

City of Cambridge

RULES OF THE CITY COUNCIL AS REVISED

1980 - 1981.

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.

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 chairman shall be chosen, who shall serve during the absence of both mayor and vice-chairman.

Rule 4. He shall preserve decorum and order, may speak to points of order, in preference to other members; shall decide all questions of order, subject to an appeal to the City Council, regularly seconded; and no other business shall be in order till 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.

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Rule 5. He 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 rise and stand until counted, and 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, remonstrances, 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 special committee of the City Council.
3. To the City Manager.
4. 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 offering the order, 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.

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- 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; which several motions shall have precedence in the above order; and a motion to strike out the enacting clause of an ordinance shall be equivalent to a motion to postpone indefinitely. A motion to adjourn shall be in order at any time except upon immediate repetition, and that motion, the motion to lay on the table, the motion to take from the table, and the motion for a previous question, shall be decided without debate.
- Rule 10. The previous question shall be put in the following form: "Shall the main question be not 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 rise 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 rise and respectfully address the chair, and wait until he is recognized; shall confine himself to the question under debate and avoid personalities.
- Rule 13. No member speaking shall be interrupted by another, but by rising to call to order for explanation.

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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.

Rule 15. Every member present when a question is put 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 City Council has decided, or before the calling of the yeas and nays. 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, but a motion to reconsider may be made at the next meeting, provided written notice of such motion shall be filed with the City Clerk within thirty-six hours, Saturdays and Sundays to be excluded in the computation of the thirty-six hours; but 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.

REGULAR MEETINGS.

Rule 17. Section 17. Meetings.

All regular meetings of the City Council shall be held in the City Council Chamber, City Hall or, if agreed to by a majority of the Council, at any other suitable public building within the City of Cambridge, at 5:00 o'clock in the evening of 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, provided, however, that when a meeting day falls on a holiday the succeeding Monday shall be the meeting day, and provided further, that the City Council may

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at any meeting, by a majority vote, decide to discontinue any further meetings hereinbefore assigned.

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. (Chapter 303 of the Acts of 1975.)

Meetings of the City Council may also be held at any time when all members of the City Council are present and consent thereto. (G.L.c.43, s. 98.)

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.

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Rule 20. That all matters of whatever description which may require action by the City Council shall be presented to the City Clerk no later than 5:00 P. M. on the Thursday preceding each regular meeting.

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 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.

Rule 22. The City Clerk is authorized by these rules to order and publish notice of hearings on petitions presented to him requiring 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.
2. Communications from the City Manager.
3. Public hearings.
4. Under the provisions of Chapter 43, Section 98 of the General Laws, Tercentenary Edition, citizens and employees of the city shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at any meeting of the City Council in regard to any matter considered thereat; the time allowed for each person and employee shall be limited to ten minutes on each matter upon which they wish to express their opinion unless the City Council shall by vote allow additional time on such matter.
5. Presentation of petitions, memorials and remonstrances.
6. Communications and reports from city officers.
7. Reports of committees.
8. Motions, orders or resolutions.

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9. Unfinished business or preceding meetings.

10. Motions for reconsideration.

Rule 24. The seats of the members of the City Council shall be numbered, and determined by lot; and no member shall change his seat but by permission of the chair.

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMITTEES.

Rule 25. All petitions, memorials or remonstrances addressed to the City Council shall be filed with the City Clerk and presented by the chair or by a member in his place who may explain the subject thereof.

No petition, remonstrance, resolution or other communication, submitted by any improvement association, civic society, club or other unincorporated organization, or its officers, shall be considered by the City Council or printed in its proceedings unless such organization shall have filed with the City Clerk a statement, sworn to by one of its officers, specifying the number of members in good standing, the time and place of meeting and a list of the officers for the current year.

Rule 26. There shall be appointed standing committees of the City Council as follows:-

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - to consist of the Mayor and eight City Councillors to consider all matters of appropriations and loans, and in general any matters affecting the financial interests of the city; to consider all official bonds.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HOSPITALS. - to consist of five City Councillors to consider all matters relating to the City Hospital, Infirmary and the Health Department.

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COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, MANPOWER AND EMPLOYMENT - to consist of three City Councillors to consider all matters relative to the industrial and commercial development within the City of Cambridge and to work with the agencies of the Commonwealth and Federal Government on all matters concerning manpower and employment.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION - to consist of three City Councillors to consider all matters effecting regional transportation proposals which effect the City of Cambridge and to submit to the City Council their recommendations for action on these proposals; to study all proposals for travel within the city and make recommendations to the City Council for the improvement of travel in the city.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICES - to consist of three City Councillors to consider all complaints that may be sent to the City Council against public service corporations; to consider all matters affecting municipal lighting systems, fire alarm boxes, police signal boxes, their installation, etc.; to consider all matters affecting the municipal water supply; to consider all matters affecting the engineering department and the sewer and drainage systems of the municipality; to consider all matters affecting the municipal park system, playgrounds and all public cemeteries and burial grounds; to consider all matters affecting the public health; to consider all matters affecting the appearance of the city and comfort of its citizens.

