

January 7, 1999

1999 JAN -7 A 9:47

Daphne Abeel

148 Pleasant St

Cambridge, MA 02139

To the Honorable the City Councillors:  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

It was Lincoln who said it -- "that we here highly resolve....that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." This was his great Gettysburg address, and while some might say it is moving from the sublime to the ridiculous, it is entirely appropriate to recall these brilliant and passionate words when contemplating the intention of the Cambridge City Council to cut the opportunity for public comment and debate down to once a month at council meetings.

It is difficult for me to contain my sense of outrage concerning this proposal. The City Council serves at the will of the people. We, the people, elect the Council. The Council members are our servants. We pay them. They are there on Monday nights to do the people's business, and we, the people, insist upon our right to participate in our business. The arrogance and self-centeredness of the proposal to limit comment by the public is a direct attack on the democratic process, and everyone in the city should be up in arms about it.

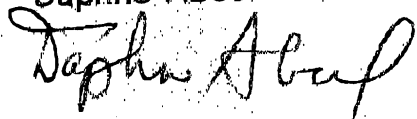
No one ever said that we, the people, could not be boring, repetitive, perhaps even a little crazy, and, certainly, at times, unwashed. However, anyone who has watched or attended council meetings could certainly attest to the fact that the councillors themselves can be boring, self-serving, repetitive, longwinded, if not crazy and unwashed. Democracy is not an efficient form of government. If it's efficiency that's wanted, visit any conveniently located dictatorship where the attitude towards the public, and particularly a public that may voice dissent or objections, or provide information that is counter to what the governors might wish for is "off with their heads." Perhaps the City Council would have us all move to Iraq.

To launch this proposal, I can only think that the council has forgotten its job, which is to serve. Frederick Hastings Rindge, who donated the funds to build Cambridge City Hall, had a motto placed above its front door, which reads in part, "It is honorable and praiseworthy to faithfully serve

the people by helping to administer these Laws." As one of we, the people,  
I would advise the councillors to exhibit some humility and try to  
recollect why they became public servants in the first place.

Sincerely,

Daphne Abeel



c.c. Cambridge Channel  
Cambridge TAB

Consent Communication #21

5

A communication was received from Daphne Abeel, transmitting her outrage in the City Council's intention to cut the opportunity for public comments and debate down to once a month at City Council meetings.

In City Council January 11, 1999

*Referred to Unfinished  
Business #15*

**City of Cambridge**  
(AMENDED AS OF JANUARY 11, 1999)  
(ADOPTED AS PERMANENT RULES MAY 4, 1998)

**RULES OF THE CITY COUNCIL AS AMENDED**

**1998-1999**

These rules, after adoption by the City Council, shall be published and made available to the public.

**Rule 1.** At all meetings of the City Council five (5) Councillors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

**DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE CHAIR.**

**Rule 2.** On the first Monday of January, following the regular municipal election, the City Council shall by a majority vote of all the members elected, elect a mayor from its own members who shall preside at all meetings of the City Council and perform such other duties as are prescribed in section one hundred (100) of Chapter 43 of the General Laws, and any acts in amendment thereof or supplementary thereto. The City Council shall, in like manner, elect a Vice-Chairman who shall also be called Vice-Mayor.

**Rule 3.** The Mayor shall take the chair at the hour to which the City Council has adjourned and call the members to order. In the absence of the Mayor, the Vice-Chairman of the City Council shall preside and, in the absence of both, a temporary chair shall be chosen, who shall serve during the absence of both Mayor and Vice-chair.

**Rule 4.** The Mayor shall preserve decorum and order, and may speak to points of order, in preference to other members. The Mayor shall decide all questions of order, subject to an appeal to the City Council, regularly seconded. If the ruling of the Chair is questioned, no other business shall be in order until the question on the appeal shall have been decided; the question shall be put as follows: "Shall the decision of the chair stand as the judgment of the City Council?" The vote shall be by roll call, and it shall be decided in the affirmative unless a majority of the votes are to the contrary.

**Rule 5.** The Mayor shall declare all votes. If any member doubts the vote, the chair without further debate upon the question, shall require the members voting in the affirmative and negative, respectively, to be counted; the Mayor shall declare the results, but no such declaration shall be made unless a quorum of the City Council has voted.

**Rule 6.** All final votes of the City Council on questions involving the expenditure of fifty dollars or more, or upon the request of any member, any vote of the City Council shall be by yeas and nays and shall be entered on the records.

**Rule 7.** All petitions, memorials, communications or any matter before the City Council may be referred as follows:

1. To standing committee of the City Council.
2. To a consent agenda.
3. To a special committee of the City Council.
4. To the City Manager.
5. To any department or department head or any person, group or organization to whom referral is permitted, authorized or allowed under the provisions of the Plan E Charter and under applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Any member offering a motion, order or resolution which is referred to a committee shall be given a hearing on the same by the committee before a report is made thereon, provided he so requests at the time of the communication, or before final action by the committee.

**Rule 8.** The chair shall put all questions in the order in which they are moved, unless the subsequent motion be previous in its nature, except that in naming sums and fixing times, the largest sum and the longest time shall be first put. After a motion has been put by the chairman, it shall not be withdrawn except by unanimous consent.

**Rule 9.** When a question is under debate the chair shall receive no motion, but

- To Adjourn.
- To Lay on the Table.
- To Postpone to a certain day.
- For the Previous Question.
- To Refer.
- To Amend.
- To Postpone indefinitely.

These motions shall have precedence in the above order. A motion to adjourn shall be in order at any time except upon immediate repetition. A motion to adjourn, to lay on the table, to take from the table, or for the previous question shall be decided without debate.

**Rule 10.** The previous question shall be put in the following form: "Shall the main question be put?" and all further amendments or debates of the main question shall be suspended until the previous question is decided.

**Rule 11.** When two or more members ask to be recognized at once, the chair shall name the member who is entitled to the floor.

**RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS**

**Rule 12.** Every member, when about to speak shall respectfully address the Chair, and wait to be recognized. The member shall confine his/her remarks to the question under debate and avoid personalities.

**Rule 13.** No member speaking shall be interrupted by another except to make a point of order, request an explanation, or request a point of personal privilege.

**Rule 14.** No member shall vote on any question, or serve on any committee, where his private interest is immediately concerned distinct from that of the public. The City Council shall be ordinance establish and implement a code of ethics for its members and for all city employees.

**Rule 15.** When a question is put, every member present shall vote unless the City Council for special reasons excuses him. A vote of "Present" shall be accepted by the Chair and so recorded. Application to be excused from voting must be made before the vote of the City Council has been decided. Such application shall be accompanied by a brief statement of the reasons and shall be decided without debate.

**Rule 16.** A question having been taken, it shall not be in order for any member to move a reconsideration thereof at the same meeting. A motion to reconsider may be made at the next meeting, provided written notice of such motion has been filed with the City Clerk within thirty-six hours of the day of the vote, Saturdays and Sundays to be excluded in the computation of the thirty-six hours. No more than one motion for reconsideration of any vote shall be entertained. Any member may move reconsideration; if reconsideration is not moved prior to the adjournment of the next regular or special meeting called for that particular purpose, the action taken by the City Council stands.

**SPECIAL EVENTS PRESENTATIONS AND REGULAR MEETINGS**

**Rule 17.** Special Events Presentations.

Commencing at 5:00 p. m. before any regular meetings there may be a *SPECIAL EVENTS PRESENTATION*. At this time special events will be presented and will be broadcast on cable television. Special Events Presentations will be scheduled through the Mayor's Office. The Special Events Presentations will conclude at 5:30 p.m. No quorum of the City Council is required.

**Rule 17.** Section 17. Meetings.

All regular meetings of the City Council shall be held in the Sullivan Chamber, City Hall, or, if agreed to by a majority of the City Council, at any other suitable public building within the City of Cambridge, at 5:30 p.m. on Monday of

4.

each week, from the first Monday in January to and including the last Monday in June, and from the second Monday in September to and including the last Monday in December.

When a meeting day falls on a holiday, the succeeding Monday shall be the meeting. The City Council may at any meeting, by a majority vote, decide to discontinue any future meeting previously scheduled. All City Council meetings shall end no later than 12: 00 midnight.

#### SPECIAL MEETINGS

Rule 18. The Mayor, or the Vice-Chairman of the City Council, or any four members thereof, may at any time call a special meeting by causing written notices, stating the time of holding such meeting and signed by the person calling the same, to be delivered in hand to each member of the City Council, or left at his usual dwelling place, at least forty-eight hours notice to all members and the public prior to each meeting. (Chapters 303 of the Acts of 1975).

#### CALENDAR

Rule 19. Any ordinance, order or resolution may be passed through all its stages of legislation at one session, provided that no member of the City Council objects thereto; but if any member of the City Council objects, the measure shall be postponed for that meeting. (Chapter 43, Section 22 of the General Laws.)

Any member may move the item, which has been subject to the Charter Right. If no action is taken at the next regular meeting by any member, then the item will be removed from the City Council Calendar.

Upon the objection of one Councillor, no action may be taken on any item not on the Calendar of the day and shall not be acted upon until the next regular meeting.

Rule 20. All matter of whatever description which require action by the City Council at its meeting shall be presented to the City Clerk by 5:00 p. m. on the Thursday preceding the regular meeting, except for orders and resolutions which shall be presented to the City Clerk by 3:00 p. m. During a week in which a legal holiday falls on a Friday, said matters shall be presented to the City Clerk by 5:00 p. m. on the Wednesday preceding the regular meeting except orders and resolutions which shall be presented to the City Clerk by 3:00 p.m. Communications submitted later will be held over for the next regular meeting, except that where the City Manager believes that emergency or exigent circumstances require him to present to the City Council a matter which was not presented to the City Clerk by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, the City Manager may present such matters to the City Council at its meeting in writing as part of a Supplemental Agenda of the City Manager.

**Rule 21.** The City Clerk shall prepare the minutes of the previous regular and/or special meetings and a calendar of all matters to come before the City Council at each meeting in accordance with the established order of business and shall deliver to the residence of each Councillor a copy of the same not later than twenty-four hours prior to said meeting. On all matters on which there has been a roll-call vote, the minutes shall reflect the votes of the individual members.

**Rule 22.** The City Clerk is authorized by these rules to order and publish notice of hearings on petitions presented to him regarding public hearings before the Council.

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**Rule 23.** At every regular meeting of this City Council the order of business shall be as follows:

1. Reading of the record, if requested by the City Council.

1a. Public comment - the procedure is as follows:

An individual may in person or via telephone to the City Council Office on Mondays from nine o'clock (9:00) A. M. to three o'clock (3:00) P. M.; or in person from five o'clock (5:00) P. M. to six o'clock (6:00) P. M. via a sign up sheet available in the Sullivan Chamber indicate their desire to comment before the City Council on any matter on the agenda of the evening regardless if a Councillor exercises his or her Charter Right on a particular matter prior to Public Comment.

2. Motions for Reconsideration

3. Manager's Consent Agenda

4. Communications from the City Manager (Manager's non-Consent Agenda)

5. Unfinished business from preceding meetings

a. Charter Rights

b. On the Table

c. Unfinished Business

6. Consent Communications (petitions, memorials, and other communications from citizens, employees and others)

7. Consent orders and resolutions

8. Committee Reports

9. Communications and Reports from City Officers

10. Non-Consent Communications (petitions, memorials and other communications removed from the Consent Communication Agenda by request of a member of the City Council or placed initially on the Non-Consent list because the communication includes a request to speak to the City Council at its meeting.

11. Motions, orders or resolutions which have been removed from the Consent Order Agenda by request of a member of the City Council.

**6.**

Public hearings shall be scheduled by the City Clerk and Chair at the request of the City Council, but not on the same night as requested except in the case of a public emergency.

