



CITY COUNCIL
WORKING RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR COUNCIL

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

At its first meeting or as soon thereafter as practicable the Council shall elect, by majority vote of the entire Council, one of its members for the ensuing year as Chair of the Council, and the City Council may fill, for the unexpired term any vacancy in the office of chair that may occur. The Chair shall preside at the meetings of the Council and shall be recognized as the official head of the City for all ceremonial purposes and shall have the power and authority given to and perform the duties required of mayors of cities for all purposes of military law but shall have no regular administrative duties. In the same manner as provided for the election of a Chair, the Council, immediately subsequent to the election of the Chair, shall elect a Vice Chair, from among its members. The Vice Chair shall exercise all powers of the Chair, during the Chair's temporary absence or disability. (City Charter §212) If more than one candidate is nominated for Chair or Vice Chair, each candidate will be voted on in separate motions.

ABSENCE OF CHAIR

In a situation where the Chair and the Vice Chair of the City Council are absent, the Council shall appoint by affirmative majority vote of its members present, a temporary Chair of the Council to serve until such time as the Chair or Vice Chair returns. The temporary Chair is to have and exercise all powers conferred upon the permanent Chair of the said City Council by Charter or otherwise.

AGENDA ITEMS

All agenda items shall be, under normal circumstances, submitted to the City Clerk's Office 6 days prior to any regular or special meeting. In the event that a matter shall arise which was not submitted to the Clerk's Office within the proper time frame, then that item, in proper form to be submitted to the City Council, shall be presented to the Council Chair and City Manager as soon as possible. The Council Chair may present the matter to be considered by the Council, with a majority vote of Councilors present required for it to be included on the agenda.

QUORUM

A majority of the nine (9) members of the City Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a small number may adjourn from time to time or may compel attendance of absent members. At least twenty-four (24) hours' notice of the time and place of holding such adjourned meeting shall be given to all members who were not present at the meeting from which adjournment was taken. (City Charter §216)

CONSENT AGENDA

On any agenda for the City Council for the City of Bath, one item may be the Consent Agenda and may consist of:

- a. Minutes of the City Council meetings.
- b. Such items as may be marked with an asterisk (*) on the agenda for the meeting, which in the opinion of the City Council Chair shall be considered routine matters not requiring debate.

Any Councilor wishing to have any item so marked removed from the Consent Agenda shall have the unlimited right to do so at any time prior to the vote by Council on the Consent Agenda. If such an item is removed from the Consent Agenda, it shall be considered within the normal course of the meeting.

In the case of items included the motion to approve shall be considered to have been passed by the City Council as part of its vote to approve the Consent Agenda.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Workshop sessions may be scheduled by the Chair or City Manager, for the purpose of disseminating information for Council enlightenment and evaluation or for the discussion or refinement of future agenda items.

Members of the public are invited to attend any workshop session but will not be allowed to participate in the workshop. Prior to adjourning any workshop session, Council will provide time for members of the public to address the session to provide information relevant to the subject being explored or to ask questions, through the Chair, relating to the subject of the workshop session.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All motions for Executive Sessions shall state the nature of matters to be dealt with. No topic other than that referred to in the Motion shall be discussed during executive session. All matters discussed during executive session shall be held in strictest confidence by Councilors and shall not be discussed with or divulged to any person other than a fellow Councilor or persons in attendance at the executive session. Any violation of this confidentiality requirement shall be deemed to be malfeasance of office and shall subject the offending Councilor to sanction by the Council as set forth in Section 213 of the City Charter.

PUBLIC TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

PUBLIC COMMENTS: At the beginning of each regular monthly meeting, there will be a public comment period to address the Council regarding any item that is not on the agenda for that meeting. All individuals addressing the Council shall limit their remarks to five (5) minutes or less. No individual shall be permitted to address the Council more than twice on any agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM: As each item on the agenda for any meeting is brought to the floor for discussion, the City Council Chair, sponsoring Councilor, the City Manager or City Manager designee shall first be allowed to present initial comments. Following this introduction, there will be time devoted to any questions regarding the agenda item which any Councilor may have which would help to clarify the question presented by the agenda item. The Chair shall allow questions only during this time, and no debate or discussion of collateral issues shall be permitted. Once the agenda item has been explained and clarified by any questioning as provided above, there will be public comment period regarding this particular agenda item.

SECOND COMMENTS: The Chair may allow a second period of public comment no longer than two minutes per person, prior to final Council vote. Second comments must be to provide new or undisclosed information or viewpoints.

- Any individual wishing to address the council, after being recognized by the Chair, will move to the lectern to speak, and give their name and address before beginning remarks.
- If, during time of public comment, a person seeks merely to reinforce a point made by another speaker, their remarks should simply note concurrence with the specific point.
- Any comment by the public shall be limited to the expression of opinions, concerns, or questions regarding the agenda item. All such questions shall be directed through the Chair. There will be no debate of an agenda item between members of the public and the Council. No public comment shall be allowed which has the effect of embarrassing or attacking the character of any individual or Councilor, and this rule shall be liberally construed and strictly enforced.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS

No individual Councilor shall speak for more than 5 minutes on any one motion before the Council. For the purpose of this rule, Councilors shall be allowed to speak for 5 minutes on any amendments proposed, as well as to the original motion. No individual Councilor shall speak more than twice on any given motion or amendment. These rules may be waived by a majority-vote of the Councilors present and such motion may be made by the Councilor wishing the additional time. Councilors are encouraged to explain the rationale for their vote during their comments. No comments shall be allowed which have the effect of embarrassing or attacking the character of any fellow Councilor or member of the public, and this rule shall be liberally construed and strictly enforced.

MEETING LENGTH

All Council meetings, workshops or executive sessions shall, except in extraordinary circumstances, adjourn at or before 9:00 P.M.

TABLING MOTIONS

If a Councilor feels that a decision on a motion needs to be postponed for any reason, then they can move to "table" the motion. A member may not move to table a motion at the end of a speech, only at the time they are recognized by the chair. A specified time may be put on the tabling or the motion may be left indefinite. The only debate allowed is as to the length of tabling, or the timeline involved.

WAIVER

Any of these rules may be waived for any meeting, or portion thereof, by a majority vote of Councilors present.