

**RULES OF PROCEDURE
FOR THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE
CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS
EFFECTIVE MARCH 6, 2018**



City Charter Section 2.10(C) allows the City Council to adopt procedural guidelines for City Council meetings to the extent they do not conflict with local or state law. The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order was adopted under Resolution No. R-34-80 to provide further guidelines for the conduct of efficient and orderly meetings. The following Rules of Procedure will provide more detailed guidelines.

RULES OF CIVILITY

The City of Green Cove Springs encourages citizen participation in the democratic process and recognizes and protects the right of freedom of speech afforded to all. As the City council conducts the business of the City, rules of civility shall apply. City Council members, City officials, and members of the public are to respectfully communicate according to the City Council's Rules of Procedure. Persons shall speak only when recognized by the Presiding Officer and, at that time, refrain from engaging in personal attacks or derogatory or offensive language. Comments from citizens being made at a time other than during the period titled "Mayor to call on members of the audience wishing to address the Council on matters not on the Agenda" should be focused on the issue at hand. Outbursts will not be tolerated and those who do not conduct themselves in a respectful and lawful manner shall be subject to removal as outlines in the City Council's Rules of Procedure. It shall be the responsibility of each individual to demonstrate civility.

PREFACE

The City of Green Cove Springs conducts municipal government, performs municipal functions, and renders municipal services and exercises any power for municipal purposes according to the City Charter, except as otherwise provided for by law. Any conflict or need for clarification arising out of the following Rules of Procedure shall be resolved, where applicable, by provisions of the City Charter which shall prevail, except as otherwise provided for by law. Any Amendments to the City Charter which may require revisions to the Rules of Procedure shall be administratively prepared by the City Clerk and adopted by the City Council.

These Rules of Procedure are adopted by the City Council to guide the City Council through its primary operations and functions. They are designed to provide the structure needed to conduct City business while also maintaining the flexibility needed to efficiently and effectively carry out the public business as circumstances may dictate.

The Government in the Sunshine Act, also known as the Sunshine Law, provides a right of access to governmental proceedings of public boards or commissions at both the state and local levels. The law is equally applicable to elected and appointed boards, and applies to any gathering of two or more members of the same board to discuss some matter which will foreseeably come before

that board for action. Members-elect to such boards or commissions are also subject to the Sunshine Law, even though they have not yet taken office. There are three basic requirements of s. 286.011, F.S.: (1) meetings of public boards or commissions must be open to the public; (2) reasonable notice of such meetings must be given; and (3) minutes of the meetings must be taken and promptly recorded.

RULE 1 MEETINGS

All City Council meetings shall be held in the Council Chambers in City Hall, 321 Walnut Street, Green Cove Springs, Florida, unless advertised otherwise, and shall be open to the public. In case of emergency, the Mayor may designate an appropriate meeting place for a meeting open to the public. Robert's Rules of Order, as revised, so long as they do not conflict with Ordinances, Statutes, these Rules, or the City of Green Cove Springs Charter, shall be used as a guide in conducting City Council meetings.

RULE 2 REGULAR MEETINGS

As noted in City Charter Section 2.10 (a), the City Council shall hold regular meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of each month commencing at 7:00 p.m. From time to time, regular meetings may be adjusted by Resolution of the City Council to accommodate a holiday schedule, except that: (a) When a regular meeting day shall fall on a Legal Holiday, the regular meeting shall be held on the following day at the same time and place, (b) In July, there shall be only one regular meeting to be held on the third Tuesday of the month commencing at 7:00 p.m., (c) In November, there shall be only one regular meeting to be held on the first Tuesday of the month commencing at 7:00 p.m., and (d) In December, there shall be only one regular meeting to be held on the first Tuesday of the month commencing at 7:00 p.m. Meetings shall also be rescheduled to accommodate Elections as scheduled by the Clay County Supervisor of Elections. The news media shall be notified and appropriate notice shall be posted at City Hall and on the City's website.

RULE 3 SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Mayor, or in the Mayor's absence, the Vice-Mayor, or two (2) or more Council members, may call or schedule a Special Meeting of the City Council. Whenever possible, such meeting should be called on the first or third Tuesday, except holidays or eves of holidays. A minimum of six (6) hours' notice shall be given to all City Council members for all Special City Council Meetings. Notice of the call of such Special Meetings shall be by majority agreement of the City Council, or in writing, signed by the party or parties making the call, and shall be served on every member, either by notifying the member in person, by telephone, electronic media, or by leaving a copy of said notice at the member's legal residence. The news media, the City Attorney, the City Clerk, the City Manager, and affected Department Heads shall also be notified. The notice shall state the business to be transacted at such meeting and no other business than that so specified shall be transacted. Only matters on the agenda or matters of an emergency nature may be acted upon by the council. Justification of emergency action shall be spread upon the minutes of the meeting. Notice shall be posted at City Hall.

