



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title:	Action on a Council Policy for Meeting Management Procedures and Protocols for Recommendation to the City Council for its Consideration and Approval				
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Attachments:	1. July 2, 2024 - RTC 24-628, 2. Rosenberg's Rules of Order, 3. DRAFT Council Policy 054 Meeting Management Protocols				

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
10/4/2024	1	Governance and Ethics Committee	Approved as amended	Pass

REPORT TO GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

SUBJECT

Action on a Council Policy for Meeting Management Procedures and Protocols for Recommendation to the City Council for its Consideration and Approval

BACKGROUND

At the Special Governance and Ethics Committee meeting held on July 2, 2024, staff prepared a report to the Committee (Attachment 1) which presented options for consideration with the use of Rosenberg's Rules of Order ("Rosenberg's") for meeting management procedures for public meetings. During the item, staff presented differences between Robert's Rules of Order (the current parliamentary system used by the City) and Rosenberg's. Existing "local" rules for procedures that the City had been formally adopted or were being using as a matter of informal policy and practice were also presented.

The Governance and Ethics Committee approved a motion to direct staff to prepare meeting management policies and procedures based upon Rosenberg's for Committee, and ultimately Council consideration. As part of the motion, they also asked staff to include provision to split public comment between the beginning and end of a meeting, at the discretion of the presiding officer, if a substantial number of public presenters proposed to speak, and a significant amount of agenda items still remained to be considered.

The Committee also discussed the need for consistency and enforcement in the application of the rules, the pros and cons having interactive discussions during question periods versus the efficiency of asking all questions at once.

DISCUSSION

Staff has developed a recommended formal policy and procedure, Council Policy 054 (“City Council Meeting Management Procedures and Protocols”) for consideration by the Committee. Some of these rules are consistent with current Council practices that had not been formalized. Other proposed rules and procedures are taken directly from Rosenberg’s, or are based upon best practices used by other cities in California. The policy is expressly subject to the requirements of the Brown Act and the terms of the City’s Charter.

The recommended policy includes the following key provisions:

- Transition to Rosenberg’s. In general, the Council Policy will transition the City from parliamentary rules based upon the use of Robert’s Rules of Order to a system based on Rosenberg’s Rules of Order, and other best practices.
- Mayor as Presiding Officer. Consistent with the City’s Charter, Rosenberg’s maintains the concept of the Mayor/Chair as presiding officer having primary responsibility for managing the meeting in accordance with applicable rules [Policy Section A].
- Role of the City Attorney. If a question arises, the Mayor/Chair, or a member of the legislative body can request clarification of the rules from the City Attorney [Policy Section G].
- Appeal of Points of Order. Through a process of appeal on points of order, a majority of the body reserves the right to overrule the Mayor/Chair [Policy Section A.2 and Section E].
- Order of Consideration of Agendized Items. A process and order for consideration of agendized items consistent with the current order and process [Policy Section B].
- Rules for Public Comment for Agendized and Non-Agendized Items. Rules include (1) comments to be directed to City Council as a body, (2) time limits consistent with City Council Policy 029, (3) special rules for public presentations, including the ability of the Mayor to bifurcate public presentations, with a second round at the end of the meeting as circumstances may warrant, and (4) prohibitions on disruptive/unruly behavior [Policy Section C].
- Procedures and Protocols for Council Deliberations. Rules include process for taking turns, a focus on discussions of the matter presented and not extraneous matters, prohibition on personal attacks, avoidance of repetition and interruptions [Policy Section D].
- Terms for Main Motions and Secondary Motions. Based primarily on procedures set forth in Rosenberg’s and other existing and best practices [Policy Section E].
- Standards for Decorum. Including reference to existing City Council Behavioral Standards [Policy Section F].
- Enforcement of Rules and Appeals [Policy Section G], with the presiding officer have primary responsibility, with input from the City Attorney, with determinations subject to appeal by the Council.
- Reference to Other Relevant City Council Policies, including Council Policy 029-Time Limits for Speakers at Council, Council Policy 030 - Adding an Item on the Agenda; and Council Policy 042 - Reconsideration of Council Action; and City of Santa Clara Program in Ethics & Values, Behavioral Standards for Councilmembers.

Note: The proposed policy all suggests that its standards will be applicable to other City boards and commissions.

The Governance and Ethics Committee is scheduled to review this recommendation on the new Council Policy 054 for meeting management protocols. If the Committee so directs, the policy will be brought forth to the full City Council for its consideration.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a “project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(a) as it has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to the City other than staff time.

COORDINATION

This report was coordinated with the City Manager’s Office and the City Attorney’s Office.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Governance and Ethics Committee agenda on the City’s official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City’s website and in the City Clerk’s Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk’s Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov [<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>](mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov) or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

RECOMMENDATION

Consider proposed new Council Policy 054, entitled Council Meeting Management Procedures and Protocols, and provide direction to staff as the Committee deems appropriate to forward the policy, with any approved modifications, for consideration and approval by the City Council

Reviewed by: Elizabeth Klotz, Assistant City Manager, City Attorney’s Office

Approved by: Jōvan D. Grogan, City Manager and Glen Googins, City Attorney

ATTACHMENTS

1. July 2, 2024 Report to Council 24-628
2. Rosenberg’s Rules of Order
3. Council Policy 054 Draft - Meeting Management Protocols