

## **City Council Procedures and Decorum Policy**

### **Sec. 1-100. – City Council Agenda.**

(a) The City Administrator is responsible for creating and processing the agenda and agenda materials for City Council meetings. The City Administrator will submit agenda materials as appropriate for review by the City Attorney. The City Secretary is responsible for preparing and posting the agenda and assembling and distributing the agenda packets.

(b) The Mayor or a Council Member may direct the City Administrator in writing to place an item on an agenda for a regular City Council meeting, special meeting, or work session for discussion only. Items must be submitted to the City Administrator no later than 5 p.m. on the Wednesday preceding the week of the City Council meeting.

(c) The City Council, during any scheduled regular or special meeting or work session, may direct the City Administrator to place an item on a future agenda.

### **Sec. 1-110. – Types of Meetings.**

(a) Regular Meetings: The City of Montgomery regular City Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, unless the meeting is rescheduled or cancelled. All regular meetings of the City Council will be held in the City of Montgomery City Hall at 101 Old Plantersville Rd, Montgomery, TX 77356.

(b) Work Session Meetings: A work session is a meeting to discuss or explore matters of interest to the City, review and discuss agenda items, meet with City boards, commissions or committee members, City Staff or officers of civic organizations, governing bodies or individuals specifically invited to the session by the Mayor, City Administrator or the Council. These meetings are informational and no formal action shall be taken unless the posted agenda indicates otherwise.

(c) Special Meetings: Special meetings may be called by the Mayor, the City Administrator, or by any two (2) members of the City Council. The call for a special meeting shall be filed with the City Secretary in written form, and the City Secretary shall cause the posting of notice of the meeting as governed by applicable law.

(d) Emergency Meeting: In case of emergency or urgent public necessity, as defined by State law and confirmed by the City Attorney when practical, which shall be expressed in the notice of the meeting, an emergency meeting may be called by the Mayor, City Administrator or his/her designee, or two members of the City Council, and it shall be sufficient if the notice is posted at least two hours before the meeting is convened.

### **Sec. 1-120. – Quorum.**

A quorum at any meeting of the City Council will be established by the presence of three (3) members of Council. The Mayor shall not count as a Council Member for the establishment of a quorum.

### **Sec. 1-130. – General Procedures.**

(a) General Procedure: General rules of parliamentary procedure as defined herein, consistent with the any applicable City ordinance, statute or other legal requirement, shall govern the proceedings of the City Council. These rules of parliamentary procedure are intended solely as a guideline.

(b) Chair of Meeting: The Mayor shall preside over all meetings of the City Council as the Chair and enforce these rules and procedures during a meeting. In the absence of the Mayor, the Pro Tempore shall assume the Chair responsibility at the meeting. In the absence of the Pro Tempore, the Council will choose a Chair for the meeting.

(c) Council Deliberations: The Chair has the responsibility to control the discussion and the order of speakers. Council Members will generally be called upon in the order of the request to speak.

(d) Limits to Deliberations: After an agenda item is announced by the Chair, the City Council may discuss the item without the need for a motion on the item. Council Members will limit their comments to the subject matter or motion currently being considered.

(e) Obtaining the Floor: Any member of the Council wishing to speak shall first obtain the floor by making a request for the floor to the Chair. The Chair shall recognize any Council Member who seeks the floor when appropriately entitled to do so.

(f) Motions: Motions may be made by any member of the Council including the Chair. Any member of the City Council may second a motion.

(g) Continuance of Discussion or Hearings: Any item being discussed or any public hearing at a City Council meeting may, by order, notice, or motion, be continued or tabled to any subsequent meeting.

**Sec. 1-140. – Decorum.**

(a) General: During Council meetings, Council Members shall preserve order and decorum, shall not interrupt or delay proceedings, and shall obey the rules of the Council. Council Members shall demonstrate respect and courtesy to one another, to City Staff and to members of the public appearing before the Council. Council Members shall seek to phrase and communicate all writings, publications and speeches in a professional and constructive manner.