Under the provisions of Chapter 43, Section 98 of the General Laws, Tercentenary Edition, citizens and employees of the city shall have reasonable opportunity to be heard at any meeting of the City Council in regard to any matter considered thereat. All opportunities for citizens and employees of the city to be heard shall be provided during that portion of the order of business entitled "Public Comment," and that portion of the meeting shall take place directly after the order of business entitled "Reading of the Record", if requested, by the City Council." The time allowed for each person and employee shall be limited to a total of ten minutes provided that the time allocated shall not exceed two hours, and where necessary to ensure that all those who have indicated a desire to speak during this Public Comment time may have an equal opportunity to speak, the Chair may provide a shorter comment time for all individuals.

**Rule 23A:** Each of the three consent agendas is voted on in its entirety, with no discussion and separate vote by request of a single City Councillor. Upon such request, the item would be moved to the appropriate section of the agenda. Placement of items on the City Manager's Consent Agenda shall be determined by the City Manager. Placement of items on the Communications Consent Agenda shall be at the discretion of the City Clerk.

**Rule 23B:** The City Clerk shall include the written statement of the mission and goals or priorities of the City Council and the City Manager with the materials prepared for the agenda of the City Council for its weekly meeting, along with a list of the four dates per year for which discussion of these items shall be in order.

**Rule 24.** The seats of the members of the City Council shall be determined by the City Clerk in consultation with the members; no member shall change his seat but by permission of the Chair.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMITTEES**

**Rule 25.** All communications, petitions, or resolutions addressed to the City Council, which require action by the City Council at its meeting shall be filed with the City Clerk. The City Clerk shall place all new communications on the agenda for the next regular City Council meeting. Upon receipt of a communication that is substantially unchanged copy of a previously submitted communication, the City Clerk shall not place the communication on the agenda and shall transmit said communication to the Mayor. All communications, petitions, or resolutions that do not meet the agenda deadline specified in Rule Twenty shall be held over for the subsequent City Council agenda unless it is of an emergency nature.

**Rule 26. The Mayor shall appoint standing committees of the City Council. The City Clerk or his/her designee shall staff each committee and, where deemed appropriate, the Chair may request additional staff help through the City Manager.**

**Each committee shall meet regularly to review matters referred to it by the City Council or to take up other matters within its domain. To the extent possible, matters of policy shall be referred to the appropriate committee, so that careful study and consideration can be given to the subject matter. The committee shall make policy and other recommendations to the City Council as a whole for discussion, consideration and adoption.**

**It is the goal of the City Council to involve citizens actively in the work of city government through these committees. All committees shall work with community and neighborhood groups and committees on issues that relate to these groups' mandates and interests. The committee staff shall keep lists of interested parties and shall keep citizens informed of the meetings and deliberations of the committees.**

**The standing committees of the City Council shall be as follows:**

**Ordinance Committee -- a committee of the whole to consider the merit of any ordinance presented to the City Council and to consider the form and legality thereof; to consider all legal matters for which no other provision is made; and to represent general interests of the city before committees of the General Court when so authorized by a vote of the City Council.**

**Finance Committee -- a committee of the whole to consider all matters relating to the financial interests of the city, including the city budget, sources of city revenue, appropriations and loans, and city bonding capacity; to work with the City Manager and other officers of the city to benefit the city from a financial perspective; and to work with citizen groups and committees that might be formed from time to time to consider the financial health of the city.**

**Rules Committee -- to consist of three City Councillors to consider the rules of the City Council and its committees and to recommend amendments and changes thereto.**

**Government Operations Committee -- to consist of three City Councillors to consider matters relating to the delivery of City services and the operation of City departments.**

**Health and Hospitals Committee -- to consist of five City Councillors to consider policies and all other matters that relate to the health system provided for the citizens of Cambridge; to work toward maintaining and financing a strong, high quality system, including the Cambridge Hospital, the neighborhood health clinics, Neville Manor, school health program, and the Cambridge Health Department; and to work with the Health Policy Board and other citizen groups towards these ends.**

**Environment Committee -- to consist of three City Councillors to work toward an environmentally safe and clean city both in the short term and the long run; to consider proposals relating to environmental issues including those relating to air and water quality, solid and hazardous waste, visual quality, and the environmental impact of development; and to make recommendations to the City Council for legislation to prevent further pollution of the environment and to clean it up.**

**Housing and Community Development -- to consist of five City Councillors to enhance the quality of life in Cambridge as it relates to the livability of neighborhoods and to housing Cambridge people; to consider all matters relating to land use and to planning and development of housing in the city; to develop goals and an action plan for the maintenance and development of housing, with an emphasis on the needs of low income and working people and to coordinate with the Rent Control Committee toward this goal; to work with city and other agencies and other City Council committees on issues related to industrial and commercial development, especially as they relate to linkage and neighborhood protection, and to job development.**

**Economic Development, Training, and Employment Committee -- to consist of three City Councillors to work to enhance the employability of Cambridge residents, especially of young people, and to enhance employment opportunities for Cambridge residents, especially youth; to work with the Housing and Community Development Department, Housing and Community Development Committee, the School Department, the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce, the Private Industry Council, and other private sector groups, to develop policies and programs that will enhance economic development in the city and expand employment opportunities for Cambridge residents; and to monitor and improve existing employment programs.**

**Public Safety Committee -- to consist of three City Councillors to consider all matter affecting the public safety of Cambridge citizens; and to review matters relating to the performance, organization, and effectiveness of the police and fire departments, the traffic department as it relates to public safety issues, and the Police Review Board.**

**Human Services and Youth Committee -- to consist of three City Councillors to work toward the assurance that a broad human service delivery system, provided by the city, other levels of government, and non-profit and private agencies, exists to meet the human needs of all Cambridge people, including those of children, youth, families, and single adults of all backgrounds; to study policies, overall planning, and the delivery of human services to Cambridge people; to make recommendations to the City Council to improve the scope and quality of these services and to locate new sources of funding; to work with the city's Human Services Department, Human Services Commission, and other human service agencies to meet these ends.**