RULE 4 EMERGENCY MEETINGS

The Mayor, or in the Mayor's absence, the Vice-Mayor, two (2) or more Council members, or the City Manager, may call an Emergency Meeting of the City Council upon not less than six (6) hours' notice to every City Council member. Emergency Meetings may be scheduled days or evenings in addition to the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month. Notice of the call of such Emergency Meetings shall be in writing, signed by the party or parties making the call, and shall be served on every member, either by notifying the member in person, by telephone, electronic media, or by leaving a copy of said notice at the member's legal residence. The news media, the City Attorney, the City Clerk, the City Manager, and affected Department Heads shall also be notified. The notice shall state the business to be transacted at such meeting and no other business than that so specified shall be transacted. Notice shall be posted at City Hall. If there is no longer a need for an Emergency Meeting, the entity that called the meeting is authorized to cancel such meeting.

RULE 5 WORKSHOPS

A workshop may be called orally or in writing by the Mayor, any two (2) or more City Council members, or the City Manager. The City Council can initiate workshops, also known as Special Meetings, that are public meetings to improve communication, to gain information, or to create a stronger working relationship among the elected officials of the general city government. Public attendance is encouraged. Notice shall be posted at City Hall.

RULE 6 QUORUM AND ATTENDANCE

- (a) A Quorum of the City Council for the transaction of any business shall consist of three (3) members, but a lesser number may adjourn from time to time until a quorum is present. Once a quorum has been established, a majority of the City Council present at the meeting shall be required to carry a motion, unless, by Statute, Ordinance, or other regulation, an extraordinary majority (4/5ths) of the City Council is required for approval. In the absence of a quorum, the City Council may compel the attendance of members absent without cause by a fine of \$25.00 for each meeting not attended. As stated in City Charter Section 2.10, "All voting, except on procedural motions, shall be by roll call and the ayes and nays recorded in the minute book."
- (b) City Council members may participate in and vote at all regular, special, or emergency meetings of the City Council by use of electronic media in those instances where the member is temporarily deployed, reassigned, activated, or transferred by any branch of the United States Military or the Florida National Guard for a period of longer than thirty (30) days. In addition, this policy shall cover any other situation resulting in the absence of the member due to illness, medical related issues of a non-incapacitation nature, or extraordinary circumstances related to their job or family emergencies causing them to be physically unable to attend a meeting. In all instances, participation by electronic media will only be allowed if a quorum is physically present at the site where the meeting is actually being held.

- (c) In addition to the City Council members, City officials whose regular attendance shall be required at meetings of the City Council are the: City Attorney, City Clerk, City Manager, or their designees, and City Department Directors as charged by the City Manager. The Chief of Police, or his representative, shall be present to provide security and assistance in maintaining order.

RULE 7 **NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS**

The term of City Council members elected to office shall commence on the 3rd Tuesday in May following the general election. A swearing-in ceremony for the new City Council members will be coordinated by the City Clerk. The City Clerk will provide orientation materials.

RULE 8 **ELECTION OF MAYOR AND VICE-MAYOR**

- (a) The election of Mayor and Vice-Mayor pursuant to Sec. 2.05 of the Charter shall occur at the second regular meeting in May.
- (b) In case of the absence or temporary disability of the Mayor, the Vice-Mayor serves as the Presiding Officer during the absence. In case of the absence or temporary disability of the Mayor and Vice-Mayor, an Acting Chair, elected from members of the City Council, serves during the continuance of the absences or disabilities.

RULE 8 **PRESIDING OFFICER**

- (a) The Mayor, or in the Mayor's absence the Vice-Mayor, shall preside over all meetings of the Council. In the absence of the Mayor and Vice-Mayor, at the hour fixed for any meeting, the City Manager shall call the City Council to order, whereupon a temporary Chair shall be elected by the members present. Upon arrival of the Mayor and Vice-Mayor, the temporary Chair shall relinquish the chair upon conclusion of the business immediately before the Council.
- (b) The Presiding Officer shall be responsible for enforcing the Rules of Procedure and conducting meetings in a manner which preserves order and decorum, prevents attacks on personalities or the impugning of members' motives, and confine debate or comments to the question under discussion. The Mayor shall endeavor to conduct meetings in a fashion that draws balance between the informality and congeniality possible in a small community while also maintaining the decorum and formality necessary to conduct business in an orderly fashion.

