

RESOLUTION NO. 86-2017

A RESOLUTION REPEALING AND REPLACING RESOLUTION 56-2017 ADOPTING
RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE CITY COUNCIL OF ABILENE, TEXAS

WHEREAS, the Constitution and Laws of the State of Texas, and the Charter of the City of Abilene, Texas, authorize the City Council of said City to promulgate and establish rules of procedure to govern and conduct meetings, order of business, decorum, etc., while acting as a legislative body representing the City; and,

WHEREAS, because of its desire to effectively and efficiently serve the public through the medium of public meetings it has become necessary to establish guidelines relating to proper conduct of all parties present for such meeting;

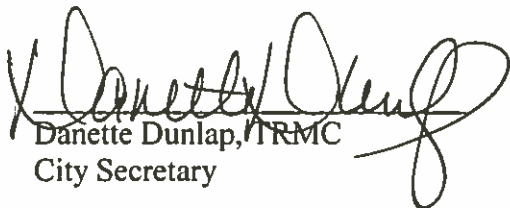
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS:

PART 1: That the rules and procedures are attached hereto as Exhibit A, shall be in all things, approved.

PART 2: That this resolution shall take effect immediately from and after its passage.

PASSED this 13th day of July, 2017.

ATTEST:


Danette Dunlap, TRMC
City Secretary


Anthony Williams
Mayor

APPROVED:


Stanley Smith
City Attorney

Exhibit "A"

Rules of Procedure

Article II, Section 17 of the City Charter of the City of Abilene, Texas grants the City Council the right to determine its own rules of procedure; the following rules are enumerated under and authority of said provision.

2.1 Construction of Authority

2.1.1 The construction of authority in all matters associated with the meetings and activities of the City Council, including the Agenda, shall be: (1) the U.S. Constitution and statues of the United States of America; (2) The Texas Constitution and statues of the State of Texas; (3) the City Charter; (4) the Code of Ordinances of the City of Abilene, Texas; and, (5) these Rules.

2.2 Purpose of Parliamentary Procedure

2.2.1 The purpose of these rules of parliamentary procedure is to establish orderly conduct of the meetings. Simple rules lead to a wider understanding and participation. Complex rules create two classes: (1) those who understand the rules, and (2) those who do not fully understand and therefore, do not fully participate. The ultimate purpose of these rules of parliamentary procedure is to encourage and facilitate decision-making by the City Council. In a democracy, the majority opinion carries the day. These rules enable the majority to express their opinion and fashion a result, while permitting the minority to also express itself (but not dominate) and fully participate in the process.

2.3 Meetings Shall be Public

2.3.1 Except as otherwise allowed by law, all meetings of the City Council shall be public, and notices thereof shall be posted as provided under the Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, Open Meetings Act. Except in the case of an emergency meeting, notice of all meetings shall be given at least 72 hours before the time set for any meeting. (Charter § 16)

2.4 Conduct of Meetings

2.4.1 Meetings of the City Council shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules adopted by the City Council as set forth herein, and as may be amended from time to time.

2.5 Council Meetings

2.5.1 For the months of January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, and October the Regular Meetings of the City Council shall be on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. For the months of November and December, the Regular Meetings of the City Council shall be on the first and third Thursdays each month. The first regular meeting of the month shall begin at 4:30 PM, and the second regular meeting of the month shall begin at 8:30 AM.

(Charter § 16)

2.5.2 Meetings shall be held at City Hall unless another convenient place within the City is designated by the meeting agenda. (Charter § 16)

2.5.3 Special meetings may be called by the City Secretary upon written request of the Mayor, or any three members of the City Council. (Charter § 16) For purposes of administrative feasibility, the City Council specifically grants the City Manager authority to call a special called meeting when necessary through the adoption of these *Rules*.

2.5.4 In case of an emergency or urgent public necessity, which shall be expressed in the meeting notice, it shall be sufficient if members receive, and public notice is posted at least two (2) hours before the meeting is convened. Notice shall be provided also to the media in accordance with the Texas Government Code, Section 551.047.

2.6 Workshop Sessions

2.6.1 Workshop Sessions are special meetings called for conducting a detailed and thorough exploration of matters that may properly come before the City Council.

2.6.2 Workshop Sessions are held at 5:30 PM on the Tuesday before the second monthly Regular Meeting of the City Council, or at such other time as may be convenient and necessary.

