



MEDINA, WASHINGTON

AGENDA BILL

Tuesday, May 26, 2026

Subject/Topic: City Council Rules and Guidelines	Proposed Council Action/Motion:
Dept. Origin: Council	<input type="checkbox"/> Information Only
Category: Study Session/Retreat	<input type="checkbox"/> Receive and File
Prepared by: Jennifer Robertson, City Attorney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discuss
Attachments: Updated City Council Rules and Guidelines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provide Direction
	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt/Approve

Summary

A. Description of Proposed Revisions.

The Council directed staff to undertake a general update the City Council Rules and Guidelines to reflect current operations and practices and to provide clarity regarding Council roles, committees, and filling of council vacancies. Some changes were also made for language clarity or to reflect current resources. Where staff seeks council input, a bolded, italicized “Discussion question” is noted after a description of the change.

The attached draft City Council Rules and Guidelines (“Guidelines”) includes several changes which are listed below. These are the Council’s Guidelines, therefore, they should reflect the operations, practices and standards that the Council supports.

The revisions are generally described below and are shown in “track changes” in the Guidelines. Where revisions were minimal and not substantive they are not described, however, all the changes are tracked even if not listed below.

- 1.1 Changes made for clarity of procedures.
- 1.2.1 Changes made regarding use of MRSC for research and maintaining confidentiality. Updates were made regarding resource publications to reflect currently available documents and to add document links.
- 1.3 A question is inserted into a comment box about whether the Council would like to add a policy organizational chart to guidelines. ***Discussion question.***
- 2.3 OPMA/PRA: updated language was added regarding mandatory training laws.

- 2.4 A new section was added to reference the State Code of Ethics for Municipal Officers (Ch. 42.23 RCW).
- 2.5 A reference to RCW 35A.13.120 and a description of that limitation was added to this section on separation of powers.
- 2.11 A reference the State Code of Ethics for Municipal Officers (Ch. 42.23 RCW) was added and additional language regarding civility in debate was added.
- 3.2 Under “Duties of City Council” clarifying language under subsections 3 and 4 was added to reflect the Council’s current practices.
- 3.3 Under “Selection and Role of Mayor” process clarification were made to 3.3.1(3) consistent with current practices and RRO.
- 3.3.2 Under “Role of Mayor” significant changes were made to clarify the mayor’s role and to reflect current roles and responsibilities.
- 3.5 A new section 3.5 “Council Vacancies” was added to outline the process for filling council vacancies as recommended by the Personnel Committee’s and as used in filling the most recent council vacancy.
- 3.6 Under “ Role of Advisory Boards and Commissions”, there was language clarification but also a new sentence was added providing the Council the authority to adopt operating guidelines or bylaws for its standing boards and commissions. This is a staff-recommended addition. If Council supports this change, staff will bring forward guidelines and updated governing documents for the Parks Board and Planning Commission in the future. **Discussion question.**

In addition, a request for direction from the Council as to whether the Council would like to have term limits for the Parks Board and Planning Commission is in a comment box at the end of this section. That is a policy question for Council. **Discussion question.**
- 3.7 Under “City Council Committees” the existing committees of the council (personnel, finance, and DSC) are added with descriptions of those committees.
- 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 All address Council Meeting procedures. Updates are made to include the correct time (5:00 PM) for Council meetings as well as how the meetings have been running post-COVID.
- 4.6 Under “Council Meeting Agendas”, language has been clarified regarding removal of items from consent. This reflects current practice by allowing one member to remove an item but puts a noon timeline on the meeting day in order to provide staff notice that an item will be removed. The council as a whole can still remove an item via motion at the meeting. This is a process and preference question for the Council. **Discussion question.**
- 4.7 Under “Council Meeting Rules for Councilmembers” additional language regarding expectations for councilmember behavior is included consistent with prior retreat discussions. In addition, language has been updated to reflect current practices regarding use of City-issued or personal devices.

- 4.8.2 Additional language was added to “Verbal Communications” to clarify that people attending remotely are required to register online by 2 PM the day of the meeting in order to speak. Council is asked to weigh in on this addition. **Discussion question.**
- 4.9 The Council Meeting Recordings section has been clarified to conform to current practices which is not to record study sessions, retreats or workshops.
- Ch. 5 Under “City Council Meeting Procedures” clarifications and language cleanups have been made. In Section 5.1 the less formal procedure that Council typically utilizes is spelled out. Where 5.2 conflicts with federal law, that language has been stricken.
- 5.6.3 A new subsection has been added to address what happens when a councilmember does not vote or abstain (it is counted as a vote in the affirmative). This is standard practice for many cities. **Discussion question.**
- 5.7 Under “Attendance at Council Meetings Required”, a clarification was made about when and whether absences are excused.
- 5.8 Under “Remote Participation at Council Meetings”, updates were made consistent with current practices.
- 6.2 This section requires Councilmembers to act consistent with City policies. Language was added regarding when councilmembers represent the City on regional boards or commissions as requested by Council. This direction is consistent with recent discussions and prior (unwritten) expectations and standards.
- 6.3 The section regarding Council Communications has been updated for clarity and completeness to reflect legal standards and to protect privileged communications.
- Ch. 7 The Conflicts of Interest chapter had been modified for clarity and completeness consistent with applicable law.
- 8.3 This section regarding Council interactions with staff has been updated to incorporate RCW 35A.13.120.
- 9.1 Under “Consequences of Violation” language has been added clarifying the violation of the Guidelines may result in removal from committees, even if censure is not pursued.

B. Proposed Review Process.

Council is requested to review the draft Guidelines ahead of the meeting. During the meeting, staff will walk the Council through the revisions and request input on the proposed changes, the items flagged for discussion (noted “Discussion question” above), and any other changes the Council would like to propose.

Council Priorities

This proposal furthers Council Priorities 2, **3**, 4 and 5.

1. Financial Stability and Accountability
2. Quality Infrastructure

3. **Efficient and Effective Government**
4. Public Safety and Health
5. Neighborhood Character and Community Building

Budget/Fiscal Impact: N/A

Recommendation: Discuss and give direction to staff.

City Manager Approval: 

Proposed Council Motions: N/A

Time Estimate: 90 minutes