



Parliamentary Procedure & Protocol

February 25, 2019
City Council Study Session

City Council Meetings

- Regular meeting time/place/frequency set by ordinance.
- Special meeting called by mayor or 3 members with written notice.
- Quorum required for regular or special meetings.
- Must be noticed & open to the public (except executive sessions).

Meeting Agendas

- Council determines its organization, rules, & order of business (Charter, 4.27(a)).
- City Manager sets the agenda with Council input (CP-2(I)).
- Council can direct items to be placed on agendas.



Key City Procedural Rules

- Act by ordinance, resolution or motion.
- Ordinances & resolutions must be read in full unless available at meeting
- Approval requires majority except:
 - Executive sessions;
 - Emergency ordinances;
 - Zoning decisions contrary to Planning Commission recommendation;
 - Certain motions (previous question/limit debate).

Decorum

- Formality of process and language has many purposes.
- Behavior impacts the clarity, quality, and legality of Council actions:
 - Interactions between council
 - Interactions with staff
 - Interactions with public
 - Non-verbal actions
 - Sidebar discussions



Common Agenda Items

- Citizen Communication
- Consent Agenda
- Resolutions & Ordinances
- Administrative Council Business
- Committee Reports



Commerce
CITY

Motions in Practice

- Motion
 - Maker may modify or withdraw.
- Second (if required)
 - Maker may modify or withdraw.
- Chair restates the motion
- Debate and other motions
- Resolution of other motions
- Vote on main motion



Motions

- “I move [to do one thing].”
- Clarity and simplicity are critical for fairness and due process.
- Avoid:
 - Run-on motions;
 - Justification or debate;
 - Complex or amending seconds.
- Ask for assistance in advance or during the meeting



Types of Motions

- Main motion (requires second).
- Subsidiary motions (all require second):
 - Postpone indefinitely
 - Amendment
 - Refer to committee
 - Postpone to a certain time
 - Limit or extend limits of debate (2/3 majority)
 - Call the (previous) question (2/3 majority)
 - Table (Lay on the table)



Amendments

- Must relate to the main motion.
- Cannot change the meaning of the motion.
- Only two pending at a time (to amend the main motion, & to amend the amendment)
- Approving an amendment doesn't approve the main motion.
- Resolved before voting on main motion.



Privileged Motions

- Council can't take any other action while considering these.
- Motions/Actions:
 - Question of privilege (no second unless motion)
 - Can interrupt speaker.
 - Chair rules on question.
 - Recess
 - Adjourn
 - Fix time to which to adjourn



Reconsidering Actions

- Motion to reconsider (only by member voting on winning side of prior action) at same meeting.
- Others (not common or recommended in Commerce City):
 - To rescind or to amend something previously adopted.
 - To take from the table.



Procedural Tools

- “Move the previous question.”
- “Point of information” - asks a question about facts under discussion.
- “Point of order” - raises a procedural issue/rule violation.
- “Appeal” - asks the chair to reconsider ruling.





Questions?

