



Governance & Ethics Committee

Item #5 Review Council Meeting Management Procedures

December 4, 2023

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Background

- **August 17, 2021:** Council Priority Session check-in session addressed meeting management procedures.
- Council passed motion to utilize a procedure for a period of approximately 6 months & revisit procedures at the 2022 Council Priority Session.
- The current following procedures are still in place without a formal resolution.



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Current Meeting Management Procedures

That each item on a Council and/or Authorities agenda shall be heard and discussed in the following procedure:

1. City staff provides a report on the item, if warranted;
2. Each Councilmember shall have the opportunity to ask their questions;
3. City staff shall, to the extent possible, provide a response to all Councilmember questions;
4. The public shall have the opportunity to provide public comment on the item;
5. At the Mayor's request, City staff shall, to the extent possible, provide responses to the comments or questions from the public;
6. A Councilmember shall then make a motion and the motion should be seconded by another Councilmember;
7. Each Councilmember who wishes to speak to the motion (during the deliberation portion of the meeting) shall then have the opportunity to make statements regarding the motion; and;
8. A vote shall then be taken.



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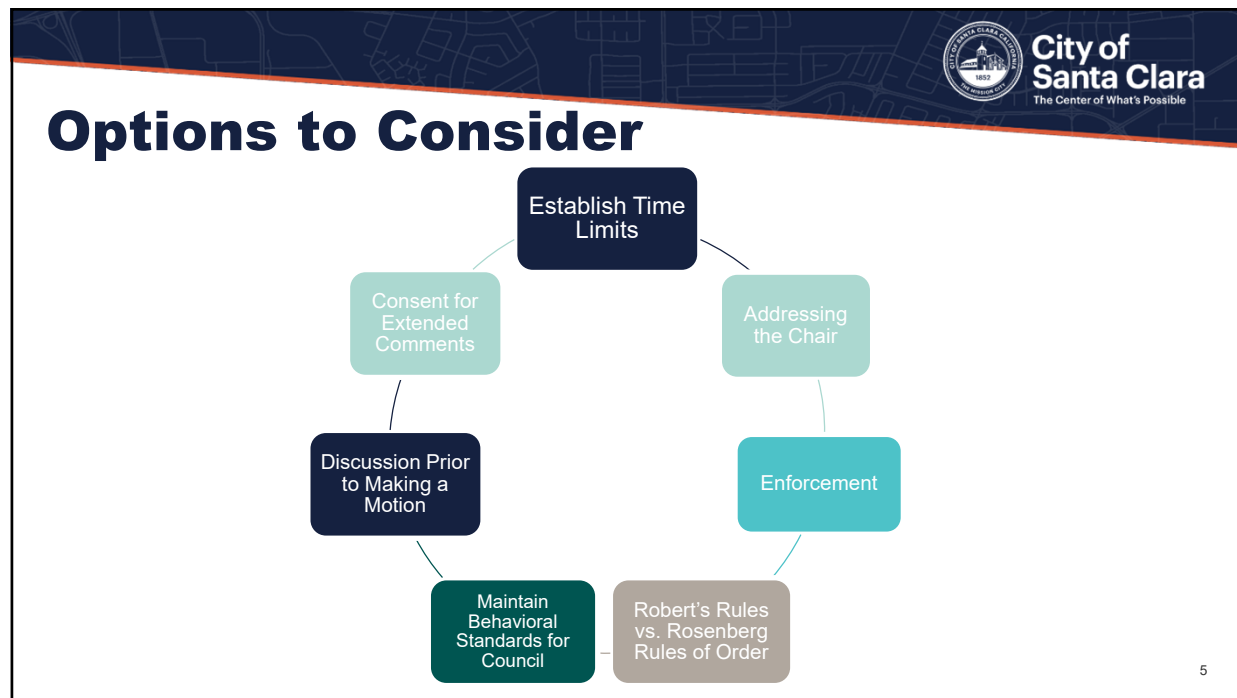
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Options to Consider

- **Option 1:** Consider using the current procedure in place and direct staff to formalize the procedures with a formal Resolution.
- **Option 2:** Consider revising the current procedure in one or more ways.
- **Option 3:** In addition, consider directing staff to consider options to replace Robert's Rules of Order with Rosenberg Rules of Order, a simplified set of parliamentary rules used in several cities throughout California.

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Establishing Time Limits

- This could help focus remarks and ensure all have an equal opportunity to speak.
- On the other hand, specific time limits and/or limits on the number of times a member is allowed to speak may negatively impact Council deliberations and information/idea sharing on important policy matters. Continuing to rely on the powers of the meeting's Chair to guide the City Council's discussions in a timely manner is an effective strategy that is used in many (if not most) jurisdictions.

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Consent for Extended Comments

- Councilmembers seeking to make extended comments may request consent from the Chair or the Council to allow extended speaking time.
- This can be utilized if the City Council elects to set time limits or without time limits and requested if the Chair seeks to limit discussion/questions.

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Provision for Discussion Prior to Making a Motion

- Council could consider the formal addition of a Council “discussions” step prior to the making of a motion.
- This is generally consistent with existing practices and can, particularly for more significant matters, facilitate the making of constructive motions that take into account the collective thoughts of the Council.
- As per standards, the Presiding Officer would manage this process with all Councilmembers given an opportunity to speak.

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Options to Consider

- **Addressing the Chair:** Councilmembers should address comments to the Chair (as the Presiding Officer), not directly to other members to assist with maintaining order and civility.
- **Minimize Repeating Points:** Councilmembers should avoid extended restatements of points already made by others to keep discussions efficient. The Chair will preside over these matters and may minimize repeated remarks.
- **Focus on Agenda Items:** Comments should relate directly to the agenda items being discussed and off-topic discussions may be redirected by the Chair.

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Options to Consider

- **Respectful Language:** Maintain a professional and respectful tone during discussions and avoid personal attacks or disrespectful language based on the City Code of Ethics and Values Behavioral Standards for Councilmembers.
- **No Interruptions:** Allow each member to speak without interruption.
- **Enforcement:** As the Chair of the meeting, the Presiding Officer may raise points of order to address violations of meeting rules, with a right for an appeal from the majority of the Council. Questions regarding applicable rules or questions of interpretation may be presented to the City Attorney for advice.

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Rosenberg's Rules of Order

- Rosenberg's Rules of Order is a simplified set of parliamentary rules used in several cities throughout California.
- Many institutions have adopted Rosenberg's Rules in lieu of Robert's Rules, by finding them practical, logical, simple, easy to learn and user-friendly, while retaining the basic tenets of order.
- If the Committee is interested in this option, staff will prepare to present a comparison at a future Committee meeting.



Rosenberg's Rules of Order
REVISED 2011
Simple Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for the 21st Century

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