

**Lansing City Council Rules**  
**(As amended on September 11, 2006)**

**Rule 1. Sessions of Council.** Regular meetings of Council, unless otherwise set forth by resolution of City Council, shall be held on Monday evenings of each week at a time, place and date to be set by resolution of Council. Special meetings may be called as provided in Section 3-202 of the City Charter.

**Rule 2. Quorum; Attendance; Call of Council.** Five members of Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a lesser number may compel the attendance of absentees or adjourn any meeting or hearing until a later date.

No Councilmember shall absent himself or herself from the Council meeting without first having obtained leave from the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer may revoke leaves of absence at any time.

A call of Council may be ordered by the majority of Councilmembers present, whether a quorum or not, and in pursuance thereof, the Chief of Police, or any other person duly authorized by a majority of the Councilmembers present and voting, may be dispatched for, and take into custody and bring before Council any Councilmembers absent without leave.

**THE PRESIDENT - POWERS AND DUTIES**

**Rule 3. Presiding at Sessions.** The President of Council shall preside over all sessions of Council, or, in his or her absence, the Vice President shall preside. If both the President and Vice President are temporarily absent, then the most recent past President shall preside as Acting President.

**Rule 4. Decisions Subject to Appeal.** (Repealed)

Editor's note--Rule 4 was repealed by Resolution 327, passed June 7, 1993. See Rule 19.1.B.

**Rule 5. Appointment of Committee Members; Creation of Ad-Hoc Committees.** The President shall appoint all Councilmembers to the standing committees, any Council ad-hoc advisory committee and to any outside agency (see Section 3-102.6 of the City Charter). The President shall appoint the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of each standing committee and any ad-hoc advisory committee. Each standing committee of City Council shall consist of three Councilmembers. The President may, at his or her discretion, create or discharge any ad-hoc advisory committees.

**Rule 6. Recognition.** (Repealed)

Editor's note--Rule 6 was repealed by Resolution 327, passed June 7, 1993. See Rule 19.1.A.

**Rule 7. Staff Operations.** The President of Council shall be responsible for Council staff

operations. The President may, at any time, delegate in writing the responsibility for Council staff operations to the Vice President.

## **THE CLERK'S DUTIES**

**Rule 8. Calling the Roll and Noting Absentees.** The Clerk, or his or her Deputy Clerk, shall call the roll at the opening of each meeting of Council and announce whether or not a quorum is present. He or she shall announce the names of the Councilmembers absent and enter the names of all absentees upon the record of proceedings.

**Rule 9. Notice by the Clerk.** The Clerk shall give notice, in writing, to committees, members of Council and City officers concerning the agenda items which have been referred to them by City Council.

**Rule 10. Preparation of Agenda.** The Clerk's office shall prepare and provide copies of packets to Council and the Mayor of an agenda of business to be considered at each regularly scheduled Council meeting and any special meetings of City Council. No item of business shall be placed on the agenda for a regular meeting of Council unless the original document, annotated with such approvals as may be required, shall have been filed in the office of the Clerk by 4:00 p.m. on the second official business day, usually Thursday, immediately preceding the business day of the Council meeting. The agenda for each such meeting shall be posted in the lobby of City Hall and Council Chambers not later than eighteen hours prior to the time of each such meeting, and at such other places as Council may deem appropriate.

**Rule 11. Items Upon Agenda; Designated Items for Action.** Any item of business not placed upon the Council agenda in accordance with the terms of Section 3-103.2 of the City Charter and the provisions of these Rules shall not be considered at any meeting of Council, unless this Rule is suspended by the affirmative vote of six members of Council. Individual Councilmembers or committees may sponsor resolutions or ordinances (except initiatives and referendums presented by the citizenry) and place them on Council agendas.