- (c) The Presiding Officer shall take the Chair at the hour fixed for the meeting and call the members to order. The Presiding Officer shall state every question given before the Council and direct the City Clerk to call roll. The City Clerk shall call roll in a random order as selected by the City Clerk. The City Clerk will record the vote on all matters in which the recording of ayes and nays is required by law or with respect to which any member requests such recording. The Presiding Officer or City Clerk will announce the decision of the City Council on all subjects and the Presiding Officer will decide on questions of order. Any member may appeal from the decision of the Presiding Officer, in which event a majority vote of the members present shall govern and conclusively determine the ruling appealed. No other business, except a motion to adjourn or to lay on the table, shall be in order until the question on appeal has been decided.
- (d) The Presiding Officer shall remain objective, consistent with Robert's Rules of Order. According to Robert's "Rule Against Chair's Participation in Debate," the Presiding Officer has, as an individual, the same rights in debate as any other member; but the impartiality required of the Chair in an assembly precludes exercising these rights while presiding. On certain occasions, the Presiding Officer may believe that a crucial factor relating to such a question has been overlooked and that his/her obligation as a member to call attention to the point outweighs his/her duty to preside at that time. If the Presiding Officer wishes to place a motion, the gavel must be relinquished.

Based upon these Rules of Procedure, the gavel will be relinquished in the following order:

1. Vice-Mayor;
2. Other City Council members based on seniority of tenure;
3. City Clerk/City Manager.

The "Rule Against Chair's Participation in Debate" further states that the Presiding Officer who relinquished the chair shall not return to it until the pending main question has been disposed of, since he/she has shown himself/herself, to be partisan as far as that particular matter is concerned. Unless a Presiding Officer is extremely sparing in leaving the chair to take part in debate, he/she may destroy members' confidence in the impartiality of his/her approach to the task of presiding.

Once a motion has been made and second received, the Presiding Officer shall hear comments from the other City Council members. Following comments from the other City Council members, the Presiding Officer shall be permitted to provide his/her input on the motion.

- (e) Declare the meeting adjourned or at any time in the event of an emergency affecting the safety of those present.

RULE 9 **CITY CLERK**

- (a) The City Clerk, or his/her Deputy Clerk, serves as parliamentarian, and advises the Presiding Officer as to correct rules of procedure or questions of specific rule application. The City Clerk calls to the attention of the Presiding Officer any error in the proceedings that may affect the substantive rights of any City Council member, or may otherwise do harm.
- (b) It shall be the duty of the City Clerk of the City Council, in addition to other duties prescribed by law, to keep and preserve correct minutes of the proceedings of the City Council. The minutes shall be a public record. Proposed substantive additions or corrections to proposed minutes, other than spelling and grammatical corrections, shall be furnished in writing to the City Clerk not less than twelve (12) hours prior to the meeting at which approval action is scheduled. The record of every meeting when approved and entered in the minutes shall be signed by the Presiding Officer at such meeting and attested by the City Clerk. The City Clerk shall prepare an Agenda for each regular meeting of the City Council in the order of business and furnish a copy thereof to each member, the City Attorney, and the City Manager at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of said meeting. All official meetings of the Council shall be recorded on an automatic recording device by tape, record, or other device and permanently preserved in the official records of the City or until their destruction as specifically authorized by the State or City Council.
- (c) Requests for copies of public records regarding a meeting of the City Council shall be made through the Office of the City Clerk. The cost shall be in accordance with State law.

RULE 10 **RULES OF DEBATE**

- (a) The Presiding Officer may move, second, and debate subject only to such limitation of debate as are enforced by these standing rules on all members and shall not be deprived of any of the rights and privileges as a member.
- (b) When a member desires to speak in debate on a subject open to debate, the member must address the Presiding Officer. When recognized by the Presiding Officer, the member may speak only on matters germane to the business or questions under debate.
- (c) A member, once recognized, shall not be interrupted while speaking unless the member is called to order for transgressing any rule of the City Council or failing to maintain proper decorum. If a member is called to order while speaking, the member shall cease speaking until the questions of order is determined by the Presiding Officer.

- (d) After the decision on any question, it shall be in order only for a member voting on the prevailing side to move for reconsideration at the same meeting, but such motion may be seconded by the member. If a motion to reconsider is lost, it shall not be renewed again at the same meeting. A motion to reconsider may be laid on the table or postponed indefinitely, and the effect of such action in either case shall be to defeat the motion to reconsider and to prevent further consideration thereof.

