

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

Proposed updates to the City Council Rules of Procedure

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DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL**DIRECTION**

Staff is seeking feedback on proposed revisions to the Bellevue City Council Rules of Procedure, last updated in 2015 (Resolution 8928). No action is being sought tonight. Staff will return at a future meeting in response to direction provided.

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

The current version of the Council Rules of Procedure was adopted in 2015 by way of Resolution 8928. That update was focused on a number of proposed amendments that had been raised during the 2015 Council Retreat, and was the first revision since the year 2000. Over the past year, multiple revisions have been contemplated to the existing rules in order to reflect practices that have been put into place and for requests for clarity. The requested changes include:

- Election of Mayor (Section 3B): Over the past three elections, the Council has opted to follow an alternative practice for the selection of Mayor. The current rules are silent to the method of voting on the Mayor, meaning the practice supported by Robert's Rules of Order would be used. An alternate method of using paper ballots for rounds of voting, followed by the reading of the ballots, has been used instead. The proposed change would make this the default method. Alternately, the Council may continue to vote on options for voting prior to the election via a Suspension of Rules (Section 13).
- Board and Commission Appointments (Section 5C): The 2015 revision of the rules added a section to document the longstanding procedure for filling vacancies on Boards and Commissions. In 2018, the Council agreed to add a step in that process to ask staff to provide one week advance notice of the proposed candidate.
- Council Order of Business (Section 7A): Add a permanent location on the regular session agenda for proclamations. Staff would recommend adding an item for 'Honors and Proclamations' following the approval of the agenda. The order of business for Extended Study Sessions has been temporarily amended this year to hold executive sessions following oral communications. Feedback from the public has been favorable to the change, and Council may wish to reflect it in your rules.

- Rules for Public Participation (Section 8D): An amendment to Resolution 8928 was made during the adoption of the rules to add a second opportunity for Oral Communications at the end of the Extended Study Session agenda. While the Resolution was amended by a vote of 7 - 0 to reflect the change, the rules are currently silent as to how the additional opportunity for communications is handled, including the applicability of 3 speakers per each side of a topic. According to the meeting minutes (Attachment C) the following intentions were stated by Councilmembers:
 - Add second opportunity in order to accommodate individuals who were not able to speak earlier due to time constraints, even if it means extending the meeting;
 - Allow the Mayor to determine if the second opportunity was limited to individuals who signed up earlier in the evening or whether anyone would be allowed to speak;
 - Ensure a balance of allowing time for the Council to conduct necessary business, while providing the public an opportunity to speak.

In addition, the Council may have an interest in reviewing the section on Remote Participation in Council meetings (Section 6E) to add or amend any of the provisions. This section was added when the rules were last updated in 2015.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

RCW 35A.12.120 states that “The council shall determine its own rules of order and business, and may establish rules for the conduct of council meetings and the maintenance of order.” RCW 35A.12.110 identifies a number of components traditionally addressed in rules of procedure established by Washington cities, including meeting schedules, votes on ordinances and resolutions, and roles of the chair, vice-chair and clerk.

It should be noted that these citations are made applicable to the Council-Manager plan of government by RCW 35A.13.230.

There is no fiscal impact associated with implementing these changes.

OPTIONS

1. N/A

ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

- A. Resolution 8928
- B. Proposed process for voting during Election of Mayor
- C. June 1, 2015 Regular Session Meeting Minutes for Item 11(c)

Available in Council Library: N/A