests that will be presented for future Council decision-making.

### **Responsibilities of the Council Liaison:**

1. Attend all meetings but is not a member of the committee.
2. Acts as a representative of the full Council to provide direction or guidance clearly supported by the Council.
3. If the committee asks for the Liaison’s opinion, the Liaison may state a **personal opinion** but should emphasize that they are speaking for themselves rather than the entire Council.
4. As requested or invited by the Committee Chair, Liaison may speak to remind the committee of the Council direction or City policies.
5. Shall not attempt to influence the work or recommendations of the committee.
  - a. Will not take part in any deliberations, votes or decisions.
  - b. Must not share or engage with information discussed in a quasi-judicial committee, e.g. Planning Commission.
6. Will share with Council any requests from the committee such as:
  - a. Questions raised by the Committee about scope of work or changes to the scope of work
  - b. Requests for expenditures or impact on city resources (money, staff time or supplies)
  - c. Requests to add items to Council agenda
7. The Council member liaison will regularly update Council on the work of the Committee.

## Section 7 – Vacancies and Appointments

Mayor or councilor vacancies are outlined in the Charter and filled by appointment to serve the remainder of the term.

1. Declaration of vacancy requires a majority vote of the City Council.
2. Notices and recruitment will be posted for minimum of thirty (30) days.
3. Qualified candidates will be invited to a Council meeting.
4. Candidates will be welcomed and given (3) three minutes to introduce themselves and discuss why they are interested in serving on the council.
5. The presiding officer shall review the interview and appointment process with the candidates and audience. Candidates will draw a number to determine the order in which they will be interviewed.
6. Candidates will be requested to step out of the council chambers until the time of their interview so they will not gain an advantage by listening to the other candidates. They may remain in the audience after their presentation.
7. Interviews will be completed, and ballot cards containing the candidates names in alphabetical order will be distributed.
8. Each of the remaining members of the Council shall select one candidate and mark their ballot accordingly. If one candidate receives the majority of the votes of the remaining members of the Council, such candidate shall be appointed to fill the vacant position.
9. If no candidate receives a majority vote of the remaining members of the Council on the first ballot, the two candidates receiving the most votes will move to the next round.  
  
If a tie in the first-place tie situation, all first-place candidates will go to the second round. If there is one first-place candidate and tied second-place candidates, then all first and second place candidates will be placed on the second ballot.
10. Councilors will be asked to select one of the candidates and write their name on the back of the original ballot. The candidate receiving a majority of the votes of the remaining members of the Council shall then be appointed to fill the vacancy.

Repeat the process in above if a third tie.

## Section 8 – Ethics, Decorum, Outside Statements

Ethics. All members of the Council shall review and observe the requirements of state ethics law. In addition to complying with state ethics law, all members of the Council shall refrain from:

- A. Disclosing confidential information.
- B. Taking action that benefits special interest groups or persons at the expense of the city as a whole.
- C. Expressing an opinion contrary to the official position of the Council without so saying.
- D. Conducting themselves in a manner so as to bring discredit upon the government of the city.

Decorum. The presiding officer shall preserve decorum during meetings and shall decide all points of order, subject to appeal of the Council.

- B. Members of the Council shall preserve decorum during meetings, and shall not, by conversation or action, delay or interrupt the proceedings or refuse to obey the orders of the presiding officer or these rules.
- C. Members of the city staff and all other persons attending meetings shall observe the Council's rules of proceedings and adhere to the same standards of decorum as members of Council.

### Statements to the Media and Other Organizations

- A. Representing City. If a member of the Council, to include the mayor, appears as a representative of the city before another governmental agency, the media or an organization to give a statement on an issue, the member may only state the official position of the city, as approved by a majority of the Council.
- B. Personal Opinions. If a member of the Council, including the mayor, appears in their personal capacity before another governmental agency, the media, or an organization to give a statement on an issue, the member must state they are expressing their own opinion and not that of the city before giving their statement.

## Section 10 – Miscellaneous

### 10.1 Communication with Staff

Questions of city staff and/or requests for additional information that may take staff time in excess of fifteen minutes should be directed only to the City Administrator, who may respond directly or delegate to another staff member.

Materials supplied to a Council member regarding pertinent, urgent or critical issues that would be of interest to other Councilors will be made available to all members of the Council so that all have equal access to information.

Every effort should be made to limit disruption to the work of city staff. Council members should avoid making requests to staff members who are in meetings, on the phone, or engrossed in performing their job functions.

Council members should never express concerns about the performance of a city employee in public or to the employee directly. Comments about staff performance should only be made to the City Administrator through private correspondence or conversation.