Resolutions may be sponsored by the Committee of the Whole if placed on Council agendas by the President, or, in the President's absence, the Vice President, or by any four Councilmembers when their names are typed at the top of each resolution so sponsored. Committee reports may be sponsored and placed on Council agendas by committee Chairpersons or by any two members of the appropriate committees. Any committee report can be removed from the Council agenda at the committee Chairperson's discretion. City Council staff shall inform the Clerk's office of those items upon which action is to occur at the Council meeting. The Clerk or his or her Deputy shall be responsible for designating those items which are on the Council agenda for action with an asterisk.

## **SERGEANT-AT-ARMS**

**Rule 12. Powers and Duties.** A police officer shall be present at all meetings of Council. The police officer shall be under the direction of the Presiding Officer, shall serve as

security and as Sergeant-at-Arms of Council and shall have general charge and supervision of the Council Chambers, Councilmember offices, committee rooms, Council staff offices and work areas and all connecting hallways and passages.

## **COUNCILMEMBERS**

**Rule 13. Speaking.** When a Councilmember desires to speak, he or she shall first address the Chair. Debate shall be governed by Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure, except where superseded by these Rules. When the Presiding Officer desires to speak on any agenda item identified as an action item, he or she shall turn over the Chair to the Vice Chair.

**Rule 14. Compulsory Vote; Conflict of Interest.** When a question is put to vote by the Chair, every Councilmember present shall vote, unless because of an actual or apparent conflict of interest, he or she is excused by an affirmative vote of five members of Council. Such interest shall be stated by the Councilmember for the record in his or her request to be excused to the Council, and an affidavit of disclosure shall be filed by the Councilmember with the City Clerk within the appropriate time frame. In the event that a Councilmember is present at the Council meeting but not in the Council Chambers at the time a vote is taken, the vote will be recorded by the City Clerk as a "no" vote unless the Councilmember has been excused by the Presiding Officer.

**Rule 15. Important Items; Vote Requested.** Any matter of business requiring the vote of more than five members of Council, which is defeated at a meeting at which all members of Council are not present, may be reconsidered at either of the first two meetings thereafter.

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**Rule 16. Generally.** The order of business of the City Council shall be on a printed agenda prepared by the City Clerk. The order of business for Council meetings shall be as follows:

1. Roll Call;
2. Meditation and Pledge of Allegiance;
3. Reading and approval of printed Council Proceedings;
4. Consideration of Late Items (Late items are to be considered as part of the regular portion of the meeting to which they relate);
5. Tabled Items, if any (Tabled items are to be considered as part of the regular portion of the meeting to which they relate);
6. Special Ceremonies;
7. Councilmembers' Comments (and City Clerk's Announcements);

8. Speaker registration for public comment on legislative and City government related matters;

The Clerk and his or her designee will announce that the public comment registration form(s) for those intending to address Council on legislative or City government matters will be collected and that only those persons who have fully completed the form(s) will be permitted to speak.;

9. Mayor's Comments;

10. Show Cause Hearings;

Only persons who have received notice from the City as an interested party or the interested party's agent with written permission, may speak on the agenda item which is the subject of a show cause hearing, for up to a total of 3 minutes.

11. Public Comment on Legislative Matters;

Comment on legislative matters consists of the following items as listed on the agenda: Public Hearings (other than show cause hearings), Resolutions, Ordinances for Introduction, and Ordinances for Passage.

Each member of the public who has registered to speak will have up to a total of three minutes to address Council on legislative matters. The presiding officer may reduce the amount of time allowed for each speaker if he or she determined that the number of registered speakers is so numerous that the meeting cannot be timely concluded without a reduction in the time allocated for each speaker.

12. Public Comment on City Government Related Matters;

Each member of the public who has registered to speak will have up to a total of three minutes to address Council on City government related matters that concern them. A City Government related matter is an issue or topic relevant to the operation or governance of the City. The presiding officer may reduce the amount of time for each speaker if he or she determines that the number of registered speakers is so numerous that the meeting cannot be timely concluded without a reduction in the time allocated for each speaker.

13. Council consideration of Legislative Matters;

Council will consider its agenda and legislative matters in the following order:

- a) Referral of Public Hearings;
- b) Resolutions for Action;
- c) Reports from Council Committees;
- d) Ordinances for Introduction and Setting of Public Hearings;
- e) Ordinances for Passage;

f) Reports from City Officers or Boards and Commissions, Communications, Petitions, and other City-Related Matters.

