

Appendix I

Meeting Procedures

- A. Meetings of the City Council are where the business of the City is conducted and vital decisions for the City's future are made. The main objective of the City Council in the proper conduct of its meetings is to ensure the public's business is conducted in an efficient manner with full opportunity for members of the City Council to communicate their thoughts and have discussions on the agenda items before a decision is made. The Open Meeting Law requires that City Council meetings be open to the public but does not require the City to offer opportunities for public comment other than required public hearings. The City of Mankato recognizes that meetings represent a forum where public can address Council as a whole. As a result, Council allows public the opportunity to share comments on subjects relevant to city government, its policies, operations or service and for the limited purposes provided in the publicly noticed meeting agenda outlined in the Meeting Procedures below.

Order of Business

The Mayor presides over Council meetings. The at-large Council Member (also known as the president) performs leadership duties if the Mayor is absent. Council meetings begin promptly and are held in the following order:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes
5. Appearances, Recognition, and Proclamations
6. Public Open Forum
7. Consent Calendar
8. Public Hearings/Ordinances/Variations
9. Planning Commission
10. Licenses
11. Council Business
12. Reports and Miscellaneous Business
13. Adjournment

Call to order—presiding officer

The Mayor (or at-large Council Member) calls the meeting to order. If the Mayor arrives after the meeting has begun, the Mayor resumes duties once business on a particular topic has been concluded. At any meeting where the Mayor and the at-large Council Member are not present; the Council appoints the most senior Council Member to preside at the meeting.

Roll Call

Council Members' names (present and absent) are called before a meeting starts. After roll call, those in attendance recite the "Pledge of Allegiance."

Approval of the Agenda

All official Council meetings are open to the public and the media in accordance with Minnesota’s open meeting law. Agenda approval makes it official.

Approval of the Minutes

Minutes approval makes it the official meeting record. It’s recommended to read the minutes for accuracy prior to the meeting and make any changes before Council approval.

Appearances, Recognition, and Proclamations

The public may make requests in advance to appear before the Council. These requests are typically up to 10 minutes long and held after roll call. Topics vary based on what the person or group wants to present. Examples include the recognition of photo contest winners, or discussion about a City item, such as a park statue. In addition, this section awards, recognizes, and honors via a formal proclamation that outlines achievement, and designates a day in honor of the individual or groups and the related achievement or activity. If honoree is present the proclamation will be read and presented, if the honoree is not present the proclamation will be acted on during the consent calendar only, unless the Council wishes to highlight the proclamation by pulling it from the agenda.

Public Comment

The City Council has allocated 15 minutes for the Public Forum. People wishing to speak may take one opportunity to address the City Council for three (3) minutes (not including interpreter’s time) on any topic, even if on the agenda, with the condition that they may not speak on the same item later in the meeting. No prior notification is required; however, speakers are encouraged to notify the City Clerk of the desire to speak prior to the meeting.

The Mayor will call up individuals to speak with preregistered speakers first, then if time allows the floor will be opened for other speakers.

Members of the public wishing to speak are encouraged to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Speak only once for no more than three (3) minutes (not including interpreter’s time) on the topic unless the speaker is addressed by the City Council;
- Consider having a spokesperson or two for your group to present comments;
- People wanting a response to a question are encouraged to submit the question in writing to the City Clerk, including contact information, such as name and best way for City to contact them.
- Questions will not be responded to during the comment period.
- People cannot gift their speaking time to other members of the public.

NOTE:

The Public Forum is not intended for the following:

- Introduction or discussion of topics or subjects not relevant to city government, its policies, operations or service
- Introduction or endorsement of candidates for public office.

Making defamatory or threatening comments directed at or concerning a person, business, or organization.

Consent Calendar

Routine and non-controversial items are placed on the City Council's consent agenda. These items may be approved by one motion upon unanimous consent. A City Council or audience Member may request an item be withdrawn for separate consideration. A Council Member may abstain from voting on, or voting against, any consent agenda item without requesting its removal. Abstentions will be recorded in the respective City Council meeting minutes.

Public Hearings

Public hearings ensure due process by protecting an individual's rights prior to governmental action. Due process encourages objective decision making by providing those who have an interest in the City's decision with an opportunity to be heard.

Generally, there is no dialogue between Council Members, staff, or the public during the hearing. Council Members may ask questions of those addressing the Council to clarify a fact, but any statement by a Council Member for anything other than to pose a question on the matter being considered may be ruled out of order by the Mayor (or presiding officer).

After new facts and information have been presented to the City Council, the hearing may be closed. Once the public hearing is complete, Council Members make a motion and debate the matter under consideration.

Ordinances

Ordinances are changes to Mankato City Code and require a public hearing. Other acts may be done by ordinance or resolution.

Variances

The Council may discuss variances, which are an exception to rules laid out in a zoning ordinance. Variances allow a respective landowner to deviate from rules that would otherwise apply (i.e., enforcement causes the owner undue hardship). Variances are generally related to physical standards (such as setbacks or height limits) and may not be used to allow a use prohibited in a particular zoning district. More information about variances is available in the [City Code, see 10.05](#).

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission usually provides an advisory report and/or recommendations for Council action.

Licenses

Routine license approvals may be in the consent calendar portion of the agenda, or the Council may review applications and take formal action on City licenses. Licenses may also be reviewed for possible suspension or revocation.

Council Business

Requests for actions, for City Council consideration.

