

OVERVIEW OF COUNCIL RULE CHANGES FOR 2026

Resolution 2026-0009

(As Adopted 03-09-26)

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

- **Effective July 9, council agenda review and committee meetings will be on Tuesdays at 11 am and 1 pm respectively, and legislative meetings on Wednesday evenings at 6 pm**
- **Effective July 9, council agenda format modified to a single weekly agenda containing “Proposed,” “Pending,” and “Final” Legislative items**
- **Effective July 9, the public is provided an opportunity to give “express testimony” at beginning of legislative session, grouped testimony for all items on the “Proposed” and “Final” agenda, and, for those items on the Pending agenda, grouped testimony for appointments and contracts, and individual testimony on each legislative item**
- **Adds mechanism for a special legislative meeting to be called by a majority of council members, per Section 10 of the Charter**
- **Sets forth timelines for legislation, and accelerates consideration of contract items and emergency items**
- **“Consent Agenda” changed to “Reports, Contracts, and Claims” to better reflect these items still require council approval**
- **Extensive revision to Rule 3 to clarify difference between adjudicative hearing and legislative hearing**
- **Requires certain amendments receive public comment before adoption**

Rule No	Topic	Change
1.2	Duty of Mutual Respect	• Adds to the duty of mutual respect a duty to uphold the “spirit and letter” of the council rules
1.3	Duty of Ethical Conduct	• Clarifies that any abstention must be consistent with Rule 2.17 (Deferral, Abstention)
1.4	Robert’s Rules	• Clarifies reference to Robert’s Rules • Adds provision that presiding officer’s ruling on procedure may be challenged by motion per Rule 2.13 (Chair)
1.6	Effective Date	• Establishes effective date of April 1, 2026 “unless otherwise stated” (See comments regarding Rules 2.8, 2.10 and 2.16)

Rule No	Topic	Change
2.1	Place / Time of Meetings	• Clarifies language regarding agenda review to conform to current practice • Effective July 9: ○ The evening legislative session will be changed to Wednesday ○ The agenda review and committee meetings will be on Tuesdays at 11:00 and 1:00 respectively • Clarifies that executive session may be convened by the Council President rather than council “adjourning” to executive session • Clarifies the council president can combine agenda items for purposes of public testimony and voting absent objection from the council • Adds new language to allow council members to schedule district meetings (in lieu of Town Hall)
2.2	Open Forum	• Clarifies that Open Forum testimony shall not relate to “any published agenda” • Corrects email address for sharing documents with council members outside of testimony
2.3	Adjournment	• Clarifies that council may adjourn to the next regular meeting or to “properly noticed special meeting”
2.4	Special Meetings	• Adds additional provisions to provide a mechanism for a special legislative meeting to be called by a majority of council members, per Section 10 of the Charter
2.7	Service Animals	• Clarifies that neither city staff <i>nor council members</i> are obligated to provide care or food for service animals.
2.8	Functions of Agenda	• Retains the current agenda format and publication (draft, updated draft, and final) until July 9. • After July 9, there will be a single agenda published each week with “proposed,” “pending” and “final” items and a new agenda format (See Exhibits B and C) • Effective July 9, the agenda will reflect the Order of Business as revised in Rule 2.14 (See Exhibits B and C) • Deletes earlier change that would have Office Director and Clerk develop a method for publicizing future legislative items
2.9	Introduction of Items	• Requires legislation be in final or close to final form • Clarifies that approval of claims is “legislation” • Adds special provision for council consideration of emergency declarations • Allows end-of-year SBOs to be added to council agenda without committee review and on Friday prior to final consideration if submitted first to Finance chair, vice-chair, and Council Budget Director • Deletes rule 2.9.F (Public Rule) now that SMC 3.14 was enacted

