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# NORTH LITTLE ROCK CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** North Little Rock City Council  
**FROM:** Amy Beckman Fields, City Attorney  
**SUBJECT:** Procedural Rules of City Council  
**DATE:** February 5, 2024

Arkansas Code Annotated § 14-43-501 provides that the members of the governing body elected for each city shall assemble annually in January and organize the governing body. My apologies that I overlooked this in January this year. The City Council adopted Ordinance No. 9079 on February 11, 2019, amended by Ordinance No. 9328 on January 25, 2021, adopting rules and procedures. I have attached a copy of the Rules and Procedures for your review. I will be prepared to discuss these procedures, as well as any revisions you may want to implement, at our meeting on February 12.

Please note, these procedures are yours. They may be changed in any manner that you believe would result in an improved process. If any of you wish to propose any changes, legislation can be prepared to address those proposals for consideration at the next City Council meeting.

FILED 8 A.M. \_\_\_\_\_ P.M.  
BY email Amy Fields  
DATE 2/16/24  
Diane Whitbey, City Clerk and Collector  
North Little Rock, Arkansas  
RECEIVED by [Signature]

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**CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS**

**Rules and Procedures  
for the  
North Little Rock City Council**

Adopted 2-11-2019 – Ordinance No. 9079  
Amended 1-25-2021 – Ordinance No. 9328

## **DIVISION 1. - GENERALLY**

### **Section 1.01 Regular Meetings**

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b), regular meetings of the city council ("council") shall be held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month, commencing at 6:00 p.m.

(b) If the regular meeting date falls on a holiday or other inconvenient time, the meeting shall automatically be postponed until the next night which is not a holiday, commencing at 6:00 p.m., or, after notice has been provided in accordance with the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act, until such time and place as may be agreed by a majority of the council.

### **Section 1.02 Place of Meetings**

Except as otherwise provided, all meetings of the council shall be held in the council chambers located in City Hall.

### **Section 1.03 Calling of Special Meetings**

(a) The mayor or any three regularly elected and qualified council members may call the council in special session by giving each member notice thereof. Notice shall be made:

- (1) by delivering the call for a special meeting with copies of any and all proposed ordinances or resolutions to be considered by a duly qualified officer of the North Little Rock Police Department no less than 24 hours prior to the meeting; or
- (2) by transmitting the call for a special meeting with copies of any and all proposed ordinances or resolutions to be considered through the city electronic mail system ("e-mail") no less than 72 hours prior to the meeting; or
- (3) by waiver.

(b) The call for a special meeting shall disclose the subject or subjects to be considered by the council in such special session, and no other business than that mentioned in the call or notice shall be considered. The call shall have attached thereto a copy of any and all proposed ordinances or resolutions, without which the subject or subjects shall not be considered. No special meeting may be held unless all members shall have received notice in accordance with subsection (a). Evidence of service for special meetings shall be preserved in the record.

(c) Regardless of the method of service, a printed copy of any and all proposed ordinances or resolutions to be considered shall be placed on each member's desk prior to the special meeting.

## **DIVISION 2. RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE**

### **Subdivision I. General Provisions**

#### **Section 2.01. Rules Order**

There is hereby adopted as the parliamentary rules of the council that publication known as *Procedural Rules for Municipal Officials* as published by the Arkansas Municipal League.

#### **Section 2.02 Determination of Seniority**

For the purposes of this division, seniority shall be based on the total amount of time served by a council member, with no distinction between continuous and noncontinuous periods of service. Council members of equal seniority shall be ranked alphabetically by surname.

#### **Section 2.03 Calling of Roll**

Council members shall be seated by ward. The senior council member of each ward shall have the privilege to choose his or her seat. Upon the calling of the roll for any purpose, the council member's name shall be called in the order seated by ward, beginning with Ward 1 and continuing in a series through Ward 4. If circumstances exist that restrict a Council member from being physically present at a scheduled meeting, Council members are authorized to attend, speak, and vote using Zoom or other virtual communication means. The technology used shall allow members to hear and communicate simultaneously with members who are present in the meeting. The Mayor, or other person presiding over the meeting, must be physically present in the designated meeting room. When recording the vote of any member who is participating virtually in a meeting, the City Clerk shall call the name of the member and record the response. If for any reason no response is received, the City Clerk shall record that the member abstained from the vote.