2.7 Executive Sessions (Closed Sessions)

2.7.1 Executive Sessions are closed to the public. They are only permitted for discussing matters enumerated in Chapter 551, Open Meetings Act of the Texas Government Code. Notice of topics to be discussed during executive sessions shall

be made known to the public in accordance with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

2.7.2 The City Council may retire into an executive session as stated on a posted agenda during a regular or special meeting, or if a motion is duly made, seconded, and affirmed by a majority of the Council. However, before said session begins, the Presiding Officer shall announce that the executive session is commencing. The order in which an executive session may appear on the agenda is subject to the discretion of the City Council. A certified record of the meeting will be created by the Presiding Officer or his or her designee, sealed and permanently kept, subject to opening by Court order. No voting or action shall be taken by the City Council during an executive session. No other subject but that posted on the agenda is to be considered. Adjournment of the executive session and any vote needed shall be made during an open public meeting.

2.7.3 Items discussed in Executive Session are to remain private and confidential. Except, as provided by law, no Council Member, staff member or legal counsel may discuss or reveal the proceedings of an Executive Session to persons not present during the Executive Session. In the event an elected official is absent from the Executive Session the Presiding Officer, the City Manager or the City Attorney may brief the elected official who was absent from the meeting on the discussion.

2.7.4 Additionally, the certified agenda or recording of the Executive Session is confidential, and no persons may disclose to a member of the public the certified agenda or recording of the Executive Session, except as provided by law. Section 551.146 of the Texas Government Code makes such an act a Class B Misdemeanor and opens the person who reveals such information personally liable for any damages resulting from such action.

2.8 Recessed Meetings

2.8.1 No meeting shall be recessed for a longer period than until the next regular meeting except when required information has not been received, or, in the case of workshops or special meetings, to a date certain by motion duly passed.

2.9 Quorum

2.9.1 Four or more members of the Council shall constitute a quorum for all meetings for the transaction of all business. (Charter § 17)

2.10 Presiding Officer

2.10.1 The Mayor shall serve as the Presiding Officer for all meetings of the City Council. In the absence of the Mayor, the Mayor Pro Tem shall serve as the Presiding Officer. In the absence of the Mayor Pro Tem, the Deputy Mayor Pro Tem shall serve as the Presiding Officer. In the absence of the Mayor, the Mayor Pro Tem and the Deputy Mayor Pro Tem, the City Secretary shall call the meeting to order if a quorum of the Council is present and the first order of business shall be for Council to elect by majority vote, a temporary Presiding Officer from the members then seated and in attendance. The temporary Presiding Officer shall serve in such capacity until the meeting is adjourned, or until the Presiding Officer, the Mayor Pro Tem, or the Deputy Mayor Pro Tem is present at the meeting, whichever occurs first.

2.10.2 The Presiding Officer shall serve as the chair of all meetings and shall make final rulings on all questions pertaining to these rules. All decisions of the Presiding Officer are final unless overruled by the City Council through a Motion to Appeal as described in Section 2.18 – Courtesy, Decorum and Order of these *Rules*.

2.10.3 The Presiding Officer is entitled to participate in the discussion and debate, and is entitled to vote on all business before the City Council. Because the Presiding Officer conducts the meeting, it is common courtesy and custom for the chair to take a less active role than other members of the Council in debates and discussions. This practice in no way precludes the Presiding Officer from participating in the meeting fully and freely.

2.11 Minutes of Meetings

2.11.1 The City Secretary shall keep an account of all proceedings of the City Council and they shall be open to public inspection in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas. (Charter § 15)

2.12 Suspension and Amendment of Rules

2.12.1 Any provisions of these *Rules* not governed by federal, state law or the City Charter may be temporarily suspended by a super majority vote of the City Council and may be amended in a similar fashion if such amendment was introduced at the previous regular meeting of the City Council and shall have received preliminary approval of the City Council at such meeting. For the purpose of this section,

preliminary approval shall mean a motion and a second with a majority vote to approve the amendment preliminarily.

2.13 Agenda

2.13.1 The City Manager and the City Secretary shall prepare an agenda and cause the same to be posted at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Agendas shall be delivered to the City Council on or before 6:00 PM of the day of the posting, or within such other times as established by the City Council from time to time. In the event of an emergency meeting of the City Council, this provision shall be suspended when not inconsistent with the provisions of federal or state law, or the City Charter.