Rule No	Topic	Change
2.10	Agenda Process	• Retains current timelines for legislation until July 9 • Effective July 9, sets forth expected legislative timeline for items: ○ Contract items, emergency ordinances, board and commission appointments, and special considerations appear on agenda as pending legislative items eight (8) days after committee and appear on agenda as final legislative items fifteen (15) days after appearance in committee. ○ All other ordinances and resolutions appear on the agenda as proposed legislative items eight (8) days after committee, as pending legislative items fifteen (15) days after committee, and as final legislative items on the agenda twenty-two (22) days after committee. • Clarifies that items uploaded by Mayor's office must go to relevant committee and not F & A • Provides new procedure for removal and addition of sponsors • Clarifies that contract items originating from council office must receive administrative approvals from Purchasing Department • Provides that committee agenda are to be circulated on Fridays (versus Thursdays) • Adds new section providing means for chairs and council members to enforce rule on submission of complete agenda sheets and items, and adds process for referral/deferral of items lacking complete fiscal information
2.12	Special Meeting Notices	• Clarifies that council is not to <i>consider or</i> make final disposition of a matter not included in the special meeting notice
2.13	The Chair	• Clarifies that any appeal of presiding officer decision is only debatable if debatable under Robert's Rules • Clarifies presiding officer can declare the council is "at ease" or declare a "recess"
2.14	Order of Business	• Current version eliminates earlier change to two agendas and keeps current practice of three agendas • Clarifies right to object to consolidated agenda items • Changes the title of the "Consent Agenda" to "Reports, Contracts and Claims" and abbreviates/changes all subsequent references to "Contracts Agenda" accordingly • Deletes section on Town Hall meetings (see change to Rule 2.1) • Changes effective July 9 under Attachments B and C include: ○ Elimination of Land Acknowledgement from agenda ○ Adds placeholder for announcements of changes to the agenda ○ Adds opportunity for "Express Testimony" per rule 2.16 ○ Moves Hearings to front of agenda ○ Sets forth sections for "Proposed," "Pending" and "Final" legislative items • Maintains right to president to combine items for voting subject to councilmember right to a separate vote per Rule 2.17

Rule No	Topic	Change
2.15	Public Participation	Minor changes to reflect change of published agendas
2.16	Public Testimony	- Changes effective July 9 under Attachments B and C include: - Sets forth minimum fields for public testimony sign-up form to include, among other items, an option to indicate position on legislative items - Revises and consolidates language regarding when public testimony is allowed - Sets forth allotted time for “express testimony,” hearing items, Proposed legislation, Pending legislation, and Final legislation - Provides that individuals speaking in “Express Testimony” will not have option to speak to other legislative items - Provides that written testimony submitted under subsection G that includes photographs, presentations, videos, or other media will not be included in the agenda packet (just the text of correspondence). Until July 9, no media will be allowed.
2.17	Voting, Deferral	- Adds word “Abstention” to the title of rule - Clarifies when 6-month timeline for deferrals commences - Clarifies that an abstaining council member may NOT vote on procedural matters relating to a legislative item after abstaining - Clarifies right of council members to demand separate vote on individual items
2.18	Suspension of Rules	- Requires that motion to suspend rules must be followed by a separate main motion (no combining the two motions) - Once approved, motion to suspend only applies to next pending question - Provides that no debate is permitted on a motion to suspend the rules
2.19	Reconsideration	Technical change to clarify the motion only applies to legislative items
2.21	Participation In Meetings; Debate	Minor change to wording
Rule 3	Adjudicative Appeals / Hearings	Extensive revision to distinguish between legislative hearings and adjudicative hearings, and to outline permitted contacts with public for each
4.2	Amendment and Substitution	- Clarifies that deadline to submit amendments is 5:00 p.m. Thursday prior to the item appearing on the draft agenda - Adds intent language regarding adoption of amendments and “clean agendas” - Requires each amendment must be circulated in “clean” and “redline” format. The redline version of the amendment appears in the draft agenda, and, if adopted, then appears as a “clean” version in the final agenda.

