



CITY OF JONESBORO, GEORGIA COUNCIL

Agenda Item Summary

COUNCIL MEETING DATE:

05/04/26 Work Session

Requesting Agency (Initiator): Mayor & Council

Sponsor(s): Mayor & Council

Item Title: Council to discuss ordinance language regarding Parliamentary Rules of Procedure.

Requested Action: Discussion

Requirement for Mayor & Council Action:

Is this Item Goal Related? Yes

Summary and Background:

Overview

The proposed Meeting Decorum Ordinance (“Ordinance”) establishes clear and uniform standards governing the conduct of the Mayor and Council during public meetings. The Ordinance is intentionally drafted to operate within the existing framework of the City Charter and Code of Ordinances and does not alter, diminish, or reallocate the authority of the Mayor as Presiding Officer.

The Ordinance addresses a recognized gap in the current Code by defining expectations for elected official conduct during deliberations while preserving the Charter-based structure under which meetings are conducted.

The Ordinance is intended to:

- Promote more consistent and professional meeting conduct;
- Provide clarity regarding expectations and procedures;
- Reduce ambiguity in addressing conduct concerns; and
- Create a reliable record for use in appropriate circumstances.

Significantly, the Ordinance does not and cannot resolve differences in leadership style or interpersonal dynamics, which remain outside the scope of legislative regulation.

Legal Framework and Charter Compliance

The City Charter and implementing Code provisions establish a presiding-officer-centered system under which the Mayor:

- Controls recognition of speakers;
- Maintains order; and
- Governs the conduct and progression of meetings.

The Ordinance is expressly drafted to remain consistent with the Charter and is adopted pursuant to the Council’s authority to establish rules of procedure and order of business, provided such rules are consistent with the Charter.

Accordingly, the Ordinance represents the maximum permissible legal regulation of meeting conduct without implicating or conflicting with Charter authority.

Relationship to Ethics Code

The Ordinance connects documented Material Violations to the City’s existing Code of Ethics, which provides an independent and structured process for review, including notice and opportunity to be heard.

To prevent misuse or overreach, the Ordinance includes several important safeguards:

- Only Material Violations may be considered under the Code of Ethics;
- Conduct occurring in the ordinary course of deliberation is not subject to ethics enforcement absent material disruption;
- Conduct that is promptly corrected or cured may be asserted as evidence of good faith and considered in mitigation; and
- All complaints are subject to established procedures, including impartial review and due process protections.

These provisions are intended to prevent the filing of routine or minor complaints arising from the normal dynamics of public meetings.

Public Censure Provision

The Ordinance authorizes the governing authority, following a final determination of a Material Violation under the Code of Ethics, to adopt a resolution of public censure.

A censure serves as a formal, public expression of the governing authority’s disapproval based on established findings and is entered into the official record. A censure does not constitute disciplinary action and does not impose any limitation on the authority, duties, or powers of any member, including the Mayor as Presiding Officer.

This provision is intentionally limited to ensure compliance with the City Charter and does not authorize real-time enforcement, removal from office, or any reallocation of authority. Instead, it provides a structured and transparent mechanism for formally acknowledging substantiated conduct concerns following completion of the established ethics review process.

Conclusion

The Ordinance is a legally compliant, balanced, and measured approach to improving meeting conduct. It reinforces expectations, creates accountability through documentation, and relies on existing legal processes for review, while preserving the authority structure established by the City Charter.

Fiscal Impact:

Exhibits Attached:

Contact Information and Recommendation:

FOLLOW-UP APPROVAL ACTION		
Typed Name and Title	Date	
Signature		