



# Council Meeting Procedure

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April 26, 2021  
City Council Study Session  
Presentation 21-26

# City Council Meetings

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

# Meeting Agendas

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

# Common Agenda Items

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- Citizen Communication
  - At time stated in agenda
- Consent Agenda
- Resolutions, Ordinances on 1<sup>st</sup> and Second Reading
- Administrative Council Business
  - Recommended submission by Tuesday prior
- Reports

# 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
  - New taxes;
  - Zoning decisions contrary to Planning Commission recommendation;
  - Certain motions (previous question/limit debate).

# Decorum

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- New debate and speaking policies (16(F)(2); 23(C))
- Behavior impacts the clarity, quality, and legality of Council actions:
  - Interactions between council
  - Interactions with staff
  - Interactions with public
  - Non-verbal actions
  - Sidebar discussions

# Motions in Practice

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- 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

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- “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

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- 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.
- Ordinance amendments



# Text Amendments

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- Ordinances and resolutions must be amended specifically
- New structure:
  - Offer opportunity to amend before introduction or main motion on approval
  - Work with staff to craft amendment



# Privileged Motions

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- 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

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- 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

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- “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?

