RULES OF ORDER OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF WOONSOCKET

ADOPTED ~~DECEMBER 12, 2022~~ **~~APRIL 17, 2023~~ DECEMBER 19, 2023**

Rule 1. The president shall call the meeting to order and shall cause the order of business to commence at the time set by the President, with Regular Meetings starting at **6 P.M.** ~~7 P.M~~. In the absence of or at the request of the President, the Vice President shall call the meeting to order and shall cause the order of business to commence. The Council President, Council Vice-President or other members as prescribed in Rule 2 ~~that~~ **who** calls the meeting to order shall also be referred to as the “Chair” with respect to the rules that follow. In the event that the meeting exceeds 11 P.M., the council shall by majority vote decide to continue with the meeting or recess to the next following regular business day at **6 P.M.** ~~7 P.M.~~ All public hearings shall be called to order at **6 P.M.** ~~7:00 P.M.~~

Rule 2. The City Council, in the absence of the President and Vice President, shall elect one of its members to be acting President of the City Council. It shall be the duty of the acting President to assume all the duties of the President.

Rule 3. At its first meeting following a general election or at its initial organizational meeting following a general or special election, the City Council shall elect a Council President and Vice-President by majority vote of the City Council members present and voting.

In the event of a vacancy in the office of Council President or Vice-President, the City Council shall, by majority vote, select a member to serve as Council President consistent with the procedures as set forth in this Rule.

The City Council may schedule a reorganizational meeting at any time by request of the Council President or four members of the Council to the City Clerk and follow all notice requirements set forth by the RI Open Meetings Act.

Rule 4. The Chair shall preserve decorum and order; may speak on points of order subject to an appeal to the Council by a motion regularly seconded, and no other business shall be in order until the question on appeal shall have been decided by a majority vote of the members present. The Chair shall distinctly put all questions and decide all votes. The “yeas” and “nays” of the members of the City Council shall, at the request of two members of the City Council present, be taken and entered on the record.

Rule 5. Any member of the council or public desiring to speak shall address the Chair, and after his right to speak has been recognized, the member shall not be interrupted while speaking except by a call to order. They shall confine their remarks to the question under debate and shall avoid slander and derogatory remarks. Remarks from anyone that are slanderous,offensive, or derogatory towards individuals or the City may result in the removal from the City Council chambers.

 When a member of the City Council wishes to address specific items of interest or concern not on the agenda, the councilmember shall submit a written request to the City Clerk specifying those items that the councilmember wishes to address by not later than the close of business on the Wednesday before the scheduled meeting. The City Clerk shall place said items(s) on the agenda under “Petitions and Communications” after consultation with the Council President.

 Each councilmember shall be allotted a total time of 10 minutes during a regular council meeting to address those items previously submitted under Petitions and Communications. The Council President shall enforce said time limit which may be extended at any time by a majority vote of the City Council. If the time allotted is not sufficient, the items not addressed shall be placed on the next regularly scheduled Council Meeting or at a work session if requested.

 On all other Petitions and Communications submitted by the public, the Council President shall enforce a 10 minute limit on all written requests to address the city council per individual. If the matter is one in which additional time or study is needed, the Council President, or any member of the City Council upon majority vote of its members present, may table the matter for a later work session or move to suspend this rule and upon approval of the motion, provide additional time.

 The Council President shall have the duty and right to schedule all such councilperson and public Petition and Communications requests so as to not unnecessarily prevent or delay the conduct of necessary City Council business.

Rule 6. No member shall speak more than once on the same question until all members desiring to speak thereon shall have done so. There shall be no conversation among the members while a member is speaking, while a roll call is being taken, while any paper is being read, or while a question is being stated by the Chair.

Rule 7. The Chair shall enforce order and decorum among persons in the City Council chamber. No persons other than the Mayor, members of the City Council, Clerk of the Council, and representatives of the press and radio shall be allowed on the floor of the City Council without receiving an invitation from the Chair, or without an invitation by a majority of the members present.

Rule 8. When a question is under debate, the Chair will receive no motion except to lay on the table,-the previous question, -to postpone to a day certain, -to commit, -to amend, -or to postpone indefinitely. These said motions shall have precedence in the order herein stated and the first two of said motions shall be undebatable.

Rule 9. After a roll call is ordered, said roll call vote shall not be interrupted, delayed, or stopped by the Chair or any member of the Council for any reason whatsoever. In case of a tie vote, the motion is lost. No main motion shall be debated until it is seconded.

Rule 10. Any motion may be withdrawn by the maker at any time before the taking of a vote thereon, or before an amendment is made to said motion.