2.13.2 In order to facilitate the agenda process, the City Manager is responsible for placing items on the agenda. A written request from the Mayor or any member of the Council shall cause the City Manager to place an item on the agenda for Council consideration. The Council Member requesting the item shall be identified in the agenda item heading for the requested item. Staff assistance, if required, should be requested through the City Manager (Charter § 13). If a Council requested agenda topic does not allow for staff to adequately prepare information for Council's consideration, the item shall be postponed by the City Manager until the next Regular Meeting, or until such time as mutually agreed.

2.14 Consent Agenda

2.14.1 There is hereby established, as a part of every agenda for Regular and/or Special Called Meetings of the City Council, a portion of said agenda that shall be labeled "Consent Agenda." Said Consent Agenda may consist of any and all business regularly coming before the City Council.

2.14.2 All items set out in the Consent Agenda shall be deemed passed upon passage of an affirmative motion, by a vote of at least four of the members of the City Council then seated, that the Consent Agenda be adopted. No further action shall be deemed necessary, and all such items appearing on the Consent Agenda, upon passage of such motion, shall be deemed adopted as if voted upon separately and as if the caption and/or body of any ordinance therein set out shall have been read in full.

2.14.3 Any member of the City Council or a citizen may request, that an item be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately. Such request shall be honored as if it had been passed by majority vote.

2.15 Model Format for an Agenda Item Discussion

2.15.1 The following ten steps can be used as a model or guidebook by the Presiding Officer. The meeting is governed by the agenda and the agenda constitutes the only items to be discussed. Each agenda item can be handled by the Presiding Officer in the following basic format:

- (a) **Announce the Item.** The Presiding Officer should clearly announce the agenda item number, and should clearly state the subject matter of the agenda item by reading the caption for the item being considered.
- (b) **Receive a Report.** The Presiding Officer should invite the appropriate people to report on the item, including any recommendations they might have.
- (c) **Ask Clarifying Questions.** The Presiding Officer should ask the Council Members if they have any technical questions for clarification. At this point, members of the City Council may ask clarifying questions to the people who reported on the item, and those people should be given time to respond.
- (d) **Get Citizen Input.** The Presiding Officer may invite citizen comments – or if a public hearing, shall open the public hearing. Upon conclusion, the Presiding Officer should announce that public input is closed, or if a public hearing, close the public hearing. Unless the item requires a public hearing, no public input is required.
- (e) **Discussion.** The Presiding Officer should now invite the members of the City Council to discuss the item. If there is no desired discussion, the Presiding Officer may call for a motion.
- (f) **Motion First.** The Presiding Officer should invite a motion from the City Council after the initial discussion is concluded. The Presiding Officer should announce the name of the member who makes the motion.
- (g) **Motion Second.** The Presiding Officer should determine if any member of the City Council wishes to second the motion. The Presiding Officer should announce the name of the member who seconds the motion.
- (h) **Repeat Motion.** If the motion is made and seconded, the Presiding Officer should make certain that everyone (including the audience) understands the motion. This is done in three ways:

- (1) The Presiding Officer may ask the maker of the motion to repeat it;
 - (2) The Presiding Officer can repeat the motion; and/or
 - (3) The Presiding Officer can ask the City Secretary to repeat the motion.
- (i) **Discuss the Motion.** The Presiding Officer should now invite the members of the City Council to discuss the motion. If there is no desired discussion, the Presiding Officer may call for a vote. If there has been no discussion or a brief discussion, then there is no need to repeat the motion before taking a vote. If the discussion has been lengthy, The Presiding Officer should repeat the motion before calling for the vote.
- (j) **Vote.** The Presiding Officer calls for the vote. Unless a super-majority is required for passage of the motion, an affirmative vote of at least four (4) members is required for any motion to pass (Charter §18). Unless a member of the Council abstains from discussing and voting on any question where the discussion and vote would constitute a conflict of interest, all members of the Council, including the Mayor, should vote upon every question, ordinance or resolution. For the purposes of these *Rules* a vote is properly made if it is cast *for the motion, or against the motion*. A member may properly abstain from voting on the motion if they choose to do so.
- (1) Upon consideration for passage of any ordinance, resolution, or motion, the City Secretary shall call the roll of the Council and record the voters, which record of votes shall constitute a public record. (Charter § 18)
 - (2) Ordinances changing the zoning of a property that is properly protested by the owners of twenty percent (20%) or more of the area of the lots or land covered by the proposed change, or the area of the lots or land immediately adjoining the area covered by the proposed change and extending two hundred feet (200') from that area, requires a 3/4 super-majority vote, which is an affirmative vote of at least six Council Members.
 - (3) Other votes of the City Council may require a 2/3 or 3/4 majority vote as determined by the statutes of the State of Texas or the ordinance of the City of Abilene.