**Civil and Human Rights Committee -- to consist of three City Councillors to work with and oversee City agencies that deal with civil and human rights issues; to respond to incidents or concerns that are brought to the attention of the City Council relating to civil and human rights and to bring in the appropriate agencies, departments or legal services to assist in responding to such incidents; and to develop needed programs and legislation in this area.**

**Elder Affairs Committee - to consist of three City Councillors to consider all matters affecting senior citizens of Cambridge; to work in conjunction with city, non-profit, and private agencies, as well as other City Council committees, to further the well-being of our older citizens in all areas of concern, including but not limited to, housing, employment, health care, social services and recreation opportunities; and to make recommendations to the City Council with regard to state and federal legislation that impacts senior citizens.**

**Public Service - to consist of three City Councillors to consider matters of the appearance and services of the city that are related to public works; to work on matters related to the municipal lighting system, park system, public cemeteries and burial grounds, historical sites, and streets and sidewalks; to deal with the appearance of squares and neighborhoods of the city and their upkeep.**

**Claims Committee -- to consist of three City Councillors to consider all claims that have been filed against the city; to make recommendations on these claims to the City Council which shall give final approval of the disposition of these claims; and to consider and make recommendations issues related to litigation of claims that may be referred to the City Council by the City Manager.**

10.

**Traffic and Transportation -- to consist of three City Councillors to consider and recommend action on matters affecting traffic, including public and regional transportation proposals which affect Cambridge; and to work closely with other City Council Committees, especially the Public Safety and Economic Development, Training and Employment, and Environment Committees to develop a sound traffic and transportation program that will meet the needs of residents and employees at a minimal cost to the environment.**

**Cable Telecommunications and Electricity -- to consist of three City Councillors to consider issues relating to cable television, telecommunications, electricity and consumer protection issues related therein and to recommend tools for developing effective communication by the City Cable office to the City Council City agencies and the general public.**

**Veterans' Committee -- to consist of three City Councillors to consider all matters affecting veteran services and benefits of the City.**

**Sister Cities -- to consist of three City Councillors to monitor and provide oversight on the existing sister-city relationships; to assist in the development of additional relationships; to assess the potential for cooperation with the private sector in matters relating to development of business opportunities through sister cities; to make recommendations with regard to administration of sister cities activities.**

**Food Policy Committee -- to consist of three City Councillors to consider all matters relating to the problem of hunger in the city and to study and recommend solutions as well as establishing a food access policy for the City of Cambridge.**

**Rule 27. Every committee of the City Council to which any subject may be referred shall report on the subject within a reasonable time from the time of referral. In the case that the chairman of any committee shall fail for thirty (30) days from the time any subject has been referred to it to call a meeting of the committee, a majority of the committee may call a meeting of said committee. Notice of all committee meetings must be given at least forty-eight (48) hours before the time of the meeting.**

**Rule 28. Minutes shall be kept of all committee proceedings. All minutes, reports, and papers shall be submitted to the City Council by the clerk of Committees at the request of the chairman or a majority of the committee thereof. Recommendations of each committee shall be made to the City Council for consideration and adoption.**

**Rule 29. The Councillor first named thereto shall be the chair of any committee of which he/she is a member, and in case of his/her resignation or inability to serve, another member of the committee shall be named by the Mayor.**

## MEMBERS LOBBY

**Rule 30.** No person will be admitted within the rail in the Sullivan Chamber or in Members' Lobby connected with said chamber at any meeting of the City Council except upon permission of the Mayor.

## HEARINGS

**Rule 31A.** Public hearings may be requested for matters of public interest or of legislative requirement. Where appropriate, the City Council may refer such requests to a committee of the City Council.

**Rule 31B.** The time devoted to public hearings at any meeting of the City Council shall not be more than two (2) hours at any one sitting. Any hearing not completed within the specified time may be continued to another meeting.

Any individual appearing before the City Council at a public hearing and claiming to represent another as agent or otherwise in the matter of being heard shall file with the City Council a written authorization signed by the individual, organization or corporation whose interests such individual represents.

There shall be a ten (10) minute time limit for each speaker to express his views on the matter being heard by the City Council. Each speaker will be required to address himself solely to the issue, which is before the City Council for discussion and shall not engage in personal or rude remarks.

In all hearings before the City Council, the case of the petitioner shall be submitted first, except in matters affecting acceptance of highways or taking by right of eminent domain.

## ORDINANCES AND ORDERS

**Rule 32.** All by-laws passed by the City Council shall be termed ordinances, and the enacting style shall be "Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Cambridge." In all votes by which the City Council expresses anything by order or command the form of expression shall be "Ordered," and in all votes by which the City Council expresses opinions, principles, facts or purposes, the form shall be "Resolved."

**Rule 33.** The City Clerk shall determine the newspaper of the city in which shall be published any loan order or any ordinance and said publication shall be made in each newspaper in regular order, beginning with the oldest publication.

**Rule 34.** Every ordinance and every order, resolution or vote shall after its passage remain in the possession of the City Clerk for thirty-six (36) hours after the day of the meeting for the purpose of giving any Councillor an opportunity to file notice of his intention to move reconsideration.

### AMENDMENT AND SUSPENSION

**Rule 35A.** Any of the foregoing rules with the exception of Rule 19 may be suspended at any meeting by a two-thirds vote of the entire membership of the City Council.

**Rule 35B.** No amendments or additions to the rules may be enacted until at least seven days have elapsed from the date of the submission of the proposed changes or additions and require a majority vote of the entire membership of the City Council.

### ROBERTS' RULES OF ORDER

**Rule 36.** The City Council shall be governed by "Roberts' Rules of Order" in all questions of parliamentary practice not provided for by special rules of order.

### RULES OF COURTESY

**Rule 37.**

1. No one shall delay or interrupt the proceedings, or refuse to obey the orders of the presiding officer.

2. All persons shall refrain from any private conversation, which would interfere with the proper conduct of the meeting or hearing.