Rule 11. When a vote has been passed, it shall be in order for any member voting with the majority to move a reconsideration thereof at the same meeting, or to give notice through the City Clerk in writing of his intention to move a reconsideration at the next regular meeting, provided, however, that the Chair shall not entertain any motion until the motion to reconsider has been acted upon; and when such notice of an intention to reconsider has been given, the Clerk shall retain possession of the papers until the next meeting, and no subsequent motion to reconsider the vote passed shall be in order at the same meeting, unless upon a withdrawal of the notice; and when a motion to reconsider has been decided, that vote shall not be reconsidered; and the same resolution or ordinance shall come but once before this body for reconsideration.

Rule 12. The order of precedence of motions shall be as follows:

 1. Take a recess.

 2. Raise a question of privilege.

 3. Lay on the table.

 4. Suspend the rules -two-thirds vote required.

 5. Previous questions with two-thirds vote required.

 6. Limit or extend limits of debate - two-thirds vote required.

 7. Postpone to a certain time.

 8. Commit or refer.

 9. Amend

 10. Postpone indefinitely.

 11. Main motion.

 The highest in rank being at the head of the list and the lowest in rank at the last of the list. When any of them is immediately pending, the motions before it on the said list are in order and shall be acted upon first, and those below are out of order.

Rule 13. The following motions shall be undebatable:

 1. To adjourn.

 2. Take a recess, (when privileged).

 3. Raise a question of privilege.

 4. Lay on the table.

 5. Suspend the rules.

 6. Previous question (two-thirds vote).

 7. Limit or extend limits of debate (two-thirds vote).

Rule 14. The following motions only can be amended:

 1. Take a recess.

 2. Postpone to a certain time.

 3. Commit or refer.

 4. Amend.

 5. Main motion.

Rule 15. The order of business at every regular meeting of the Council shall be as follows:

 1. Roll Call.

 2. Prayer.

 3. Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Agenda for board of license commissioners.

5. Public Comment (limited to five minutes per person).

 **6. Approval of Minutes of previous meetings**

 **7** ~~6~~. Consent Agenda.

 ~~a. Approval of Minutes of previous meetings~~

 **a** ~~b~~. Monthly paid bills, all accounts

 **b** ~~c~~. Other matters

  **8** ~~7~~. Communications from the Mayor.

 **9** ~~8~~. Communications from the City Solicitor

 a. Claims

 b. Other Matters

 **10** ~~9~~. Communications and reports from City Officers.

a. Finance Director –

1. State mandated financial reports

2. Revenue collections

3. Fund financial activity

4. Bid posting and award activity

b. Public Works –

1. Highway department activity/status

2. Permit activity/revenue

c. Public Safety –

1. Activities/Statistics

d. Planning Department –

1. Ongoing/New activities

2. CDBG program and financial status,

3. Other matters

e. Personnel –

1. Employment activity – New hire/vacated/vacant positions

 f. Human Services – Ongoing and upcoming programs

 g. City Clerk – Office permits issued and revenues

 h. Library – Circulation and other activity

 **11** ~~10~~. Recognitions and Announcements

 **12** ~~11~~. Unfinished business of previous meetings.

 **13** ~~12~~. New business.

**14** ~~13~~. Petitions to speak by the Public and Elected/Appointed Officials.

 **15** ~~14~~. Reports of committees.

 **16** ~~15~~. Adjourn.

Rule 16. No motion to adjourn shall be in order until the regular order of business is dispensed with, and then said motion to adjourn shall become a privileged motion and shall be undebatable.

Rule 17. Every proposed Ordinance or Resolution shall be filed with the City Clerk by a member of the City Council not later than the close of the business day 4pm on the Wednesday before the council meeting at which it is proposed for consideration. Each Ordinance or Resolution shall have at least one member of the City Council as the sponsor and have authorized the City Clerk verbally or written to be listed as the sponsor. The agenda of the Council shall be closed at that time and the City Clerk shall distribute to the City Council a proposed agenda of all items submitted by the deadline. The City Clerk shall publish and send notice to the City Council and public a printed agenda containing such ordinances and resolutions by 3pm on the Thursday before each council meeting.

 The above provisions in regard to notice shall not apply to special meetings of the Council. For such special meetings, resolutions shall be filed with the City Clerk by a member of the City Council not later than 48 hours previous to that of the meeting at which it is to be introduced.

 Communications from the Mayor and city officers may be received at any time by unanimous consent of the council.

Rule 18. The City Clerk shall prepare and cause to be printed for the information of the members of the City Council a docket on which there will be a definite statement of summary of all ordinances, resolutions, orders and other business to be considered at each meeting of the City Council.

Rule 19. The City Council shall serve as a Committee of the Whole to research, review, or investigate all matters referred to it or any matter over which the City Council retains jurisdiction as the legislative body of the City of Woonsocket.

 If, by majority vote, the City Council, determines that a sub-committee is necessary or preferable, then the subcommittee shall be formed, to be chaired by a council member, as selected by the majority of the City Council.