(k) **Announce the Outcome.** The City Secretary announces the results of the vote and should also state what action (if any) the Council has taken.

2.16 The Basic Motions

2.16.1 **The Basic Motion.** The basic motion is the one that puts forward a decision for consideration. A basic motion might be: "I move for approval of the Ordinance as submitted."

2.16.2 **Motion to Amend.** If a member wants to change a basic motion, he or she would have to motion to amend it. A motion to amend might be: "I move that we amend the motion to include the changes we discussed to the Ordinance." A motion to amend seeks to retain the basic motion on the floor (a motion made and seconded), but to modify it in some way. It requires the agreement of the person making the original motion, and this agreement shall constitute the second required to amend the basic motion. No motion to amend shall be allowed after a motion has been called for a vote.

2.17 Discussion and Debate

2.17.1 The basic rule of motions is that they are subject to discussion and debate. Accordingly, the motion is eligible, for full discussion by and before the City Council. Discussion and debate can continue as long as the members wish to discuss it, or until the Presiding Officer decides to end discussion and call a vote on the motion.

2.17.2 There are exceptions to the general rule of free and open discussion and debate on motions. The exceptions all apply when there is a desire of the Council to move on. The following motions are not debatable, and the Presiding Officer must immediately call a vote on the motion, if seconded by another member. The following motions require an affirmative vote of at least four (4) members.

(a) **Motion to Adjourn.** This motion, if passed, requires the Council to immediately adjourn to its next regularly scheduled meeting.

(b) **Motion to Recess.** This motion, if passed, requires the Council to immediately take a recess. Normally the Presiding Officer will determine the length of the recess which could last for a few minutes to several hours.

(c) **Motion to Fix the Time to Adjourn.** This motion, if passed, requires the Council to adjourn the meeting at the specific time set in the motion. For example, “I move we adjourn this meeting at Midnight.”

(d) **Motion to Table.** This motion, if passed, requires discussion of the agenda item to be halted immediately, and the agenda item to be placed on hold. The motion may contain a specific time to bring the item up again, or it may not specify a time. If no time is specified, the item should be placed on the agenda at the following regularly scheduled Council meeting.

(e) **Motion to Allow Public Comment.** This motion, if passed, requires the Presiding Officer to allow public comment even though a public hearing may not be required under the law.

2.17.3 The following motions require a supermajority vote to pass (3/4 majority). In all cases, a super majority vote consists of at least six (6) affirmative votes.

(a) **Motion to Limit Debate.** This motion is sometimes referred to as, “moving the question” or, “calling the question.” When a member of the Council makes such a motion, the member is saying, “I have had enough discussion, let’s vote on the issue.” When such a motion is made, the Presiding Officer should ask for a second, stop the discussion and vote on the motion to limit debate.

(b) **Motion to Object to the Consideration of an Item.** This motion, if passed, precludes the City Council from even considering the item on the agenda. It does not preclude the item from appearing on a future agenda.

(c) **Motion to Suspend the Rules.** This motion is debatable. This motion allows the Council to suspend its own rules for a particular purpose. For example, the Council may desire to give a particular speaker more time than normally allowed. A “motion to suspend the rules and give the speaker ten additional minutes,” accomplishes this desire.

2.17.4 **Motion to Reconsider.** A motion to reconsider requires at least a four (4) member majority vote to pass, but there are two special rules that apply only to the motion to reconsider.

(a) The first issue involves timing. A motion to reconsider must be made at the meeting where the item was first voted upon or at the very next meeting (if properly noticed and on the posted agenda). A motion to reconsider made at a

later time is considered untimely and it may not be considered unless the Council suspends the rules to consider it.