14. Motion of Excused Absence;

15. Remarks by Councilmembers;

16. Remarks by the Mayor or Executive Assistant;

17. Adjournment.

**Rule 17. Standing Committees.** The standing committees of Council and their functions are as follows:

**Development and Planning.** Reviews economic development matters, E.D.C. projects and the five-year plan covering development goals, policies, services and overall direction; reviews all matters having to do with land use, including zoning, plats and historical designations; reviews proposed modifications to the Master Plan; reviews acquisition and disposition of public property; and reviews changes to C.D.B.G. programming.

**General Services.** Reviews licensing and regulation matters, personnel matters and human services; reviews matters pertaining to the arts, cultural and community-wide activities, special events and leisure time programs; has general oversight of City government operations (except those more specifically covered by another standing committee); reviews and prepares amendments or revisions to Council Rules; and develops policies that would turn over routine matters to the Administration wherever possible.

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS.** Represents Council in outreach efforts to improve working relationship with other political entities, with regional agencies and, internally, with such bodies as the Board of Water and Light, the Housing Commission, and the Entertainment and Public Facilities Authority. Its primary charge is to lead in the exploration of intergovernmental cooperation, toward provision of needed services in the best manner by the most appropriate jurisdiction with the least duplication of effort, to include specific emphasis on achieving a regional approach to various issues.

**Public Safety.** Reviews service levels and issues related to public safety, including police, fire, ambulance, emergency services, traffic environment and the building inspection program.

**Public Services.** Reviews all matters pertaining to wastewater treatment, sewer and street needs, long range infrastructure and parks and recreation needs and development and the Municipal parking system, including parking enforcement and policies.

**Ways and Means.** Reviews all proposed modifications to the City's annual Budget and program audits prepared by the Internal Auditor, the City's short-range and long-range financial condition, workforce needs for City operations and financial impact statements

developed on proposed actions; and reviews and develops policy recommendations on City financial and budget matters.

**Council Personnel.** This committee shall be comprised of four members and shall include the president, the vice-president, one at-large councilperson, and one ward councilperson. The vice-president shall serve as chair of the committee.

The Committee on Council Personnel shall consider, study and recommend with respect to the following council staff matters: recruitment; selection; discipline; performance evaluations; job descriptions; policy and procedure manual development; any other personnel matter referred to it by the council.

Except as may otherwise be provided herein, the President shall appoint a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of each standing committee. In the temporary absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall act as Chairperson. The standing committees' functions shall be reviewed by the Council President and shall be adopted by resolution of Council during January of each year.

**Rule 18. Duties of Committees; Quorum; Discharge of Committees.** All committees appointed by Council shall thoroughly investigate such matters as are referred to them and report their findings in a timely manner.

All committees appointed by Council, other than standing committees, shall have a fixed term of life and shall expire at such times unless extended by a majority vote of Council.

A quorum of a committee shall be a majority of the committee members present.

A committee shall be discharged of any matter referred to it by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Councilmembers at the Committee of the Whole or City Council meeting.

No Council committee, ad-hoc or standing, shall meet during a session of Council unless prior permission has been granted by Council. Any Council committee, ad-hoc, standing or Committee of the Whole, shall follow these Rules and Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure whenever applicable. Every committee, standing or ad-hoc, shall provide an opportunity for the public to speak on items designated for action by the committee. The Chairperson of each committee, standing or ad-hoc, shall be responsible for setting and enforcing the rules governing public comment at his or her committee.