 The chair shall then recommend for appointment other members to serve on the subcommittee. The total number of members to serve on any subcommittee shall be no less than 3 or not more than 7, or a greater number, if necessary, as set by a Resolution creating the subcommittee. The membership of the subcommittee may include no more than three (3) sitting members of the City Council, and other legal residents of the City of Woonsocket, business owners, and such other qualified members or professionals that the City Council deems necessary and prudent.

 The City Council shall approve, by majority vote, the membership of each subcommittee and shall establish, by resolution, the terms of said membership as well as the specific charge of the subcommittee. All subcommittee members appointed in conformance with this Rule shall terminate within 14 days upon the election, and taking of office of a duly elected City Council unless the City Council extends the term of the subcommittee by Resolution.

 All subcommittee members appointed consistent with this Rule are advisory in nature. They shall make written recommendations to the City Council on any matter referred to it. Nothing in this Rule shall be construed to grant any legislative power to any subcommittee as such power remains solely vested in the Woonsocket City Council.

Rule 20. Council members appointed to special committees shall maintain an active interest in the subjects assigned, and shall be ready to advise the City Council at any time on matters relating to their committees.

Rule 21. The regular meetings of the City Council shall be held in City Hall on the first and third Mondays of each month with the exception of the months of July and August when only one regular meeting will be held on the first Monday of each month and the month of September when only one meeting shall be held on the third Monday of the month.

Rule 22. If any regular meeting shall fall on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be held on the day following or as directed by Resolution of the City Council.

Rule 23. The foregoing rules shall not be altered, amended, suspended or repealed at any time excepting by a majority vote of the City Council.

Rule 24. The City Council hereby adopts “Robert’s Rules of Order” as the authority on all matters pertaining to rules of order not covered herein.

Rule 25. The Clerk of the City Council shall cause to be printed for each of the members of the City Council, a record of the previous meetings and shall have the record of the previous meeting ready for each meeting of the City Council.

Rule 26. In an emergency, the Council President with approval of the majority of the members, may postpone its regular meeting to the next working day following its regular meeting.

Rule 27. Consent agenda:

1. When the City Clerk determines that any item of business requires action by the Council but is of a routine and non-controversial nature, as designated by an asterisk (\*), (s) he may cause such item to be presented at a regular meeting of the Council as part of the Consent Agenda.

2. An objection by any member of the Council to inclusion of any item on the consent agenda forthwith may be recorded at any time prior to the taking of a vote on the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Any item removed from the Consent Agenda shall be considered in its normal sequence on the meeting agenda.

3. The Consent Agenda shall be introduced by a motion “To approve the Consent Agenda” and shall be considered by the Council as a single item.

4. There shall be no debate or discussion by any member of the Council regarding any item on the Consent Agenda beyond asking questions for simple clarification.

5. All items on the Consent Agenda which require public hearings shall be open for hearing simultaneously, and the City Council President shall announce, or direct the City Clerk to announce titles of all items.

6. Approval of the motion to approve the Consent Agenda shall be fully equivalent to approval, adoption, or enactment of each motion, resolution, ordinance or other item of business thereon exactly as if each had been acted upon individually.

Rule 28 News Releases/Statements to the Media.

1. All Council news releases/statements shall be released by the City Clerk at the direction of the Council.

2. Council news releases/statements shall be prepared by the City Clerk. If the Council deems it necessary it may, by a majority vote, designate a specific official to prepare a news release/statement on a specific subject.

3. Prior to the issuance of any and all news releases/statements the City Clerk shall:

a) furnish a draft of said news release/statement to each councilor;

b) confirm with each councilor that he/she is in receipt of said release/statement.

c) poll each councilor so as to ascertain his/her agreement or disagreement with said release/statement. In all cases, prior to polling the Council, the City Clerk shall allow each councilor a minimum of 24 hours review and offer amendments to said release/statement from the time the Clerk confirms that a councilor is in receipt of said document.

4. The City Clerk shall issue said news release/statement if, after polling the Council, it has been determined that a majority of the members are in agreement with said news release/statement. The Clerk shall offer to those councilors who are not in agreement with said release/statement the opportunity to have their disagreement noted as a part of said release/statement.

 IN CITY COUNCIL – October 6, 2014 – As amended. (14 R 111 / Rules #3 & #19)

 IN CITY COUNCIL – December 1, 2014 – As amended. (14 R 131 / Rules #1 & #5)

IN CITY COUNCIL – December 17, 2018 – As amended. (18 R 131 / Rules #1, #3, #5 & #15)

IN CITY COUNCIL – December 7, 2020 – As amended (20 R 111 / Rule #15)

IN CITY COUNCIL – December 12, 2022 – As amended (22 R 169 / Rules #3, #5, #7, #15 & #17)

IN CITY COUNCIL – February 20, 2023 – As amended (23 R 19 / Rules #5 & #17)

IN CITY COUNCIL – April 17, 2023 – As amended (23 R 44 / Rule #15)

 IN CITY COUNCIL – December 18, 2023 – As amended (23 R 183 / Rule #1)