RULE 11 CONDUCT AND RESPONSIBILITY OF MEMBER

- (a) Any member who is unable to attend a City Council or Committee Meeting due to sickness or for a duly authorized reason shall notify the City Clerk, who shall notify the Presiding Officer before the meeting.
- (b) No member present at any meeting of the City Council shall leave the meeting without permission from the Presiding Officer.
- (c) While the City Council is in session, the members shall preserve order and decorum. A member shall neither by conversation or otherwise delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the City Council, or disturb any member while speaking, or refuse to obey the Rules of Procedure of the City Council or the Presiding Officer.
- (d) No member shall speak on any question, discuss any matter, interrupt another, or make a motion without first addressing the Presiding Officer and obtaining recognition.
- (e) No member shall be allowed to vote on any motion or measure, or gain the privilege of the floor, unless the member is at his or her designated seat.
- (f) Every member, in speaking on any matter, shall be confined to the question, shall not use unbecoming or abusive language, and shall avoid personalities.
- (g) No member shall be permitted to explain his or her vote during roll call, but may do so for a period of not more than one (1) minute prior to the result of the roll call being announced.
- (h) Every member who is present when a question is put, unless excluded by a conflict of interest, shall vote in the affirmative or negative.
- (i) Every member shall observe the Code of Ethics as set forth in the laws of the State of Florida and as required by the Charter or Ordinances of the City. Disclosure to the City Council of a private interest, as required by the State law on ethics, shall be accomplished in the form as prescribed by the Commission of Ethics, State of Florida.
- (j) No member shall direct the City Manager to forward to another political subdivision or government agency communications on matters under consideration by the City Council or its committees except where there is clear understanding of approval by the City Council or in response to routine matters in consonance with the previous actions of the City

Council. Nothing precludes a member from initiating correspondence on City stationary over their own signature indicating the City Council seat they currently hold. Nothing in this Rule is to be construed to limit or restrict the Mayor acting in his or her official capacity from coordinating with the City Manager in answering or responding to correspondence or communications relative to the business of the City.

- (k) Ex parte Communications – Oral or written communications (sometimes referred to as lobbying or information gathering) between a Council Member and others, including staff, where there is a substantive discussion regarding a quasi-judicial decision by the City Council. The exchanges must be disclosed by the City Council member so the public may respond to such comments before a vote is taken.

RULE 12 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No City Council member shall vote in his/her official capacity on a matter which would inure to his/her special private gain or loss, or which the City Council member knows would inure to the special gain or loss of any principal by whom he/she is retained, of the parent organization or subsidiary of a corporate principal by which he/she is retained, or a relative or of a business associate. The City Council member in conflict shall announce such conflict before any discussion commences. He/she may participate in the discussion but may not vote. Within 15 days of following that City Council meeting, he/she shall file with the City Clerk a Form 8B which describes the nature of his/her interest in the matter. The Form 8B shall be received by the City Clerk and incorporated into the minutes of the meeting.

RULE 13 ORDINANCES

An enacted Ordinance is a legislative act that prescribes general, uniform, and permanent rules of conduct relating to the corporate affairs of the City. City Council action shall be taken by Ordinance when required by law, or to prescribe permanent rules of conduct which continue in force until repealed, or where such conduct is enforced by penalty. All Ordinances shall be introduced in writing, and scheduled for public hearing after advertisement.

- (a) Any non-emergency Ordinances, with the exception of zoning Ordinances, shall be initiated by either a member of the City Council, the City Attorney, or the City Manager. Each Ordinance shall be introduced in writing and shall embrace one (1) subject and matters properly connected therewith. The subject shall be clearly stated in the title. No Ordinance shall be revised or amended by reference to its title only. Ordinances to revise or amend shall set out in full the revised or amended act, section, or subsection or paragraph of a section or subsection. Rezoning Ordinances shall be scheduled on the City Council Agenda following the required public hearing(s) before the Planning and Zoning Board and, once scheduled, the same procedure as outlined shall be followed unless State law provides otherwise.