**Rule 19. Rules of Decorum for Meetings; Address by Persons.** The presiding officer shall conduct Council meetings in an orderly manner. Members of Council and others in attendance shall obey directions of the presiding officer. Citizens and others attending Council meetings may address Council as specified in this Rule and Rule 16. Speakers are required to print their name, address, and the topic to be addressed on the appropriate registration form (Legislative or City Government Matters). The forms will be used to call speakers to the podium, allow Councilmembers to determine if the speaker is from their Ward, and to assist in the accuracy of recording Council Proceedings. Anyone who fails to fully complete the speaker registration form before it is collected will not be called on to

speak. Extension of a speaker's time limit is permissible at the discretion of the presiding officer; or on a motion of a Councilmember, by affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Councilmembers serving.

The purpose of the City Council meeting is to discuss City business and not to deal with individual personalities. Consequently, during any City Council meeting, the City Council shall not permit a personally-abusive attack upon any person during debate or public comment. Nothing herein is intended to limit or restrain negative, positive, or neutral comment about the manner in which an employee, officer, official, or councilmember carries out his or her duties in public office or employment.

No person shall engage in conduct that disrupts the normal presentation of business during a Council meeting or breaches the peace. Conduct which disrupts the meeting includes, but is not limited to, threatening or abusive language, whistling, stomping, clapping other than during special ceremonies, interrupting a speaker, heckling, using profanity or engaging in any other act that disturbs, disrupts, interferes with, or otherwise impedes the orderly process of a meeting.

No speaker shall make any slanderous, defamatory, or profane remark or engage in speech or conduct which disturbs, disrupts, interferes with, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of any council meeting.

No person in the audience at a Council meeting shall engage in speech or conduct which disturbs, disrupts, interferes with or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the Council meeting. The presiding officer may rule any member of the public who is a speaker, meeting attendee, or audience member out of order for failing to follow Council's Rules or the presiding officer's directions, and may take whatever action is necessary to restore order to the meeting.

**Rule 20. Introduction; Consideration.** Ordinances may be introduced by Councilmembers at any regular meeting of Council in the regular order of business. All ordinances must be in writing and shall be approved as to form and section numbers by the City Attorney.

The regular order for consideration of ordinance proposals shall be:

- 1) Introduction, first reading by title;
- 2) Referral to the appropriate committee;
- 3) Public hearing on the ordinance scheduled by Council, which hearing shall be scheduled to be held not sooner than five days after notice of the hearing is posted on City bulletin boards;
- 4) Report on the ordinance in writing; and
- 5) Final reading and passage.

These five steps shall take place in not less than two regular meetings of Council. This Rule shall not be suspended except by the affirmative vote of six Councilmembers.

**Rule 21. Manner of Introduction; Form.** Each ordinance introduced shall be accompanied by three true copies, and a copy shall be provided to the Mayor and to each Councilmember by the City Clerk. In each ordinance amending an existing ordinance, changes or new matter shall be placed in capital type, and matter which has been omitted shall be indicated by printing in stricken through type. Every ordinance shall have endorsed thereon the name of the Councilmember introducing it. In the drafting of proposed ordinances, the lines on each page shall be numbered consecutively. Proposed ordinances shall be reproduced and deposited in the City Clerk's office in sufficient quantity to meet reasonable requests for copies. They shall not be printed in Official Proceedings of the City Council of the City of Lansing until they are finally enacted.

**Rule 22. First Reading, Referral and Report.** All ordinances, on introduction, shall be read by title and may be referred to the appropriate committee and be reported on in writing by that committee before final passage.

**Rule 23. Readings.** Every ordinance shall receive two readings previous to its being passed, and no ordinance shall be amended or committed until it has been read once. The first reading shall be in full unless otherwise ordered by Council.

**Rule 24. Amendment at Final Reading.** No amendment shall be received for discussion at the final reading of any ordinance recommended for passage unless supported by a majority of the Councilmembers present and voting thereon, and a vote of five Councilmembers is required to adopt any such amendment.

**Rule 25. Commitment Before Final Passage.** It shall be in order at any time before the final passage of any ordinance to move its commitment or recommitment.

**Rule 26. Final Vote; Publication.** On final passage of all ordinances, the vote shall be taken by yeas and nays and entered upon the record of proceedings. No ordinance shall be declared passed unless five or more Councilmembers have voted therefor. Upon passage, all ordinances shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the City with notice of their passage.

