



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 6416
March 1, 2024
Regular Business

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6416: Review of City Council Rules of Procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Review proposed amendments to the City Council Rules of Procedure and provide direction.	

DEPARTMENT:	Administrative Services
STAFF:	Ali Spietz, Chief of Administration Andrea Larson, City Clerk
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	1. Draft City Council Rules of Procedure 2. Suggested Edits Matrix
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This agenda bill is to review the City Council Rules of Procedure and discuss any proposed amendments.

BACKGROUND

In 2004 (see [AB 3855](#)), the City Council adopted Rules of Procedure (“Rules”) in accordance with MICC 2.06.050(A), which reads, in part: “The council shall determine its own rules, bylaws and order of business, and may establish rules for the conduct of council meetings and the maintenance of order.” The Rules were most recently amended on February 21, 2023 (see [AB 6230](#)).

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

Each year the City Council has the opportunity to review the City Council Rules of Procedure and propose amendments. In addition, staff has compiled (throughout the year) possible amendments for the Council to consider during the annual review.

Attached as Exhibit 1 is a draft version of the Rules of Procedure containing proposed amendments from Councilmembers and staff. Exhibit 2 is a matrix of these proposals for discussion or questions that have been

asked. The matrix log numbers are referenced in Exhibit 1 (yellow highlighted text in right column) to assist in referencing between the two documents.

Additional Items for Council Consideration

There are a few proposals from a councilmember that were not included in the matrix, but are included in the draft version. Staff would like Council direction on these items as a group rather than identifying each one.

1. All references to “they” and “their” should be changed to “he/she” and “his/hers” throughout the Rules. City Council could consider if Council wants to use “they” and “their” for referencing a single person when the gender is unknown or if the Council would like to revert to using “he/she” and “his/hers”. It should be noted that it is now grammatically acceptable to use “they” and “their” when referring to a single person when their gender is not known.
2. Change most actions to “shall” throughout the Rules:
 - Will to shall
 - May to shall
 - Should to shall
 - Is/are to shall be

The definitions of “will” and “shall” are equivalents, both are binding verbs. Changing of the word “will” to “shall,” would not change the intent or purpose of what has been written. The definitions of “may” and “should” are also equivalents, both are “could statements” and are not binding (“may” identifies an option, and “should” identifies a recommendation). Changing of the words “may” or “should” to “shall,” could change the intent or purpose of what has been written. Changing of the word “is” to “shall be,” could also change the intent or purpose of what has been written.

3. Capitalize “boards” and “commissions” and “committee” throughout the Rules. Where boards, commissions, and committees are currently not capitalized in the Rules, the text does not address the boards, commission, or committees as a proper noun. Boards, commission, and committees are only capitalized when referring to them as a proper noun.

NEXT STEPS

Following City Council direction on any proposed amendments and considerations listed above, staff will return at the March 19, 2024 City Council Meeting with a resolution to approve amendments to the Rules of Procedures.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Review proposed amendments to the City Council Rules of Procedure and provide direction.