- (b) Any Ordinance or Resolution prepared for consideration by the City Council shall be reviewed by the City Attorney prior to introduction to the City Council. Upon request by the Presiding Officer or any member, the City Attorney shall render an opinion to the City Council concerning the legality of any Ordinance or Resolution pending before it. Every Ordinance and Resolution which amends prior Ordinances or Resolutions shall indicate words being deleted by strike-throughs, and shall include underlining of words being added to existing provisions.
- (c) In acting upon Ordinances, the Ordinance shall be introduced on first reading as to form only. The City Clerk shall then cause the Ordinance to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the City, at least ten (10) days before the second reading, a notice of proposed enactment pursuant to and in compliance with Chapter 166, Florida Statutes. Prior to adoption, on second and final reading, a public hearing shall be held to enable citizens to comment on the proposed Ordinance. On second and final reading, an affirmative vote of the majority of the members present shall be necessary for the passage or adoption of the Ordinance.
- (d) The Council may, by two-thirds (2/3) vote of its membership, declare an Ordinance to be an emergency measure and pass such Ordinance without regard to any reading as required by the City Charter. Every emergency Ordinance, except emergency appropriations, shall automatically stand repealed as of the sixty-first (61st) day following the date on which it was adopted, but this shall not prevent reenactment of the Ordinance under regular procedures, or if the emergency still exists, in the manner specified in the City Charter. An emergency Ordinance may also be repealed by adoption of a repealing Ordinance in the same manner specified in the Charter for adoption of emergency Ordinances.
- (e) Whenever any Ordinance or Resolution has been introduced for the consideration of the City Council, and the measure failed to be adopted or passed, such measure, unless substantially changed, shall not be introduced again until the lapse of at least three (3) months from the date of the City Council meeting at which it failed adoption or passage.
- (f) If a Motion to pass an Ordinance fails, the Ordinance shall be considered lost.
- (g) Upon final passage, every Ordinance and Resolution shall be signed by the Presiding Officer of the Council, attested by the City Clerk and approved as to form by the City Attorney.

RULE 14 RESOLUTIONS

Generally, an enacted Resolution is an internal legislative act that is a formal statement of policy concerning matters of special or temporary character. City Council action shall be taken by Resolution when required by law, and in those instances where an expression of policy more formal than a motion is desired. All Resolutions shall be reduced to writing. A Resolution may be put to its final passage on the same day on which it is introduced.

RULE 15 MOTIONS

An enacted Motion is a form of action taken by the City Council to direct that a specific action be taken on behalf of the City. A Motion, once approved and entered into the record, is the equivalent of a Resolution in those instances where a Resolution is not required by law. All motions shall be made and seconded before debate.

- (a) A motion is to be worded in a concise, unambiguous, and complete form.
- (b) No speech is to be made in reference to a motion when it is introduced. There will be no debate until a motion has been seconded and, if requested by a City Council member, the question stated by the Presiding Officer or the City Clerk.
- (c) When the question has been stated, it is before the City Council and mover is entitled to the floor.
- (d) The order of procedure of motions shall be in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

RULE 16 RECONSIDERATION

A motion to reconsider shall be allowed at any time during a meeting, except when a motion on some other subject is pending. No motion to reconsider shall be made more than once on any subject at the same meeting. A motion to reconsider may be made:

- (a) At the same meeting during which an action was taken, provided that the motion to reconsider is made by a City Council member of the prevailing side of the original motion.
- (b) At a subsequent meeting by any Commissioner.

Upon passage of a motion to reconsider, no substantive action on the matter may be taken at that meeting so that the public and media may be on notice of the matter to be reconsidered. The subject matter shall be scheduled at the next regular City Council meeting for any action the City Council deems advisable.

RULE 17 RESCINDING ACTION PREVIOUSLY TAKEN

City Council action may be rescinded by a four-fifths (4/5) vote. The motion may be made by any City Council member after a motion to reconsider has been adopted by a majority vote.

RULE 18 PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

By permission of the Presiding Officer, the privilege of the floor shall be extended to a citizen or citizens to address the Council on any matter pending before it or which needs the attention of the City Council. At public hearings required by law or fixed by the City Council, the Presiding Officer shall extend the floor to a reasonable number of proponents or opponents of the subject

matter of the public hearing, and those filing written requests to be heard with the City Clerk shall be heard prior to other persons who appear at the hearing. Each person addressing the City Council shall proceed to the place assigned for speaking, give his or her name and address in an audible tone of voice for the record and limit his or her address to three (3) minutes, unless a lesser time is fixed for all speakers by the Presiding Officer or further time is granted by the City Council. The person may speak only to matters germane to City business or to questions under discussion. All remarks shall be addressed to the City Council as a body and not to any member thereof. All questions of members shall be directed through the Presiding Officer.

RULE 19 PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Robert's Rules of Order, so far as they are applicable or are not in conflict with these standing rules, the Ordinances, or the Charter of the City, shall govern the proceedings of the City Council.

RULE 20 SUSPENSION OF STANDING RULES

Any standing rule contained herein may be temporarily suspended for special reasons by a vote of four-fifths (4/5) of all City Council members unless such suspension would conflict with provisions of the Ordinances or the Charter of the City.

RULE 21 EFFECTS OF RULES

No Ordinance, Resolution or action duly passed, adopted or taken by the City Council shall be held to be invalid because of failure of the City Council to comply with or abide by any one or more of the provisions of these standing rules if such Ordinance, Resolution or action would otherwise be valid under the Charter or Ordinances of the City or laws of this State but for such provisions of these standing rules alleged to have been violated or ignored.