Council Members may express differing ideas, equitable representation helps promote unity of purpose by allowing the public to be informed of each Member's position during his/her term of office and not only during an election campaign.

Members of the Council will not condone any unethical or illegal activity from any Council Member or members of the Staff. All members of the Council agree to uphold the intent of this policy and to govern their actions accordingly.

(b) Mayoral Responsibilities:

(1) The Mayor shall serve as the Chair of all meetings. The Mayor Pro Tempore shall preside in the absence of the Mayor.

(2) The Mayor shall have a voice in all matters before the Council.

(3) The Chair is responsible for preserving order and decorum and shall keep the meetings orderly by recognizing each Member for discussion, limiting speaking items, encouraging debate among Members, and keeping discussion limited to the agenda item being considered.

(c) Council Responsibilities

(1) Each Council Member is responsible for being prepared to discuss the agenda.

(2) Each Council Member is required to attend a Council Member Orientation and is encouraged to attend at least one Texas Municipal League-sponsored conference each year in order to stay informed on issues facing municipalities.

(3) It is the responsibility of Council Members to be informed about action taken by the Council in their absence. In the case of an absence from a work session, the Council Member is responsible for obtaining this information from the City Administrator prior to the Council meeting during which said item is to be voted upon.

(4) When a Council Member is appointed to serve as a liaison to a board, committee or commission, the Council Member is responsible for keeping all Council Members informed of significant activities of that board, committee or commission. The appointed Council Member should report the actions of the board, committee or commission to the City Council.

(d) Citizens' participation: The following rules shall be in force for persons in attendance at all meetings of Council:

(1) Persons wishing to address the Council during "persons to be heard" or "public hearings" shall complete a "request to speak" form and present said form to the City Secretary prior to the beginning of the regularly scheduled City Council meeting or immediately following their address to Council. Speakers shall approach the lectern and give his/her name and address before speaking. Speakers shall address the Mayor and Council with civility that is conducive to appropriate public discussion. All public comments should be addressed through the Mayor. Each speaker will be allowed three (3) minutes to speak. No person shall be allowed to address the Council more than once unless called upon by a City Council Member to do so.

(4) Persons attending Council meetings shall remain seated or may stand in the back and come and go so long as it does not disrupt the meeting. No person attending any Council meeting shall delay the proceedings or refuse to obey the orders of the presiding officer.

(5) Disturbances, transgressions of the rules or disorderly conduct in the Council chamber may cause the transgressor to be removed from the meeting. A police officer may remove an individual or individuals for disrupting a meeting as authorized by Texas Penal Code Section 42.05.

**Sec. 1-150 - Staff Relations**

(a) In order to ensure proper presentation of agenda items by Staff, questions arising from Council Members after receiving their information packet should be, whenever possible, presented to the City Administrator for Staff consideration prior to the Council meeting. This allows Staff the time to address Council Member's concern and provide all Council Members with additional information.

(b) The City Administrator shall designate the appropriate Staff Member to address each agenda item and shall see that each presentation is prepared and presented in order to inform and educate the Council on the issues that require Council action. The presentation should be professional, timely and allow for discussion of options for resolving the issue. As a summary, the Staff Member making the presentation shall make it clear if no Council action is required, or present the Staff recommendation as a part of the presentation, and/or present the specific options for Council consideration.

(c) The City Administrator is directly responsible for providing information to all the Council concerning any inquiries by a specific Council Member that is significant in nature and would be beneficial to all Council Members. If the City Administrator or the Staff's time is being dominated or misdirected by a Council Member, it is the City Administrator's responsibility to inform the Mayor.

(d) All Staff Members shall show one another, each Council Member, and the public, respect and courtesy at all times. They are also responsible for making objective, professional presentations to ensure public confidence in the process.

(e) The City Administrator will make sure that the Staff has prepared information needed for the orientation of new Council Members, and inform Council of any available Texas Municipal League conferences and seminars. The City Administrator will also be responsible for meeting personally with new Members and informing them about City facilities, policies and procedures.