Reports and Miscellaneous Business

Staff and City Council Members provide reports on projects, committees, or other information related to the Council or community. Also included are reminders about upcoming meetings or announcements.

Adjournment

If there is no further business, adjournment formally concludes the meeting.

B. Voting

Council actions pass or fail by majority vote of the Council. Majority is determined by the number of Council Members present at a meeting. Certain actions such as an unpetitioned street project require an extraordinary majority or 4/5 of the whole Council. Council Members may abstain from voting on a particular agenda item.

C. Principal rules governing motions

The following information is from the League of Minnesota Cities about governing motions. Information is available [online](#). This list includes the more common motions.

Motions: formal method of bringing business before the Council and for stating propositions on which the Council will have to make a decision. Motions can be made only by Council Members or Mayor.

Requires a second: motions which have a “yes” must be seconded by a Council Member before they can be considered. The motion maker may not second his/her own motion. By seconding a motion, a person does not necessarily indicate favor of the motion.

Can interrupt a speaker: motions which have a “yes” can be made at any time during a Council meeting. They may be made even while another has the floor and is speaking.

Debatable: a “yes” means the Council can discuss the motion’s merits. A “no” means no discussion is allowed and the motion must be voted on as soon as it is made and seconded.

Amendable: motions can be changed by amendment. Motions with a “no” must be voted on in the same form the motion was originally made.

Vote required to pass: tells whether the motion requires a simple two-thirds majority for passage.

Can be reconsidered: indicates whether or not a motion that was once passed or defeated by the Council can be considered again later in the meeting.

Parliamentarian

The Mayor (or in the Mayor’s absence the Mayor, the Mayor pro tem) serves as City Council parliamentarian and decides all questions of parliamentary procedure in accordance with basic parliamentary rules. Before deciding any question of parliamentary procedure, the Mayor may request advice from the City attorney or City Manager. In cases where serious errors in procedure are being used or contemplated, the City attorney or City Manager typically gives advice.

Other protocol

Other guidelines ensure Council meetings emphasize the importance of business being conducted in a professional manner. Council Members and staff:

- ◆ work to preserve appropriate order and decorum during all meetings;
- ◆ address Council Members as *Council Member*, followed by last name, such as “Council Member Jones,” and staff by their title last names, such as “City Manager Jones;”
- ◆ discourage side conversations, disruptions, interruptions or delaying efforts;
- ◆ inform presiding officer when leaving a meeting;
- ◆ limit disruptive behavior;
- ◆ recognize that on the City Council, staff, advisory body chairs or designated representatives and those authorized by the presiding officer shall be permitted to sit at Council or staff stations.

Appendix II

Rules of Decorum for City Council and Commission Meetings:

The City Council has also adopted the following rules of decorum for City Council Meetings which will be incorporated by reference on the Agenda, including notice that more than one member to remotely if a disruption occurs and order cannot be restored . The rules of decorum apply to all persons attending and/or participating in a meeting unless expressly noted. When persons, attendees and/or participants violate the adopted rules of order and decorum, the presiding officer is authorized to:

Meeting Where Order is Restored by Reiterating Meeting Procedures	Meeting Where Determination Made of Interference of Transaction of Public Business, Interference with Use of Public Property or Threat of Other Criminal Act, with Order Restored by Removal	Meeting Where Order Cannot Be Restored
Not recognize a violating or breaching person's, attendee's or participant's request to speak, as applicable, until decorum is observed.	Not recognize a violating or breaching person's, attendee's or participant's request to speak, as applicable, until decorum is observed.	Not recognize a violating or breaching person's, attendee's or participant's request to speak, as applicable, until decorum is observed.
Declare the person's, attendee's, or participant's actions out of order.	Declare the person's, attendee's or participant's actions out of order.	Declare the person's, attendee's or participant's actions out of order.
Meeting resumes.	Temporarily recess the meeting until order is restored. Members of the Elected body will depart the room but will not gather in a quorum or more outside of the room.	Temporarily recess the meeting and declare that the meeting will be resumed at a time certain on that same date, with some members joining remotely.
	Issue the person, attendee or participant a verbal warning and/or directive that the person, attendee or participant is out of order and shall follow the rules of order and decorum, be silent unless recognized to speak and/or immediately cease such conduct.	Move members to their designated locations, with less than a quorum at any one designated location, and connect their devices to Zoom meeting. One member of the body will remain in Council Chambers.

	If after issuance of a verbal warning as provided above, the person, attendee or participant continues to engage in prohibited conduct or otherwise fails to comply with the presiding officer's warning, the presiding officer may further direct or order the person, attendee or participant to immediately leave the meeting.	Meeting resumes with some members remote and one member of the body in the Council Chambers. Meeting is broadcast on screens in Council Chambers.
	If the person, attendee or participant so ordered as provided above does not immediately abide by the presiding officer's order or directive by leaving the meeting, and/or the person, attendee or participant continues such prohibited conduct, the City will find the person to be trespassing and/or in violation of Minn. Stat. §624.72.	
	The presiding officer may direct any law enforcement officer to remove the person from the meeting.	
	Meeting resumes.	

The City records, broadcasts, and posts video of City Council Meetings online. The use of cameras, video, and other recording devices is permitted during City Council meetings. However, these devices must be used in an unobtrusive manner that does not disrupt or delay the meeting. Cell phones and other devices must be silenced during meetings.