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**Rule 27. Chairperson of Committee.** When Council resolves itself into a Committee of the Whole, the President shall preside, except that in his or her absence, the Vice President shall preside. In the absence of both the President and the Vice President, the most recent past President of Council shall preside.

**Rule 28. Rules in Committee.** The Rules of Council shall be observed in the Committee of the Whole except for limiting debate and moving to vote immediately. A motion that the Committee rise shall always be in order and shall be decided without debate. Motions recommending action by Council shall take precedence in the same order as analogous motions in Council. A motion to reconsider shall be in order in the Committee of the Whole.

## **MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS**

**Rule 29. Statement; Reduction to Writing; Withdrawal.** No motion or resolution shall be adopted until stated by the Chair. A motion shall be reduced to writing if required by any Councilmember, and, when presented in writing, shall be read by the Clerk before the same shall be open to debate. A resolution shall always be reduced to writing before being adopted. A request by any Councilmember for a reasonable recess to reduce a motion or resolution to writing shall always be in order and shall be granted. Any motion or resolution may be withdrawn by the sponsor at any time before decision or amendment.

**Rule 30. Precedence of Motions.** When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received except:

- 1) To adjourn;
- 2) To take a recess;
- 3) To lay on the table;
- 4) Call to question;
- 5) To postpone to a day certain;
- 6) To refer or re-refer;
- 7) To amend; or
- 8) To postpone indefinitely.

Such motions shall take precedence in the order in which they appear above.

**Rule 31. Motion to Adjourn; Nondebatable Motions.** A motion to adjourn shall always be in order. A motion to adjourn, to recess, to lay upon the table or to vote immediately, and all questions relating to the priority of business, shall be decided without debate.

**Rule 32. Motion to Lay on the Table.** A decision to lay upon the table shall carry with it all questions to which it is attached, except in the case of laying an appeal (as explained in Rule 40) on the table.

**Rule 33. Indefinite Postponement.** A motion to postpone indefinitely the further consideration of any ordinance, motion, resolution or other matter shall require the votes of five Councilmembers to carry it, and the vote upon such a motion shall not be reconsidered. A motion to lay on the table, or a motion to reconsider the vote by which any ordinance, motion or resolution has failed to pass Council, if agreed to, shall have the effect of postponing indefinitely the consideration hereof, and shall require the votes of five Councilmembers to carry it.

**Rule 34. Reconsideration.** When a question has been once decided, it shall be in order for any Councilmember to move the reconsideration thereof, but no motion for reconsideration shall be in order unless made on the same day the vote was taken, or at the next regular meeting of Council. No question shall be reconsidered more than once. A motion to reconsider the vote by which any ordinance, motion or resolution has passed Council shall require the votes of five Councilmembers to carry it.

**Rule 35. Effect of Tabling Motion to Reconsider.** It shall not be in order to take from the table a motion to reconsider, nor shall the vote whereby any motion to reconsider was laid on the table be reconsidered.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Rule 36. Division of Question.** Any Councilmember may call for a division of any pending question, which shall be divided if it comprehends propositions so distinct that if one is taken away, a substantive proposition shall remain.

**Rule 37. Roll Call Vote.** The affirmative and negative votes shall be taken and recorded on all ordinances, and whenever requested by one or more Councilmembers, on any other matter.

**Rule 38. Other Business Cannot Interrupt Roll Call.** When the yeas and nays are demanded upon any question, and after the question is stated by the Chair, the Clerk is directed to call the roll. After the first vote is given, no Councilmember shall be entitled to speak on the question, nor shall any motion be in order until such roll call is completed and the result declared.

**Rule 39. Appeals.** Any Councilmember may appeal from any decision of the Chair. On all appeals the question shall be: "shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of Council?" Appeals shall be debatable except when Council is under operation of the order to vote immediately, or when the decision appealed from relates to the priority of business.

**Rule 40. Laying Appeal Upon the Table.** Any appeal may be laid upon the table, but it shall not carry with it the subject matter before Council at the time such appeal is taken.

