



## City Council Rules Committee

**Monday, January 31, 2022, 8:00 AM**

**Remote Meeting Minutes**

**Approved February 2, 2022**

Rules Committee Members:

Councilor Andrew Zarro, Chair

Mayor Kate Snyder

Councilor Pious Ali

Councilor Mark Dion

The meeting, held by ZOOM technology, convened at 8:00 a.m. on January 31, 2022.

Attendees: Committee members Councilor Andrew Zarro, Chair, Mayor Kate Snyder, Councilor Pious Ali and Councilor Mark Dion, and Acting Corporation Counsel Jen Thompson, and assistant Nancy English. Three members of the public, Eamonn Dundon, Sarah Michniewicz and John (no last name), attended.

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Councilor Zarro opened the meeting with a request that the committee meet weekly for the following two weeks in order to have revisions to the Council Rules of Procedure ready for full City Council review at the end of February. Committee members agreed.

Councilor Zarro proceeded with a review of the Council Rules of Procedure he proposed be considered for changes, starting with Rule 19, Reconsideration. Acting Corporation Counsel Jen Thompson advised the committee that the term "prevailing side" would be better than the rule's term "majority," in the event that votes other than a simple majority were involved. Committee members concurred. This change will be before the committee at its next meeting, February 7, 2022, for consideration.

Chair Zarro brought up Rule 20, Failure to Pass, that may be revised in order to deal with confusion, shorten the time period, or otherwise simplify it, although Mayor Snyder said the rule was appropriate in the case of a tie vote. Acting Corporation Counsel Jen Thompson advised the committee that other towns did not have this rule and it was not required; she offered to find examples of its appropriate use.

In a discussion of Rule 22, Manner of Speaking, Councilor Ali asked that the requirement to stand be amended. The following discussion brought up the issues connected to remote

meetings, including when the councilors' camera should be on or off. Attorney Thompson said she would research the issue of how the City Council could best maintain decorum in its proceedings. Chair Zarro suggested a separate rule for remote meeting issues.

Councilor Zarro suggested that the City Council adopt a Code of Ethics and Mayor Snyder agreed. The Code of Ethics used by the City of Bangor, Maine, will be considered, especially in the matter of conflicts of interest. Councilor Dion clarified that a Code of Ethics concerns integrity and a violation of such a code would cause a need to review.

Councilor Dion introduced a constituent's request that the rule governing public comment, Rule 32, Procedure for Addressing the Council, be changed to allow questions for individual councilors. He stated that he was not stating his own opinion of the proposal but only adding it to the discussion on behalf of his constituent.

Chair Zarro summarized the rules that would be under discussion at the next meeting of the committee as Rules 19, 20, 22 and 32. The committee will also consider a Code of Ethics.

Councilor Zarro asked if there were any public comment and seeing none, closed the public comment period.

Mayor Snyder moved and Councilor Zarro seconded the motion to adjourn, which passed by a roll call vote of 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:07 a.m.