RULE 22 INFORMAL CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS

When, in the judgment of the Presiding Officer, it becomes necessary to give detailed consideration to a matter under conditions of freedom, approximating those of a Committee, the Presiding Officer may entertain a motion for the City Council to consider the matter informally. When such a motion is made and properly seconded, the effect is to suspend the standing rule limiting the number of times a member can speak and inquire into matters of fact on the main questions and any amendments, except that the member may not inquire a second time into questions of fact until other members have had an opportunity to do so.

While considering a question informally, the Council may, by four-fifths (4/5) vote, limit the number or length of speeches, or in any other way limit or close discussion.

Proceedings of the City Council under informal consideration are recorded in the minutes of the meeting just as they would be if the considerations were under formal standing rules. Informal consideration ceases automatically as soon as the main question is disposed of. Informal consideration of a matter may also be ended before the main question is disposed of by a majority vote of the City Council on a motion “that the regular standing Rules of Procedure be enforced.”

Under the informal standing rules, members may obtain the floor after being recognized by the Presiding Officer.

RULE 23 PREPARATION OF AGENDAS

The City Manager and City Clerk are responsible for the preparation of the Agenda. The Mayor, or any City Council members may place an item on the Agenda. The City Attorney, City Clerk, and City Manager may also place an item on the Agenda.

As general practice, all supporting documentation must be provided to the City Manager for review or the item(s) may not be included on the Agenda.

- (a) The agenda will be in four (4) parts: Awards & Recognitions, Public Hearings, Consent, and Business.
- (b) Deadline for items to be placed on the Agenda is no later than 12:00 noon on the Tuesday before the next meeting.
- (c) Content of items on the Consent Agenda shall be limited to routine items that do not need discussion, such as the Minutes, Resolutions, payment requests, and reports from committees, etc. (refer to Resolution No. R-15-86). During the reading of the Consent Agenda, any member may pull an item for separate discussion.
- (c) The City Manager or any member may, in the event of an emergency, place items on the Agenda after the above deadline.
- (d) Council members are encouraged to present their reports as Agenda items in order to provide the public and other Council members prior notification of the report’s subject matter.
- (e) Agendas and all necessary background materials will be delivered to the members no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday before the next meeting via notification by electronic mail. In the event an item must be placed on the Agenda after it has gone to the City Council, a Supplemental Agenda will be issued no less than 24 hours prior to all meetings.
- (f) A request from a citizen to be placed on the Agenda shall be received in writing on a form provided by the City Clerk no later than the close of business on the Monday of the week preceding the next regular City Council meeting and include information and/or back-up documentation on the subject they want to discuss. If a citizen does not present an

appropriate topic or information in writing, the citizen will not be placed on the Agenda but will be told that he or she can speak at the beginning of the City Council meeting or have their Agenda item rescheduled to a future meeting.

- (g) Citizens who wish to address the City Council on an item on the agenda or an item not on the agenda shall complete a Speaker Card and give it to the City Clerk before the meeting starts. All persons, other than members of the City Council or Staff, addressing the City Council shall step up to the microphone and state his or her name and address prior to making his or her statements. The Mayor shall have the authority to waive such requirement in the event of apparent physical disability of the speaker.
- (h) The Agenda, as well as lengthy reports that are part of the Agenda documentation, shall be available for review online on the City's website, or in the Office of the City Clerk.

RULE 24 AGENDAS – ORDER OF BUSINESS

The business of all regular meetings of the City Council shall be transacted as follows; provided, however, that the Presiding Officer may, by simple majority voice vote or consensus of the City Council, re-arrange items on the Agenda to more expeditiously conduct the business before the City Council:

- (a) Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The City Council may maintain a clergy or layperson rotational roster, which may be used to rotate among the local clergy or laypersons the presentation of the invocation at the regular or special meetings. The Presiding Officer shall lead the Pledge or delegate to another party.

- (b) Roll Call

- (c) Mayor to call on members of the audience wishing to address the Council on matters not on the Agenda

The City Council recognizes the importance of protecting the rights of its citizens and taxpayers to express their opinions on the operation of City government and encourages citizen participation in the local government process. The City Council also recognizes the necessity for conducting orderly and efficient meetings in order to complete City business in a timely and proper manner.