3. All persons should refrain from smoking, drinking or eating in the Sullivan Chamber.

4. Poster or placards must remain outside the Sullivan Chamber.

5. People are admitted to the Sullivan Chamber up to the fire safety capacity of the room which includes the fourth floor balcony. Overflow crowds may listen to the proceedings on loud speakers and television provided in the hallway.

6. All persons shall confine their remarks to the question under debate and avoid personalities.

**RULES OF TRAVEL**

**Rule 38.** The City Council's travel and incidental expenses thereto shall be approved by five members of the City Council through the budget process. All individual expenses will be substantiated by receipts and requests for payments will be approved by the City Auditor prior to reimbursement. Any unexpended funds for an individual's travel will be remitted to the City Treasurer within thirty (30) days of receipt. The City Auditor shall be required to keep an up-to-date journal of all City Council expenditures and make same available on request to all interested persons. Duplicate copies of expenses and vouchers will be kept on file in the Mayor's Office

# City of Cambridge

14. Proposed amendment to the Municipal Code of the City of Cambridge entitled "Historical Buildings and Landmarks," Chapter 2.78 be amended by inserting a subsection at the end of Section 2.78.050. The question comes on passing to be ordained on or after December 21, 1998.

PASSED TO BE ORDAINED.  
9-0-0.

15. Proposed amendments to the Rules of the City Council attached as follows:

- a. Rule 17 - Special Events Presentations - *Rule Change Roll call 7-2-0*
- b. Rule 20 - Dealing with deadlines - *Rule changed v v 9.*
- c. Rule 23 - Order of Business *Rule changed to include*

~~NO ACTION TAKEN.~~

*relating to Public Comment*  
*6A*  
*6B.*  
*Proposed <sup>new</sup> language*  
*at end of para 7*  
*proposed new para*  
*after para*

*Rule 17 - Changed Roll call 7-2-0*

*Rule 20 - Changed on a voice vote of 9 members*

*Rule 23 - Rule 23, Paragraph # 5 adopted on a voice vote of ~~9~~ nine members*

*Rule 23, Paragraphs 6A & 6B Referred to the Task Force on ~~policy & deliberation~~ deliberation & policy making*

*Rule 23 - last 2 lines of the 3rd paragraph from the bottom & the second paragraph from the bottom - Referred to the Task Force on deliberation & policy making*

# City of Cambridge

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council \_\_\_\_\_, 199

*Rule 17*

YEA	NAY	ABSENT	PRESENT	
✓				Ms. Kathleen L. Born
✓				Ms. Henrietta Davis
✓				V. Mayor Anthony Galluccio
	✓			Mr. Kenneth E. Reeves
✓				Ms. Sheila T. Russell
✓				Mr. Michael A. Sullivan
✓				Mr. Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
	✓			Ms. Katherine Triantafillou
✓				Mayor Francis H. Duehay

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Vice Mayor Galluccio stated that the City Council should give the Mayor backing when he determines the length of time each speaker is allowed to speak in Public Comment. He also wanted an analysis on who was doing the speaking in the Public Comment section of the meeting. City Manager Robert W. Healy stated that the communications submitted by the general public are written so that the public can speak on the subject matter contained in the communication even though the topic does not appear elsewhere on the agenda. Vice Mayor Galluccio stated that the issue is the length of time the general public has to speak. Councillor Davis suggested a two hour time limit with the time divided by the number of speakers. Councillor Russell stated that public comment should be reserved for hearings or be held on another night. Councillor Sullivan stated that it is tiring to hear about the same topic week after week. If there is a need to hear from the public on a special topic then the rules can be suspended, he said.

Councillor Davis stated that the Huron Avenue traffic subject was brought in one week, placed on the table and then on the following week the City Council heard from the public.

Councillor Sullivan stated that the rules are a waste of time because the timer bell rings ending the speakers allotted time and the speaker does not abide by the rule. He also stated that he feels the bell rule is selectively enforced. He suggested that a light be used instead of the bell. Vice Mayor Galluccio stated that confrontation between the Chair and the public does not look good. Councillor Davis liked the idea of the light.

Vice Mayor Galluccio stated that neighborhood groups, unions and the public appear at the City Council meetings because an item, such as a Zoning Ordinance, appears on Unfinished Business section of the Calendar. He asked how can we limit the amount of time the public has to talk. Councillor Sullivan responded that no one knows when the decision time is coming, for instance on a Zoning Ordinance, if we inform the public that they can come that night to discuss an item they might. City Manager Healy responded that public hearings are the public comment period. He stated that the Ordinance and the Finance Committees are comprised as a committee of the whole because of the nature of the committee.

Vice Mayor Galluccio asked how other communities handle the agenda and the public comment. He was informed that no other community has Public Comment to the extent that Cambridge does. Councillor Davis asked that the City Clerk provide the City Council with a report on public comment in other communities. She was informed that this report has been done.

3.

At this time Councillor Russell made a motion to act on Item Number One of the Agenda, the same being public comment on communications, by submitting the following motion:

Public comment will be limited to items on the Manager's Agenda, Orders and Resolutions, Calendar and Committee Reports.

Councillor Born stated that amendments made to the Zoning Ordinances are important and it is difficult when amendments are made at the meeting. Public comment, she felt, would be helpful.

Councillor Sullivan made a motion that the City Clerk draft language on the motion made by Councillor Russell regarding public comment on the City Manager's Agenda, Orders and Resolutions, Calendar and Committee Reports and refer this back to the City Council. This motion carried on a voice vote of five members.

Councillor Davis stated that if a member of the public wants to speak on the agenda they can request a hearing. Mr. Healy stated that discussion can be referred to a committee. Councillor Born stated that the public comment period has been shortened and she thinks it is dangerous to stifle public comment. Mr. Healy stated it is the call of the City Council to decide either to continue the status quo or to continue with the work of the City Council. Councillor Sullivan stated that a City Councillor's job is to be available for our constituents 7 days a week 365 days a year. The meeting is the time to work on the business before them. The danger is taking final action on a policy issue at the late hour of the evening. He stated that the rules have been bastardized.