#### **Section 2.04 Opening of Each Meeting**

(a) For the purpose of solemnizing the official meetings of city council, each meeting may be opened with brief words of thoughtfulness, prayer, or encouragement intended to reflect upon the important duty undertaken by the council to fairly represent all people within the community. The privilege of speaking at this time shall be rotated evenly among the council members, who may invite other persons to speak on their behalf. In order to affirm the City's impartiality and commitment to fair and equal treatment of all persons, a statement shall be affixed to all city council agendas and video transmissions indicating that the city welcomes people of diverse cultures and beliefs, and that any religious viewpoints expressed during the meeting are personal in nature to the speaker and not intended to proselytize, advance, or disparage any religious belief.

(b) For the purpose of reflecting upon the lawful authority and limitations of the city, each meeting will be opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to be led by the council member scheduled to speak as described in subsection (a), or a person invited by such council member to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Section 2.05 Public Comment**

Persons who attend city council meetings may be afforded the privilege to communicate their opinions on public matters, *provided that* the persons desiring to speak:

(a) *On Agenda Items:*

- (1) Comply with the reasonable record-keeping and procedural requirements of the City Clerk;
- (2) Limit their topic of discussion according to the agenda; and
- (3) Limit the duration of their comments to three (3) minutes.

(b) *Non-Agenda Items:*

- (1) Comply with the reasonable record-keeping and procedural requirements of the city clerk;
- (2) Address their remarks to the Mayor or City Council as a whole and not to any individual member of the Council; and
- (3) Limit the duration of their comments to three (3) minutes.

Public comment on agenda items will be heard at the beginning of the meeting. Public comment on non-agenda items will be heard at the end of the meeting.

## **Subdivision II. Legislation**

### **Section 2.06 Filing of Matters for the City Council Agenda**

(a) *Communications.* Any elected official of the city may submit a document to be considered by the city council for filing in the permanent records of the city. Such documents shall only be read aloud upon the request of a member of city council. Communications may be accepted for filing individually, collectively or both, by majority vote of the council that is present and participating as indicated by *viva voce* or roll call vote.

(b) *Ordinances and resolutions.* The city council shall not pass or consider at the next city council meeting any proposed ordinance-or resolution filed with the city clerk after 12:00 noon on Tuesday of the week prior to the regular city council meetings. All such ordinances and resolutions must conform with the form prescribed by the city attorney, and in such cases where the deadline falls on a holiday, the filing date shall then be 24 hours subsequent to that time. Except as provided in subsection (c) below, ordinances and resolutions shall only be approved individually by roll call vote. All requests for legislation must be submitted to the City Attorney by noon on Thursday prior to a filing deadline.

(c) *Consent agenda.* Resolutions which do not require a public hearing as a condition precedent to approval may be placed on the consent agenda. The consent agenda shall be considered prior to new business. Resolutions on the consent agenda may be approved individually, collectively or both, by unanimous approval of the council members present as indicated by *viva voce* or roll call vote. Upon motion or request of any member of city council, a resolution shall be removed from the consent agenda and placed on the regular agenda.

(d) *Reading requirement.* Where the law imposes a duty to read ordinances aloud, such ordinances shall only be read by title. When approved by a 2/3rds vote, a motion to “waive readings” may be used to satisfy all reading requirements for a particular ordinance, or for all ordinances on the agenda, as may be desired by the movant.

**Section 2.07 Sponsoring**

All proposed ordinances or resolutions may be offered to the city council by one of its members including the mayor. The person or persons who initiate the request for the preparation of an ordinance or resolution by the city attorney shall be the principal sponsor or cosponsors; a principal sponsor or cosponsor, or any council member designated by the principal sponsor or cosponsor to do so, may call an ordinance or resolution for consideration by the city council. Only the principal sponsor or cosponsor may sign the ordinance or resolution; however, another member of the city council may sign as an additional sponsor, provided such member has first obtained the principal sponsor’s permission to sign as a cosponsor.

**Section 2.08 Drafters of ordinances, resolutions to sign copy.**

(a) Each ordinance and resolution to come before city council, except those prepared by the city attorney’s office, shall have the typed name and signature of the author prominently displayed at the end of the ordinance or resolution similar to the following manner:

“DRAFTED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
JOHN SMITH:

(b) Legislation prepared by the city attorney’s office shall so indicate at the bottom of the ordinance or resolution.

(c) Any legislation lacking indication of authorship shall be deemed to be improper in form and shall neither be accepted for filing by the city clerk nor approved as to form by the city attorney.

**Section 2.09 Removal of ordinances and resolutions remaining on agenda.**

Any and all ordinances and resolutions remaining on the city council’s calendar and agenda after 90 days from filing or six regular meetings of the city council, whichever occurs first, shall be removed from the council’s calendar and agenda by the city clerk.