The purpose of the public comment portion of the meeting is to receive citizen input pertaining to matters over which the City Council has jurisdiction or control. This period of time is for comments and not for questions directed to the City Council or Staff for immediate answer. Questions directed to the City Council may be referred to Staff to be answered within a reasonable period of time following the date of the meeting. The City Council shall not take final action at the same meeting on items addressed under this

section. Final action can only be taken if the City Council waives its Rules of Procedures. The City Council can direct Staff to place any item requiring final action on an upcoming City Council Meeting or Workshop. The exceptions are items of an emergency nature so declared.

No citizen shall speak until duly recognized by the Presiding Officer, and he/she shall immediately cease speaking and relinquish the podium when requested by the Presiding Officer. After being recognized, the citizen shall:

- (a) Step up to the podium and give his/her name and address;
- (b) State the topic or position (for/against) of the item under discussion; and
- (c) Address all remarks and questions to the City Council as a body, and not a member thereof, except through the Presiding Officer.

Three (3) minutes shall be allotted to each citizen who wishes to speak at this time, unless more time is granted by the Presiding Officer or City Council. A citizen cannot yield time to another citizen.

NOTE: Citizens are encouraged to call the appropriate City department during regular business hours. If you have contacted the department and for some reason results were not satisfactory, please call the director of the department or the City Manager's office.

Employees of the City may address the City Council on matters of public concern. Employee comments that address an active grievance/arbitration, employee appeal matter (all of which are extensively covered in the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual) or a personnel dispute will not be entertained as part of citizen comments. Employees will be advised of the appropriate forum and process for presenting or discussing such matters. (Jim, please review again.)

(d) Awards and Recognitions

Items under this section include Special Award Presentations such as a Key to the City, Proclamations, scheduled citizen or group presentations, and recognitions.

Proclamations, Letters of Honor, and Keys to the City, shall be requested and processed through the Office of the City and shall be submitted on a form provided by the City Clerk. Refer to the "Ceremonial Guidelines for Proclamations, Letters of Honor, and Keys to the City" for further guidance.

(e) Public Hearings

Public hearings shall be scheduled on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month unless otherwise determined by the City Council or State Statute. The procedures followed for public hearings are generally as follows:

- (1) The City Manager, or his/her designee, should describe the Agenda item to be considered and provide the Staff recommendation. The Presiding Officer should then inquire as to whether any City Council members have questions for the administration. After the City Council's questions are answered, the Presiding Officer opens the public hearing and requests comments from the public. Generally, the petitioner or proponent for the issues in the Public Hearing are invited to address the City Council first.
- (2) Following public comment (if any), the Presiding Officer closes the Public Hearing and inquires if any City Council member wishes to put forth a motion. Following the motion and its second, discussion occurs among the City Council. A roll call vote is then taken by the City Clerk.

(f) Consent Agenda

The Presiding Officer shall inquire if any City Council member wishes to withdraw any items from the Consent Agenda. If any item is withdrawn by any member of the City Council, the Presiding Officer addresses those item(s) individually following the vote on the motion to approve the other Consent Agenda items.

(g) Council Business

Items in this section are reports or requests presented by the City Attorney, City Clerk, City Council member, City Manager, or Staff for City Council consideration.

(h) City Manager and City Attorney Reports and/or Correspondence

During this section, the City Manager and City Attorney will have the opportunity to make comments, provide updates, or discuss any items of concern.

(i) City Council Reports and/or Correspondence

During this section, each City Council member will have the opportunity to make comments or discuss any items of concern.

(j) Adjournment

No meeting shall be permitted to continue beyond 11:00 p.m. without the approval of a majority of the City Council. A new time limit must be established before taking a City Council vote to extend the meeting. In the event that a meeting has not been closed or continued by City Council vote prior to 11:00 p.m., the items not acted on are to be continued to 8:30 a.m. on the following day, unless state law requires hearing at a different time or unless the City Council, by majority vote of members present, determines otherwise.

RULE 25 **BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND MEETINGS**

The City Council may form ad hoc or special committees from time to time. Citizen advisory boards and committees may be created and dissolved by Resolution, Ordinance, or other act adopted by the City Council. All members shall serve at the pleasure of the City Council.

The mission of advisory boards and committees shall be to examine various policy issues referred by the City Council, staff, or as determined in the work plan. Committees shall provide guidance to the City Council in the development of policy recommendations. Committees shall not attempt to manage the administrative operations of the City; the committee will not be involved in directing staff.