Councillor Davis suggested other alternatives, such as:

- length of time of public comment limited to 2 hours
- public comment held earlier
- light or bell system after 5 minutes only

Councillor Sullivan suggested starting the meeting at 4:00 p. m. and starting public comment at 5:30 p. m. Councillor Davis stated that the public wants to hear what is going on with the City Manager's Agenda.

Vice Mayor Galluccio stated that he does not support completely limiting the public speaking on communications, but he does support having a public comment night once a month. Councillor Sullivan made a motion to have a public comment night once a month. Councillor Davis amended Councillor Sullivan's motion by adding that this public comment night be held the first meeting of the month and will include communications previously received. This motion as amended carried on a voice vote of five members. Vice Mayor Galluccio made a motion to have the public comment start at 5:00 p. m. He later withdrew his motion. Councillor Born stated that she did not think it was the worst thing in the world to listen to the public who comes to the City Council meeting. She stated that the City Council is elected to serve the people.

A discussion arose about the call ins for public comment. Ms. Albano, Assistant to the City Council, stated that the same people call in every week to be placed on the public comment list. Deputy City Manager Richard Rossi stated that rules could be suspended on the public comment night or the public can be referred to the public comment meeting.

Councillor Born asked what items were discussed from the communications, which could have been before a committee, or on public comment night. Ms. Drury responded the condo ordinance, the prevailing wage proposal and the Polaroid development.

The joint committees heard from Eli Yarden, 143 Pleasant Street, member of the Living Wage Committee, who stated that the public was told by some members of the City Council to make a big showing at the City Council meeting and if they did not make a strong showing they were under the opinion the proposal would not pass. He stated that the time constraints and the role of the chair has been left out of this equation. Lately there have been many *Special Events* at the beginning of the meeting. He stated that if the public knows they can come at 5:30 p. m. to speak and there is *Special Events* this prolongs the time. These *Special Events* are important, but if you measure where the time went, some is spent on the *Special Events*.

John Gintell, Cambridge, stated the City Council should use meeting time management to structure the agenda. He stated that the important matters should be done first. It should be structured into a business format. The public comment, he said, is boring. He stated that one of the City Council goals is to get the message out and get public involved. Using the complaint system could cut out some City Council Orders, he said.

Mr. Rossi asked how a discussion like snow would be handled. Councillor Sullivan stated that it can be sent to committee. Councillor Russell stated that it can be forwarded to a round table discussion. Vice Mayor Galluccio stated that when snow is on the ground the public wants to hear about the problem.

Councillor Sullivan made a motion that the City Clerk be instructed to request the City Manager to get a price to install a light device to regulate time management for public comment. This motion carried on a voice vote of five members. Councillor Sullivan made the motion that the rules be amended to reduce public comment to 5 minutes from 10 minutes and that the Mayor should make the determination on division of the time per speaker. No action was taken on this motion.

The joint committees proceeded to act on Item Number Two of the Agenda, the same being a request to change the deadline for submission of City Council orders to the City Clerk's Office to 3:00 p. m. on Thursday. After some discussion this motion carried on a voice vote of four members.

The joint committee proceeded to act on Item Number Three of the Agenda, the same being to change the agenda to include a separate section entitled "Requests for Reports" and give the City Manager the option of removing items from lists to do a quick report that night or having it go on the Awaiting Report list for a later, thorough response. Councillor Sullivan stated that he did not support this idea. Councillor Born was concerned with the cost of staff time for these reports. Councillor Russell made a motion to refer this item to a round table task force. This motion carried on a voice vote of four members.

Item Number Four of the Agenda was discussed next, the same being moving the City Council desks for meetings. Councillor Born stated that she wanted to invest in better tables or u-shaped tables with chairs that are good looking and oak or smaller tables similar to the City Manager's table. She felt they should be furniture that could be folded down and stored up in the balcony. She stated that she feels public hearings by the Planning Board should be held in the Sullivan Chamber. Councillor Sullivan stated that it might require an amount of money to rewire the Chamber. He stated that the city should have round or u-shaped tables and there should be a designated area for the public and the city staff. Councillor Born stated that the press should sit at the press table. Councillor Sullivan stated that the Chamber should be functional for meetings other than City Council meetings. He requested that the City Manager increase the wattage of the lighting in the Chamber. Councillor Russell referred the issue of furniture and lighting to the City Manager for action. This motion carried on a voice vote of four members.

A discussion arose about the use of the City Manager's table. Councillor Sullivan stated that the general public should speak at the microphone and not at the City Manager's table. Councillor Russell concurred. Councillor Davis did not concur. Councillor Davis stated it is very rare that the city staff or the City Manager must move from this area so that the public can speak because public comment occurs before the City Manager's Agenda. Councillor Born wanted the City Council to be "public friendly". Councillor Russell moved to continue the same operating rule. Councillor Sullivan moved this issue to be decided by the Chair. This motion carried.

The Committee then discussed Item Number Five of the Agenda, limiting the comments by members of the City Council to 10 minutes. This motion carried on a voice vote of three members. Councillor Sullivan was recorded in the negative on this matter.

Item Number Six of the Agenda, should motions require a second vote, was addressed next. Councillor Sullivan stated that seconds are perfunctory; the only time there would be no second would be when there was pointed personal antagonism. Mr. Healy stated that City Council Orders get passed without discussion. He stated that there was a need to think about some motions. No action was taken on this motion.

Item Number Seven of the Agenda, regarding notification of attendance at City Council meeting by department heads was discussed next. Councillor Sullivan stated that the Agenda needs to be reorganized again. He suggested that Calendar be placed after the City Manager's Agenda so that if City Councillors want staff present for discussion, staff will not need to stay until the end of the night. The matter of having a list of specific staff needed for a particular meeting was referred to the round table task force for discussion on motion of Councillor Born. No action was taken on her motion. Councillor Sullivan's motion to place the Calendar after the City Manager's Agenda carried on a voice vote of four members.