**Rule 41. Suspension of Rules.** Any Rule may be suspended by a vote of six Councilmembers.

**Rule 42. Amendment; Repeal and Re-Adoption of Rules.** A motion to amend or repeal any Council Rule shall require the votes of five Councilmembers. These Rules may be revised or amended and re-adopted by Council as it deems appropriate. A motion made under this Rule shall not be considered for adoption sooner than the next Council meeting.

**Rule 43. Parliamentary Practice.** The rules of parliamentary practice comprised in Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure shall govern in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with the standing Rules and orders of Council or the City Charter during all meetings of Council and its committees and committees appointed by Council.

**Rule 44. Closed Sessions.** Council shall meet in closed session for the following purposes only:

- 1) To consider the dismissal, suspension or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent, when the named person requests a closed hearing;
- 2) For strategy and negotiation sessions connected with the negotiation of a collective bargaining agreement when either negotiating party request a closed hearing;
- 3) To consider the purchase or lease of real property by the City up to the time an option to purchase or lease that real property is obtained;
- 4) To consult with the City Attorney or any of his or her assistants regarding trial or settlement strategy in connection with specific pending litigation, but only when an open meeting would have a detrimental financial effect on the litigation or settlement position of the public body;
- 5) To review the specific contents of an application for employment or appointment to a public office when the candidate requests that the application remain confidential. However, all interviews by Council for employment or appointment to a public office shall be held in an open meeting.
- 6) To consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by State or Federal law.

A closed session may be requested by the Mayor, the President or any two Councilmembers at any regular or special meeting. The person requesting a closed

session shall state the purpose of such session. The stated purpose of the closed session shall constitute the only agenda items for the closed session.

A majority roll call vote of the entire Council shall be required to call a closed session for purposes set forth in paragraphs 1. and 2. hereof. A two-thirds roll call vote of the entire Council membership serving shall be required to call a closed session for purposes set forth in paragraphs 3. through 6. hereof. Council may adjourn a closed session or open the meeting to the public upon the vote of five Councilmembers. Council may deliberate during the closed sessions. However, all decisions, determinations, actions, votes or dispositions upon a proposal, recommendation, resolution, order or ordinance must be made at a meeting open to the public. A separate set of minutes of the closed session shall be taken by the designated secretary of the Council, shall be retained by the City Clerk, shall not be available to the public and shall only be disclosed pursuant to a court order.

The minutes of a closed session, which are on file in the office of the City Clerk, shall be returned unopened to the Council President one year and one day after approval of the minutes of the regular meeting at which the minutes of the closed meeting was approved. The Council President shall destroy the minutes unless a civil action regarding a closed session has been filed or is pending.

Whenever Council enters a closed session in the tenth floor Conference Room of City Hall, all persons not required for the closed session shall immediately leave the Conference Room and clear adjacent areas. The Council lobby shall be the nearest congregating area for those waiting to re-enter the meeting upon completion of the closed session when the closed session is held in the tenth floor Conference Room of City Hall.

**Rule 45. Council Parking.** Each member of Council shall have a permanently assigned parking space in the basement of City Hall. These parking bays shall be nonassignable and shall be used exclusively by the Councilmembers unless prior approval has been given by that Councilmember.

**Rule 46. Smoking Prohibited** (deleted on January 31, 2000)

**Rule 47. Compensation of Judges.** If Council is requested or desires to appropriate money for the purpose of increasing the salary level of the Judges of the 54-A District Court, before action is taken thereon, the President of Council shall appoint an ad-hoc citizens advisory committee of five members, which committee shall examine the Judges' salaries and any proposals to raise them and recommend to Council what, if any, increase is appropriate. Council shall consider the recommendation of the committee in determining what, if any, increase in the Judges' salaries should be granted.

**Rule 48. Physical Presence Required.** A member of Council must be physically present at any Council meeting, any Committee of the Whole meeting, any standing Council meeting or any special ad-hoc Council meeting, in order to vote or be counted as part of a quorum.