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND DEVELOPMENT - to consist of three City Councillors to consider all matters relative to land use, planning and development of housing in the city, including construction and rehabilitation of present and future buildings.

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COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT - to consist of three City Councillors to consider all proposals regarding air pollution and to recommend appropriate legislation to prevent the pollution of the air, streams and rivers within the City of Cambridge and to formulate any long range plans for the most effective disposal of rubbish and other related matters within the city.

COMMITTEE ON ORDINANCE - to consist of Mayor and eight City Councillors to consider the advisability and merit of any ordinance referred to it, as well as the form and legality thereof; to consider all legal matters for which no other provision is made and to represent the interests of the city before committees of the General Court, provided, however, that said committee shall not appear before a committee of the General Court unless authorized by vote of the City Council.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY - to consist of three City Councillors to consider all matters affecting the Police and Fire Departments of the City, and, in general, matters affecting the public safety of the community; to consider all petitions and requests for licenses which come within the jurisdiction of the City Council.

COMMITTEE ON ELDER AFFAIRS - to consist of three City Councillors to consider all matters affecting the elderly to work in conjunction with all agencies of the City concerned with housing, health care, social services for the elderly and to review all legislation dealing with the problems of the elderly and to submit recommendations to the City Council for implementation of said programs.

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COMMITTEE ON CLAIMS - To consist of three City Councillors to whom shall be referred all claims against the City. If the committee should meet during any month and make awards it shall report on the first meeting of the following month a list of the claims awarded or approved by them and the amount of money awarded or paid in settlement thereof.

COMMITTEE ON RECREATION - to consist of three City Councillors who shall confer with the Recreation Commission and the Superintendent of Recreation prior to the submission of the Annual Budget in order to outline the goals for programs and recreational activities for the coming fiscal year; to meet twice in each calendar year with the Recreation Commission and the Superintendent of Recreation to discuss the programs approved and future programs of the Recreation Department.

COMMITTEE ON RENT CONTROL - to consist of three City Councillors who shall study all legislative proposals relative to the administration of Rent Control in the city and to make appropriate recommendations to the city council on complaints received from landlords and tenants.

COMMITTEE ON REVENUE SHARING - to consist of three City Councillors who shall make recommendations to the City Council for the disposition of all federal funds received by the city, after hearing from all concerned parties.

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES - to consist of three City Councillors who shall analyze the overall planning and coordination of programs and the delivery of services of related agencies operating within the city and to make appropriate recommendations to the City Council for improvement of these programs.

COMMITTEE ON RULES - to consist of three City Councillors who shall study the rules and procedures of the City Council and the council committees and to make recommendations for amendments when appropriate to the full council.

All committees of this City Council shall be appointed by the Mayor.

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- Rule 27. Every committee of the City Council, to which any subject may be referred shall report therein within four (4) weeks from the time subject is referred to it, or ask for further time. In case the chairman of any committee shall fail for ten (10) 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 for meeting, but meetings may be held at any time by unanimous consent of all of the members of the committee.
- Rule 28. All committees shall cause records to be kept of their proceedings in books provided therefor. All reports and papers submitted to the City Council shall be legibly written. The Clerk of Committees shall make copies of any papers to be reported by a committee, at the request of the chairman thereof. Reports of all committees, whether by ordinance, resolve or otherwise, shall be made to the City Council, and no report shall be received unless agreed to in committee actually assembled.
- Rule 29. The Councillor first named thereto shall be chairman of any committee of which he is a member, and in case of his resignation or inability to serve, the member of the committee next in order shall be chairman.

MEMBERS' LOBBY.

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

HEARINGS.

- Rule 31. 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

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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 being heard shall file with the City Council a written authorization signed by the individual, organization or corporation whose interests such individual represents. Ten (10) minutes shall be allowed 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.

In all hearings before the City Council the case of the petitioner shall be first submitted, 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.

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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 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 will require a two-thirds vote of the entire membership of the City Council.

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Rule 36. The City Council shall be governed by "Robert's Rules of Order" in all questions of parliamentary practice not provided for by special rules or orders.

RULES OF COURTESY

Rule 37. That the enclosed Rules of Courtesy for the conduct of City Council meetings and hearings be added after the present number Rule 36.

1. That 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 City Council Chamber.

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4. Posters or placards must remain outside the City Council Chamber.
5. Citizens are admitted to the City Council 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 which will be provided in the hallway at the direction of the Presiding Officer.

RULES OF TRAVEL.

Rule 38. All request for travel and incidental expenses thereto shall be approved by five members of the City Council. All expenses will be substantiated by receipts and requests for payments will be approved by the City Auditor prior to reimbursement. All unexpended funds will be remitted to the City Treasurer within thirty 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.



OFFICE OF
THE CITY CLERK

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139 • (617) 498-9017

September 8, 1980

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed you will find a copy of the City Council Rules for
1980 - 1981 as revised on August 6, 1980.

Your kind attention in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Paul E. Healy, City Clerk.

PEH/dl

Enc.

43.

S 397

City Council Rules as revised on
August 6, 1980

In City Council,

Sept. 8, 1980

Placed

on

- File -