With regard to Agenda Item Number Eight, New Council/Staff task force it was agreed that Maryellen Carvello, Lisa Peterson and Councillor Sullivan would be added to the Task Force. This motion carried on a voice vote.

Other matters discussed were:

Councillor Russell stated that there are too many motions made for suspension of the rules. She stated she will ask for a roll call on suspension of the rules. Mr. Healy stated that it requires six votes to suspend the rules in Roberts Rules because this is seen as an extraordinary measure, not a regular event.

7.

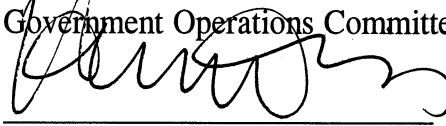
Councillor Sullivan stated that *Special Events* Presentation should be made from 5:00 p. m. to 5:30 p. m. to be cable cast. This motion carried on a voice vote of four members. Councillor Sullivan stated that the rules need to be amended to read 5:00 p. m. for *Special Events* Presentations

The meeting adjourned at one o'clock and fifteen minutes p. m. on motion of Councillor Russell.

For the Committees,

Handwritten signature of Sheila Russell in cursive, written over a horizontal line.

Councillor Sheila Russell, Chair  
Government Operations Committee

Handwritten signature of Henrietta Davis in cursive, written over a horizontal line.

Councillor Henrietta Davis, Chair  
Rules Committee

# City of Cambridge

## Government Operations Committee

Rules Committee

November 17, 1998

### AGENDA

1. Public comment on communications?
2. Request to change deadline for submission of orders to City Clerk's Office to 3:00 p.m. on Thursday.
3. Change agenda to include a separate section entitled "Request for Reports" - give City Manager the option of removing items from lists to do a quick report that night or having it go on the awaiting report list for a later, thorough response.
4. Can the City Council desks be moved for the meetings?
5. Limit comment by members of the City Council to 10 minutes with provision that no one can speak twice before all who desire have spoken and that no one can speak more than twice.
6. Should motions require a second?
7. Notification regarding what department heads are needed for each meeting.
8. New Council/Staff task force.
9. Any other matters related to the operation of the City Council.

**ACTIONS TAKEN BASED ON THE AGENDA OF THE MEETING**

- 1. PUBLIC COMMENT ON COMMUNICATIONS**

**PASSED - ONLY AT FIRST MEETING OF THE MONTH - REQUIRES A RULE CHANGE**
- 2. CHANGE IN DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF COUNCIL ORDERS TO CITY CLERK'S OFFICE TO 3:00 P. M. ON THURSDAYS**

**PASSED - REQUIRES A RULE CHANGE**
- 3. CREATION OF SEPARATE SECTION ENTITLED "REQUESTS FOR REPORTS"**

**REFERRED TO THE TASK FORCE**
- 4. CITY COUNCIL DESKS MOVED DURING MEETINGS**

**REFERRED TO THE CITY MANAGER FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- 5. LIMITING COMMENT PERIOD OF MEMBERS FO THE CITY COUNCIL**

**MOTION CARRIED**
- 6. MOTIONS REQUIRED TO BE SECONDED**

**NO ACTION TAKEN**
- 7. DEPARTMENT HEAD LIST FOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

**CALENDAR MOVED TO BE PLACED AFTER THE CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA. REQUIRES A RULE CHANGE.**
- 8. COUNCIL/STAFF TASK FORCE**

**ADDITIONAL MEMBERS ADDED TO THE TASK FORCE**
- 9. SPECIAL EVENTS PRESENTATION**

**RULES REQUIRE AMENDMENT TO DESIGNATE SPECIAL TIME OF 5:00 P.M. FOR SPECIAL EVENTS PRESENTATIONS CARRIED**

## **SPECIAL EVENTS PRESENTATIONS AND REGULAR MEETINGS**

### **Rule 17. Special Events Presentations.**

Commencing at 5:00 p. m. before any regular meetings there may be a *SPECIAL EVENTS PRESENTATION*. At this time special events will be presented and will be broadcast on cable television. Special Events Presentations will be scheduled through the Mayor's Office. The Special Events Presentations will conclude at 5:30 p. m. No quorum of the City Council is required.

### **Rule 17. Section 17. Meetings.**

All regular meetings of the City Council shall be held in the Sullivan Chamber, City Hall, or, if agreed to by a majority of the City Council, at any other suitable public building within the City of Cambridge, at 5:30 p.m. on Monday of each week, from the first Monday in January to and including the last Monday in June, and from the second Monday in September to and including the last Monday in December.

When a meeting day falls on a holiday, the succeeding Monday shall be the meeting. The City Council may at any meeting, by a majority vote, decide to discontinue any future meeting previously scheduled. All City Council meetings shall end no later than 12:00 midnight.

## RULE 20

**Rule 20. All matter of whatever description which require action by the City Council at its meeting shall be presented to the City Clerk by 5:00 p. m. on the Thursday preceding the regular meeting, except for orders and resolutions which shall be presented to the City Clerk by 3:00 p. m. During a week in which a legal holiday falls on a Friday, said matters shall be presented to the City Clerk by 5:00 p. m. on the Wednesday preceding the regular meeting except orders and resolutions which shall be presented to the City Clerk by 3:00 p. m. Communications submitted later will be held over for the next regular meeting. Except where the City Manager believes that emergency or exigent circumstances require him to present to the City Council a matter which was not presented to the City Clerk by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, the City Manager may present such matters to the City Council at its meeting in writing as part of a Supplemental Agenda of the City Manager.**

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Rule 23.** At every regular meeting of this City Council the order of business shall be as follows:

**1. Reading of the record, if requested by the City Council.**

**1a. Public comment - the procedure is as follows:**

An individual may in person or via telephone to the City Council Office on Mondays from nine o'clock (9:00) A. M. to three o'clock (3:00) P. M.; or in person from five o'clock (5:00) P. M. to six o'clock (6:00) P. M. via a sign up sheet available in the Sullivan Chamber indicate their desire to comment before the City Council on any matter on the agenda of the evening regardless if a Councillor exercises his or her Charter Right on a particular matter prior to Public Comment.