- (b) Secondly, the motion to reconsider can only be made by a member of the Council who voted in the majority on the original motion. The motion to reconsider may be seconded by any member of the City Council regardless of how they voted on the original motion. If a member of the Council who voted in the minority on the original motion cannot make a motion to reconsider, it must be ruled out of order by the Presiding Officer. The purpose of this rule is finality.
- (c) If a motion to reconsider passes, then the original matter is back before the Council, and a new original motion is in order. The matter may be discussed as if it were on the floor for the first time.

2.18 Courtesy, Decorum and Order

2.18.1 These rules of order are meant to promote an atmosphere of courtesy and decorum appropriate for the efficient discussion of business. It is the responsibility of the Presiding Officer (and the members of the City Council) to maintain that atmosphere of courtesy and decorum. The Presiding Officer should always ensure that debate and discussion focus on the item and the policy in question, not on the personalities of the participants of the discussion. In order to assist in the creation and maintenance of that atmosphere the following rules shall govern all meetings:

- (a) **Request to Speak.** Before a Council Member, staff member or an audience member may speak, they must first be recognized by the Presiding Officer. Upon recognition, the person requesting to speak shall hold the floor and shall make their point clearly and succinctly.
- (b) **Order.** If a person fails to request to speak before speaking, the Presiding Officer may rule them Out of Order and remind them that they do not have the floor. While the Council is in session, all Council Members should preserve order and decorum. No person or Council Member shall, by conversation or otherwise, delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the meeting, nor disturb any other person or Council Member while speaking or refuse to obey the orders of the Presiding Officer.

- (c) **Improper References Prohibited.** Speakers shall use good manners and refrain from personal attacks and the use of profanity. Speakers shall confine themselves to the question under debate.
- (d) **Interruptions.** A Council Member, once recognized, shall not be interrupted when speaking unless it is to call him or her to order, or other such interruption expressed below (subsections e – through i). If the Council Member, while speaking, is called to order, he or she shall cease speaking until the question of order is determined, and if the Council Member is found to be in order, he or she shall be permitted to proceed speaking.
- (e) **Point of Privilege.** The proper interruption would be: “Point of Privilege.” The Presiding Officer would then ask the interrupter to, “state your point.” Appropriate points of privilege relate to anything that would interfere with the normal comfort of the meeting. For example, the room might be too hot or cold, or a fan motor might interfere with a Council Members ability to hear.
- (f) **Point of Order.** The proper interruption would be: “Point of Order.” The Presiding Officer would then ask the interrupter to, “state your point.” Appropriate points of order relate to anything that would not be considered appropriate conduct of the meeting. For example, if the Presiding Officer called for a vote on a motion that permits debate, without first allowing any discussion.
- (g) **Motion to Appeal.** If the Presiding Officer makes a ruling that a member of the body disagrees with, that member may appeal the ruling of the Presiding Officer by stating, “motion to appeal.” If the motion is seconded and after debate if it passes by a simple majority vote, the ruling of the Presiding Officer is reversed.
- (h) **Call for orders of the day.** This is simply another way of saying, “let’s return to the agenda,” if a Council Member believes the discussion has strayed from the agenda. The motion does not require a vote. If the Presiding Officer discovers that the discussion has strayed from the agenda, he or she simply returns to the business of the day.
- (i) **Withdraw a Motion.** During the debate and discussion of a motion, the original maker of the motion on the floor, at any time, may interrupt the speaker to withdraw his or her motion. The motion is immediately deemed withdrawn and discussion on the motion shall cease. Council Members are free to make the same motion or another motion.

2.18.2 The City Council is prohibited from using text messages, email, social media posts or other means of electronic messaging during a public meeting except in cases where they are being notified of something of a personal nature. The use of such messaging could constitute a violation of the Texas Open Meetings Act.

2.18.3 In the event a Council Member or the Presiding Officer declares a conflict of interest and files the affidavit required under Local Government Code §171.004, that Council Member shall leave the Council Chambers for the duration of the item. In the event of a conflict of the Presiding Officer, the Mayor Pro Tem or Deputy Mayor Pro Tem shall serve as the Presiding Officer. In the event a majority of the members declare a conflict of interest for the item, they are not required to leave the Council Chambers and may participate in the item as allowed in Local Government Code §171.004 (c).

Exceptions:

(a) If the conflict exists for a consent agenda item, the member with the conflict of interest is not required to leave the Council Chambers and their vote on the consent agenda items shall only be counted for those items where the member has not filed a conflict.

