

The City Council met in a work session on Monday, February 6, 2017 in Council Chambers. A quorum being present, Mayor Victoria Jackson-Stanley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Those Commissioners in attendance were Commissioners Rideout, Cannon, and Hanson. Commissioners Sydnor and Foster were absent. Mayor Victoria Jackson-Stanley asked for a moment of silence. Commissioner Hanson led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Sandra Tripp-Jones reviewed with Council the rules and procedures for the conduct of Council meetings. Section 1-15 of the City Code was used as a reference.

Council reviewed the closed session report process and the reasons to close a session. A motion is required if Council is in a closed session and a Commissioner wishes to discuss the topic in an open meeting. State law prohibits Council discussing personnel in an open session.

The meetings are recorded. Typed minutes are kept in City Hall and posted on the City's website after they have been approved by City Council.

It was noted that Section 1-15 needs updating (order of business in the agenda section). Agenda items are to be submitted to Sandra Tripp-Jones. The deadline for staff to submit items is the Tuesday before the meeting. The public is to submit requests no later than the Monday before the meeting because some items have to be circulated to the department heads for their comments. The agenda is posted on the City's website and distributed by e-mail to those people who have requested it.

If a Council member brings an item to the meeting that is not listed on the agenda, the Code states that formal action on such matters shall be deferred until a subsequent meeting, except that immediate action may be taken upon a vote of four members of Council. Sandra Tripp-Jones asked that this be clarified that immediate action may be taken upon four members of Council adding the item to the agenda. They should provide a reason as to why it has to be acted on today and cannot be deferred. If an item concerns spending money, they are best served by asking for a recommendation on how to do it. There is an appropriated reserve and that is the purpose of the reserve; however, the reserve dwindles over time.

Council discussed having citizens fill out a written request if they wish to speak on a specific agenda item. The slips would then be given to the Mayor so she knows who wants to speak. This would include their name, address, and agenda item number. It was suggested that time limits be placed on how long someone can speak. This would depend on how many people wish to speak.

A request for a roll call vote required a motion and a second according to Roberts Rules of Order.

Sandra Tripp-Jones reminded the Council that a silent vote is a yes vote. The section of the Code speaking to conflict of interest needs to be updated to reflect what is in the Ethics Code. If a Council member wishes to abstain, they shall state the reasons on the record for his or her abstention.

A Council member may file a protest against Council action. Any Council member shall have the rights to have the reasons for his dissent from, or protest against, any action of Council entered in the members.

Certain ordinances and resolutions require a super majority. Adoption of the budget does not require a super majority, but a budget amendment does. Certain contractual obligations require more than a simple majority such as actions under some employment contracts. If there is an emergency measure and Council wishes to approve an ordinance at the meeting at which it is introduced (not two meetings), it requires four votes.

Rob Collison stated that there is case law that any expenditure from the reserve fund is a budget amendment because the reserve funds are not earmarked for any particular use. This requires four votes. This is a State requirement.

Commissioner Rideout provided information on incorporating rules and procedures for City committees that are otherwise not required to develop their own rules. This might include such things as how they deal with vacancies, how they select their Chair, absenteeism from meetings, length of time on a committee, etc. Work plans were also suggested. Meeting minutes should be submitted to the City Manager.

Council discussed extended absenteeism from Council meetings and the possibility of calling (phone) during the meeting so they could represent their ward. Rob Collison said the Code says when a Commissioner misses more than 1/13 of the meetings, their compensation can be reduced. Skype and phone participation are used in other locations. Sandra Tripp-Jones will provide Council with samples of what is done in other jurisdictions.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was seconded and approved.

With no further business, Mayor Victoria Jackson-Stanley adjourned the work session at 7:04 p.m. I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate account of the Council work session on Monday, February 6, 2017, insofar as I personally am aware.

Victoria Jackson-Stanley
Mayor