- (a) The City Manager/City Clerk's office shall furnish the Chair of each advisory board or committee copies of all Resolutions or Ordinances that pertain to that committee. Such information shall be delivered to the committee Chair within one (1) week after adoption by the City Council, or as soon thereafter as possible.
- (b) Appointment to citizen advisory boards/committees shall be by roll call vote during a regular City Council meeting. Candidates for appointment to the Planning and Zoning Board shall be nominated by the member whose term is concurrent with the board seat then being filled. Priority must be given to applicants from the City of Green Cove Springs.
- (c) All citizen advisory boards/committees or other bodies shall meet in the City Council Chambers or other public buildings within the City after required public notice is given. Generally, committee meetings should be scheduled on the 2nd or 4th Tuesdays or Thursdays. The news media shall be notified and appropriate notice shall be posted at City Hall. All meetings shall comply with state law regarding public meetings.
- (d) Committee Chairs and Committee Vice-Chairs shall be elected by the membership and both shall serve for a term of one (1) year or for a different term as the City Council may decide. Committee members shall be approved by the City Council. Committee meetings may be called by the Chair, Vice-Chair, Mayor, or the City Manager when sufficient business or timing is appropriate. Such meetings shall have an Agenda published to each Committee member when possible at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance. If the Committee Chair is unwilling or unable to call committee meetings, the Vice-Chair may call the meeting.
- (e) All citizen advisory boards/committees or other bodies shall provide the minutes taken at each meeting to the City Clerk. All communications to the City Council from such boards, committees, or other bodies shall be received by the City Council's Presiding Officer with a copy to the City Clerk.
- (f) All Chairpersons of citizen advisory boards/committees or other bodies may provide updates to the City Council at its regularly scheduled meetings. All requests for presentations shall be submitted to the Office of the City Manager or City Clerk.

- (g) City employees shall not be precluded from serving on citizen advisory or other committees so long as membership requirements are met.
- (h) The City Council may make exceptions to the above general policy on a case-by-case basis when necessary to: preserve the stability of the board or committee; retain a particular appointee because of his/her special expertise or knowledge; or for such other circumstances as the City Council deems warranted.
- (i) Appointees' personal and business affairs conducted within the City of Green Cove Springs must be in substantial compliance with all City regulatory and taxing authorities' rules and regulations. Appointees deemed to be in chronic violation of any City rules, regulations, or policies may be disallowed from membership on citizen advisory boards or committees by a majority vote of the City Council.
- (j) Citizen advisory boards and committees created by or in response to federal or state statutory requirements shall conduct business consistent with these guidelines unless otherwise provided for by such federal or state statutory requirements.
- (k) Citizen advisory boards and committees are required to adhere to the "Guidelines for Citizen Advisory Boards and Committees" as approved by the City Council. These guidelines are incorporated below.

GUIDELINES FOR CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

- (1) Committees are to be designated as standing or special (ad hoc).
- (2) A sunset date will be specified for special committees when appropriate.
- (3) Transition between Members:
By-laws, enacting Ordinances, guiding document, etc. will include language, which provides for members (whose terms have expired) to continue serving until the appropriate appointments are made.
- (4) Term length for serving on any standing committee will be a minimum of two (2) years unless otherwise specified (e.g. State Statute may require term lengths of less than two (2) years, board/committee enacting Ordinance provisions).
- (5) Attendance:
 - a. Reports/notices of absences are made to the board or committee Chair (or Staff liaison if the Chair is unavailable).
 - b. The board of committee liaison will provide written notice of attendance violations to the City Council Presiding Officer. The City Council will be responsible for removing members who do not meet the attendance requirement.
 - c. Absence from four (4) consecutive regular meetings of the advisory board or committee shall operate to vacate the seat of a member, unless such absence is excused by the City Council by Resolution setting forth the fact of such excuse duly entered into the minutes.

- (6) Election of Officers: All board and committee officers (i.e. Chair, Vice Chair, etc.) shall be elected by the membership of the citizen advisory board or committee, unless otherwise specified.
- (7) Meeting Frequency:
 - a. At a minimum, all boards and committees shall meet once per year.
 - b. The names of those boards and committees that do not meet this minimum requirement shall be submitted to the City Clerk's Office.
 - c. Recommendations to dissolve committees or other recommended action will be submitted to the City Council for consideration.
 - d. Any advisory board or committee whose officers are elected/appointed as prescribed in federal/state statute shall be exempted from Guideline No. 6.
- (8) Parliamentary Procedure: As appropriate, Robert's Rules of Order may be used as a guide in conducting board and committee meetings.

RULE 26 **SUSPENSION AND CONSTRUCTION OF RULES**

No permanent change in the standing rules shall be made without notice specifying the purpose and wording of the change given at a previous regular meeting of the Council and the adoption of the permanent change by a vote of four-fifths (4/5) of all members. The Rules of Procedure are for the efficient and orderly conduct of City Council business only. No violation of such rules shall invalidate any action of the City Council when approved by a majority vote required by law.