(b) If a conflict exists for a member's relative, and the member and the relative are related in the first degree of consanguinity or the first degree of affinity, the member is not required to leave the Council Chambers, but they shall not discuss, provide direction or vote on the item.

2.19 Enforcement of Rules and Procedures

2.19.1 The following provisions may be used to enforce the good order and decorum of the meeting. The action may be taken by the Presiding Officer under his or her own action, or upon a Motion to Enforce by any Council Member.

(a) **Warning.** The Presiding Officer may order any person (Council Member, staff member or audience member) in violation of these rules to be silent.

(b) **Removal.** If, after receiving a warning from the Presiding Officer, the person continues to disturb the meeting or breach the peace and good order of the meeting, the Presiding Officer may order the person to leave the meeting. If the person does not leave the room, the Presiding Officer may order the Sergeant-at-Arms to remove the person. A Council member may only be removed from

a Council meeting by a majority vote of the City Council. No person may be removed from a meeting merely due to the views or opinions expressed by the person.

- (c) **Sergeant-at-Arms.** The Sergeant-at-Arms shall be the highest ranking police officer in attendance at the Council Meeting, or such other officer designated by the Chief of Police for that purpose. Upon instruction of the Presiding Officer, it shall be the duty of the Sergeant-at-Arms to remove from the meeting any person who intentionally disturbs the proceedings of the City Council. A violation of these rules may be deemed an attempt to disrupt, obstruct, and/or interfere with a lawful meeting and subject the violator to prosecution under state law for disrupting a lawful meeting. (§ 42.05, Texas Penal Code)
- (d) **Motion to Enforce.** Any Council Member may move to require the Presiding Officer to enforce these rules and the affirmative vote of four (4) or more members of the Council shall require the Presiding Officer to do so. A motion to enforce is an allowable interruption and is not debatable.

2.19.2 In the event a Council Member violates the Charter, these *Rules* or any other Ordinance of the City, or acts in a manner that causes embarrassment or disgrace to the City of Abilene, the City Council on supermajority vote may discipline the offending member.

- (a) Such action may only take place after an Executive Session is held to discuss the offense. The offending member shall be present at the Executive Session to answer any questions asked by members of the City Council or make other statements as he or she may desire to make in his or her defense. If the offending member refuses to attend the Executive Session, the remaining members of the City Council may proceed in his or her absence.
 - (1) The discipline by the City Council may be as follows, and if required by law, shall be made publicly in Open Session in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act:
 - (2) **No Action.** The City Council chooses to take no action.
 - (3) **Private Censure.** The City Council may choose to privately censure the offending member, leaving their comments to the offending member left in the confines of the Executive Session.

(4) **Public Censure.** The City Council may choose to publicly censure the offending member through a resolution passed by supermajority vote and entered into the public record.

2.20 Regular Meeting Agenda Order

2.20.1 **Call to Order.** The Presiding Officer shall call the meeting to order.

2.20.2 **Invocation.** The Presiding Officer shall invite a Council Member or another member of the audience to lead the City Council in a prayer.

2.20.3 **Pledge to United States Flag and the Texas Flag.** The Presiding Officer shall announce who will lead the City Council in the pledges of allegiance and the pledges shall be said.

2.20.4 **Presentations, Recognitions, Proclamations and Announcements.** The Presiding Officer shall make any presentation, recognition, announcement, or deliver any proclamation as may be required from time to time.

2.20.5 **Minutes.** The Presiding Officer shall ask for a motion to approve or amend the minutes as required.

2.20.6 **Consent Agenda.** Before seeking a motion on the consent agenda, the Presiding Officer shall first ask the Council if any member would like to remove an item from the Consent Agenda and discuss it as an item for individual consideration. The same question will then be asked of any citizen(s) in attendance at the meeting. The remaining items on the consent agenda shall be voted upon before the consideration of any item removed for individual consideration.

2.20.7 **Regular Agenda – Ordinances and Public Hearings – Resolutions.** This section of the agenda requires each item to be considered individually. If a public hearing is required, the Presiding Officer shall open the public hearing and receive citizen input. While the public hearing is open, Council may ask questions of the speakers, but may not deliberate or argue with the public on the matter at hand. Those speaking at a public hearing are required to follow the rules establish herein for citizen comments. Upon conclusion of citizen comments, the Presiding Officer shall close the public hearing. Council may deliberate or take action on the matter at hand upon the closing of the public hearing. All items shall be considered by the City Council individually and approved by either an affirmative vote of at least four (4) members, or a super majority vote as the case may be.

