



Legislation Text

File #: 17-730, **Version:** 1

City Council Meeting Date: March 21, 2017

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Ben Martig, City Administrator
Deb Little, City Clerk

Consider Approval of City Council Rules of Business.

Action Requested:

The Northfield City Council approves the attached City Council Rules of Business/Meeting Rules, Rules of Order and Rules of Decorum and chooses seating assignment option B to be incorporated into the final document.

Alternate action:

Alternate motion #1: The Northfield City Council approves the attached City Council Rules of Business/Meeting Rules, Rules of Order and Rules of Decorum and chooses seating assignment option ____ to be incorporated into the final document.

Alternate motion #2: The Northfield City Council approves the attached City Council Rules of Business/Meeting Rules, Rules of Order and Rules of Decorum and chooses seating assignment option ____ to be incorporated into the final document, with the exception of using the existing language from City Council Rules of Business (approved 3/4/2014) for the open public comments and comments on the regular agenda items.

Summary Report:

The Northfield City Council reviewed and provided input on the attached Rules of Business for City Council meetings (attachment 1) and related documents at their January 10, February 14, 2017 Work Sessions. The Council provided input on particular topic areas. Staff incorporated that input into the attached Northfield City Council Rules of Business/Meeting Rules. Following discussion at the March 7, 2017 City Council Meeting, Council voted to postpone action on this item until March 21, 2017.

Council motions made prior to the postponement of this item on March 7, were as follows:

A motion was made by Council Member Zweifel, seconded by Council Member Peterson White, to approve the attached City Council Rules of Business/Meeting Rules, Rules of Order and Rules of Decorum and chooses seating assignment option B to be incorporated into the final document.

A motion was made by Council Member Ness, seconded by Council Member Nakasian, to amend the motion by striking the following words in the second sentence of 8., "before the start of the meeting" and strike the first bulleted item "Preregister to speak before the start of the meeting."

A motion was made by Council Member Nakasian, seconded by Council Member DeLong, to postpone

this item to the next regular meeting, March 21, for further discussion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - C. DeLong, C. Nakasian, C. Ness, and C. Peterson White

No: 2 - C. Zweifel, and Mayor Pownell

Staff incorporated the items noted in the above motion in the attached draft as well as well as in the motion under action requested. Staff included alternative actions noted as alternative motion #1 and alternative motion #2. Staff left the address language in the proposal for purposes of identifying whether persons are within a particular project area or affected by a particular action based on residence or business address. If Council finds no value in that, it can be stricken from the language and cards.

Staff completed a search and replace of all areas where “comment card” was used and replaced with “sign up card.” Examples of the existing sign up card and proposed sign up card are attached as attachment 6.

The list below contains significant changes incorporated into the document based on direction given by the Council on February 14, 2017 and updated with the input from March 7 (changes made following March 7 are noted below using strike out and underline):

1. Extend meeting time (6 - 9 pm approved on February 21, 2017) with a simple majority required to extend the meeting.

2. Agenda

a. Public Comment

i. Removed separate comment period on consent agenda items

ii. Public Comment on Regular Agenda Items revised as follows:

Persons that wish to speak on a regular agenda item must ~~register~~ provide name and address with the City by completing & submitting a comment sign up card ~~before the start of the meeting~~. Persons may also use the electronic register to speak option on the City’s website or contact the City Clerk no later than 12:00 noon on the day of the meeting. Persons may also provide comments through the eComment (electronic comment) system no later than 12:00 noon on the day of the meeting. The Mayor will call up individuals to speak based on preregistration and/cards submitted after the staff report on an item. Please be respectful of the public’s and the Council’s time. Members of the public wishing to speak must adhere to the following guidelines:

- ~~Preregister to speak before the start of the meeting;~~
- Speak only once for no more than two minutes (not including interpreter’s time) on the topic unless the speaker is addressed by the Council;
- Identify your relationship to the topic;
- Have a spokesperson or two for your group to present your comments.
- Persons wanting a response to a question must submit the question in writing to the City Clerk, including name and how you would like to be contacted. ~~, address, e-mail and phone number.~~

The existing rules of business approved on March 4, 2014 (complete copy included as attachment 5), public comment on open public comments and regular agenda items is noted below:

7. Open public comments - Persons may take one opportunity to address the council for two (2) minutes on any topic, even if on the agenda (not including interpreter’s time), with the condition that they may not speak on the same item later in the meeting. No notification of the mayor is

required. However, speakers are asked to complete a comment card. Persons wanting a response to a question must submit the question in writing to the recording secretary. Questions must include name, address and phone number.

9. Regular agenda - Persons that wish to speak on a regular agenda item must register name and address with the recording secretary before the meeting or prior to the start of the regular agenda. The Mayor will ask for public input after the staff report on the item. Please be respectful of the public's and the council's time. Members of the public wishing to speak must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Speak only once for no more than two minutes (not including interpreter's time) on the topic unless the speaker is addressed by the council;*
- Identify your relationship to the topic (interested citizens included);*
- Have a spokesperson or two for your group to present your comments.*

iii. Will add eComment/register to speak module in Granicus.

iv. Moved City Administrator Update before Mayor & Council reports.

- b. Council Recognition of Citizens/Groups - added language related to Mayoral proclamations. Examples of formats for a Mayoral Proclamation and a City Council Proclamation are attached.

3. Council Seating:

Option "B" was included in the proposed motion on March 7, 2017. However, this item was not voted on. Consensus was not obtained at the February 14, 2017 work session regarding the seating assignment section. Council is asked to choose an option to be incorporated into the final document. Mayor and Council seating shall be determined as follows:

- A. Mayor decides
- B. Council members shall occupy the chairs assigned to them by the presiding officer, but two council members may exchange seats by joining in a formal request to the presiding officer (Minnesota Mayors Handbook)
- C. At large members are seated on either side of the Mayor, ward members fill in the remaining seats in order starting with Ward 1 in the seat next to the City Administrator and continuing around the dais (as suggested by Councilor DeLong).
- D. Randomly determined weekly seating (as suggested by Councilor Nakasian).
- E. Other

There were no additional changes discussed or proposed to the remaining items at the March 7, 2017 meeting.

Staff incorporated changes discussed at the February 14, 2017 Work Session into the Appendices as follows:

Appendix A -Rules of Order for Councils (attachment 2)

- Removed language on number of minutes of debate that are required on a single motion before a member can move the previous question/call the question on an item.

- Noted a super majority vote is required to “move the previous question.
- Noted a super majority vote is needed to establish time limits for debate on an item.
- Noted a super majority vote is needed to suspend the rules.

Appendix B - Rules of Decorum (attachment 3)

- Revised h. to read, “No person shall ask rhetorical or leading questions during Council question period. Questions of clarification should be succinct.”

Appendix C - Frequently Used Motions Table - will be completed and added after final document is approved.

Appendix D - Citizen Guide. A draft citizen guide is attached (attachment 4). Note this document will be updated when the final rules are approved.

Alternative Options:

Council could choose to make additional changes to the proposed documents or delay action to a future meeting.

Financial Impacts:

Not applicable.

Tentative Timelines:

The “EComment” is subject to a minimum of one year contract. Therefore, it is suggested that the software will be evaluated as the one year agreement is completed.

Staff is also suggesting that as a matter of continuous improvement the Rules of Order may be evaluated on an ongoing basis. It may be appropriate to formally discuss them in six to twelve months but are not intending on deciding on a particular date at this time.