**2. Motions for Reconsideration**

**3. Manager's Consent Agenda**

**4. Communications from the City Manager (Manager's non-Consent Agenda)**

**5. Unfinished business from preceding meetings**

**a. Charter Rights**

**b. On the Table**

**c. Unfinished Business**

**6a. Consent Communications (applications for permits, which by Ordinance require City Council approval, petitions, memorials, and other communications from citizens, employees and others regarding items 2-5 and 7-11 in this paragraph).**

**6b. Communications from citizens, employees and others regarding matters which are not otherwise on the agenda of the meeting.**

**7. Consent orders and resolutions**

**8. Committee Reports**

**9. Communications and Reports from City Officers**

**10. Non-Consent Communications (petitions, memorials and other communications removed from the Consent Communication Agenda by request of a member of the City Council).**

**11. Motions, orders or resolutions which have been removed from the Consent Order Agenda by request of a member of the City Council.**

Public hearings shall be scheduled by the City Clerk and Chair at the request of the City Council, but not on the same night as requested except in the case of a public emergency.

Under the provisions of Chapter 43, Section 98 of the General Laws, Tercentenary Edition, citizens and employees of the city shall have reasonable opportunity to be heard at any meeting of the City Council in regard to any matter considered thereat. All opportunities for citizens and employees of the city to be heard shall be provided during that portion of the Order of Business entitled "Public Comment." During "Public Comment" at each regular meeting of the City Council, citizens and employees of the city may comment upon matters on the Order of Business in the categories numbered 2 through 5 and 7 through 11 in the list of the Order of Business set forth in this section above.

Communications from citizens, employees and others, which do not pertain to any matter otherwise on the agenda for the meeting, 6b, shall be referred to "*Special Public Comment.*" *Special Public Comment* shall be scheduled on the first regular City Council meeting of the month. During *Special Public Comment*, citizens and employees of the city may comment upon all matters on the City Council agenda in the categories of the Order of Business which may be the subject of comment at all other public comment portions of regular City Council meetings. In addition, citizens and employees of the city may comment on all communications referred to the *Special Public Comment* from the regular meetings of the previous month, and on communications on the agenda of the current meeting from citizens, employees and others about matters which do not otherwise appear on the Order of Business of the current meeting.

That portion of the meeting entitled "Public Comment" or "*Special Public Comment*" shall take place directly after the Order of Business entitled "Reading of the Record," if requested by the City Council. The time allowed for each person and employee shall be limited to a total of ten minutes provided that the time allocated shall not exceed two hours. Where necessary to ensure that all those who have indicated a desire to speak during this Public Comment time may have an equal opportunity to speak, the Chair may provide a shorter comment time for all individuals.

# City of Cambridge

In City Council December 14, 1998

The Government Operations Committee and the Rules Committee held a joint public meeting on Tuesday, November 17, 1998 at eleven o'clock and twenty-five minutes a. m. in the Sullivan Chamber.

The purpose of the joint meeting was to discuss changes to the City Council Agenda and the Order of Business as outlined in the Agenda of the meeting as attached as **ATTACHMENT A**.

Present at the meeting were Councillor Russell, Chair of the Government Operations Committee; Councillor Davis, Chair of the Rules Committee; Vice Mayor Galluccio; Councillors Born and Sullivan; Robert W. Healy, City Manager; Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager; Maryellen Carvello, Administrative Assistant to the City Manager; Racheal A. Seymour, Intern, City Manager's Office; Sandra Albano, Assistant to the City Council, D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk and Donna P. Lopez, Deputy City Clerk.

Councillor Russell stated that the meeting was scheduled because the City Council meetings are very long and it is very late when the City Council reaches its own business. This was discussed at the City Council retreat. Councillor Davis stated that the City Council wants to do make its policy decisions when the members are fresh, early in the meeting and not at midnight.

Councillor Russell stated that she wants the committees to formulate a method to limit the topics on which public comment is made. Councillor Sullivan stated that the general public forwards a communication and it becomes the topic of the week. City Clerk, D. Margaret Drury stated that a way to address this matter is to hold public hearings or subcommittee meetings, prepare a report and when the matter comes back to the City Council there could be comment. She stated that the living wage proposal is an example of comment being made on an item that had not been heard before a committee.

Councillor Davis stated that the City Council is hearing proposals two and three times instead of focusing on these matters at committee hearings. She stated that the PTDM proposal had a committee hearing and a hearing was continued at the City Council meeting again. There could have been a better way to discuss this issue, she said. The City Council does not do its best work this way, she said.

Committee Report #1

*5-2* *Call #*

A report from Councillor Russell and Councillor Davis, for a joint public meeting held on Tuesday, November 17, 1998. The purpose of the joint meeting was to discuss changes to the City Council Agenda and the Order of Business as outlined in the Agenda.

*1/11/99*

RULE 17 - CHANGED ROLL CALL 7-2-0.

RULE 20 - CHANGED ON A VOICE VOTE OF NINE MEMBERS

RULE 23 - RULE 23, PARAGRAPH #5 ADOPTED ON A VOICE VOTE OF NINE MEMBERS. PARAGRAPH 6A AND 6B REFERRED TO THE TASK FORCE IN DELIBERATION AND POLICY MAKING.

RULE 23 - LAST TWO LINES OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> PARAGRAPH FROM THE BOTTOM AND THE 2<sup>ND</sup> PARAGRAPH FROM THE BOTTOM - REFERRED TO THE TASK FORCE ON DELIBERATION AND POLICY MAKING.

In City Council December 14, 1998

*Accept Report.*

**PLACED ON FILE**

*3 Rules placed on Unfinished Business for 1 week*