2.20.8 **Executive Session.** The City Council shall convene into Executive Session only in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

2.20.9 **Reconvene.** The Presiding Officer shall reconvene the regular meeting at the conclusion of the executive session and shall take any action as may be required from the executive session through a continuation of the Regular Agenda.

2.20.10 **Adjournment.** There being no further business before the City Council, the Presiding Officer shall adjourn the meeting.

2.30 Rules Governing Citizen Comments

2.30.1 It is the desire of the City Council to hear from the citizens of Abilene and to stimulate discussion and offer a forum for a cordial and meaningful public debate on matters that are properly a concern of the City Council. The following rules shall control and govern audience comments.

(a) Audience members who wish to speak during an agenda item or non-agenda item (public comment) should first complete a Comment Card and submit it to the City Secretary. The Comment Card shall request the speaker's name, ask if they are "for" or "against" the item and ask them if they would like to speak, or simply provide written comments instead. A Comment Card is encouraged, but not required to address the Council on an item. Failure to complete a Comment Card does not prohibit an audience member from speaking.

(b) The Presiding Officer shall recognize each person requesting to speak in turn. A person may not speak unless recognized by the Presiding Officer.

(c) Upon being recognized by the Presiding Officer, each person may have a time limit of five (5) minutes or such other time as the Presiding Officer may deem prudent, and shall be given notice that one (1) minute is remaining. The time limit shall govern all public hearings, citizen comments on agenda items and public comments at work sessions.

(d) Every person desiring to speak shall address the entire Council and shall not single out a member of the Council, the audience, or a staff member. Speakers shall use good manners and refrain from personal attacks and the use of profanity. On items other than 'Public Comment', speakers shall confine themselves to the question under debate.

(e) The following shall be displayed prominently before the meeting: “Audience members who wish to speak during an agenda item or non-agenda item (public comment) should first complete a Comment Card and submit it to the City Secretary. A Comment Card is encouraged, but not required to address the Council on an item. **Failure to complete a Comment Card does not prohibit an audience member from speaking.**”

2.30.2 The Presiding Officer shall preserve order and decorum and, if necessary, shall cause to be silenced or removed from the Council Chambers any person speaking out of order or disrupting the order of the meeting.

2.40 Universal Applicability of these Rules to City Boards and Commissions

2.40.1 It is the intent of the City Council that these Rules shall serve as the model and guide for the City’s Boards and Commissions, it being the intent of the City Council that all Boards and Commissions should follow similar rules of procedure for ease of understanding and full participation by the citizens in the public’s business.

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Appendix 1 – Table of motions and points of order

MOTION/ORDER	REQUIRES SECOND	DEBATABLE	AMENDABLE	VOTE TYPE
Basic Motion	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 affirmative votes
Motion to Amend	*	No	**	N/A
Motion to Adjourn	Yes	No	No	4 affirmative votes
Motion to Recess	Yes	No	Yes	4 affirmative votes
Motion to Fix the Time to Adjourn	Yes	No	No	4 affirmative votes
Motion to Table	Yes	No	No	4 affirmative votes
Motion to Limit Debate	Yes	No	No	Super
Motion to Object to the Consideration of an Item	Yes	No	No	Super
Motion to Suspend Rules	Yes	No	No	Super
Motion to Reconsider	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 affirmative votes
Point of Privilege	No	No	No	N/A
Point of Order	No	No	No	N/A
Motion to Appeal	Yes	Yes	No	4 affirmative votes
Call for Orders of the Day	No	No	No	N/A
Withdraw a Motion	No	No	No	N/A
Motion to Enforce	Yes	No	No	4 affirmative votes

* For the purposes of these rules, Amendments are not debatable and only require the approval of the member who made the original motion.

** Once the original motion is amended, it becomes the motion on the floor and replaces the original motion, therefore you cannot amend an amendment. You simply amend the motion on the floor at the time.

COMMENT CARD

Meeting Date: _____

Agenda Item: _____

Your Name: _____

Are you for the item or against the item?

For

Against

Do you wish to speak on this item?

Yes

No

I do **not** wish to speak, but I would like to make the following comments for the record:

Please return this card to the City Secretary. You do not have to complete this card to speak.