Rule No	Topic	Change
4.2	Amendment and Substitution (Continued)	• Maintains Thursday 5:00 deadline, but effective July 9: ○ Guarantees publication and an opportunity for public comment for a timely amendment at the next legislative session prior to council action ○ Provides that for later amendments, the item stays in its legislative status for an additional reading and public comment if the amendment is adopted by 4 votes, and may stay on its ordinary timeline if adopted by 5 or more votes • Allows updating of contract or grant items without formal motion upon certain conditions • Adds provision for amendments of BID legislation • Provides special amendment deadline for budget amendments • Requires all amendments be circulated in clean and redline format, and instructs clerks on how to publish them
6.2	Committee Process	• Switches meeting days of PIES and Urban Experience • Adds language clarifying chair's prerogative to include presentations at committee "germane to the committee's ordinary business" • Adds clarifying language that appearance of legislation must be in the assigned committee • Deletes language preventing committee meetings on Thursdays • Adds language reinforcing obligation to submit fully completed agenda sheets and materials • Requires all presentations at committee be posted to a committee website by the end of the week
6.4	Ad Hoc Committees	• Technical changes to add clarity
7.1	Council Vacancy	• Requires at least one public meeting to allow members of public to ask questions of final candidates
7.3	Council Staff	• Changes rule to conform to Ordinance C36774 concerning central staff • Adds subsections D – I on Office Director responsibilities, use of central staff and overtime
7.5	Council members and Staff Orientation	• Minor wording change

Related Changes to SMC

Ordinance C36738 (Adopted 03-02-26)

- Changes Council legislative meeting to Wednesday night (SMC 02 01.010)
- Changes agenda review to Tuesdays (SMC 02 01.010)
- Changes are effective on July 9, 2026

Ordinance C36774 (Adopted 11-10-25)

- Modified provisions related to council staff (SMC 02.005.030)
- Eliminated specific references to central staff positions (SMC 02.005.050-090)
- Modified provisions on council legislative assistants



SPOKANE CITY COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE

(2026 revision, adopted March 9, 2026 by Resolution No. 2026-0009)

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RULE 1 - GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Rule 1.1 PURPOSE

The Spokane City Council adopts these rules to govern the conduct of city council business. These rules do not confer upon any person who is not a member of the council any right to a particular procedure, nor do they affect the validity or legality of any council action.

Rule 1.2 DUTY OF MUTUAL RESPECT

During council meetings, it is the duty of each council member to treat each other, city staff, board and commission appointees, and the public with respect, and to uphold both the spirit and letter of these council rules. Likewise, all persons who attend a council meeting or interact with council members or council staff in any type of forum or communication, regardless of the form or format, must act respectfully toward all persons and not commit “Unlawful harassment” as defined by RCW 7.105.010(37). Mutual respect includes, but is not limited to, not intentionally disclosing private information about a council member or staff such as personal telephone numbers or home addresses without the permission of the council member or staff.

Rule 1.3 DUTY OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

A. Each council member must uphold the constitution, laws, and regulations of the United States of America, the State of Washington and the Charter and ordinances of the city including, without limitation, chapter 01.04B SMC (Code of Ethics), recognizing that federal and state laws pre-empt local laws. Should a council member have a conflict of interest or become aware that they have or may have a conflict of interest, that council member shall promptly inform the council of the conflict of interest and may abstain from any council action in connection with that matter consistent with Rule 2.17.

B. Confidential information.

1. No council member may disclose confidential information, including attorney client privileged communications, to any person not entitled or authorized to receive the information. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the

city council may, upon the affirmative vote of five (5) council members taken in an open meeting, authorize the release of specific information which would otherwise be deemed confidential information, including without limitation discussions held in executive session. Disclosure of legal advice shall be pursuant to Rule 7.8 (Legal Inquiries).

2. For purposes of these rules, “confidential information” has the same meaning as the term is defined in SMC 01.04B.020(I) and SMC 01.04B.050(I).
- C. No council member may use or authorize the use of facilities of the city, directly or indirectly, for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of a person to an office or for the purpose of or opposition to a ballot proposition. Council members shall comply with RCW 29B.45.010 (Use of public office or agency facilities in campaigns—Prohibition—Exceptions). Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing in these rules prevent any member of the public from exercising their rights to free expression by wearing clothing, buttons, or other attire which displays messages of a political nature in a council meeting, so long as such conduct does not include the display of signs and/or disrupt the council meeting. Further, these rules do not prohibit the city council, acting as a body in an open public meeting, from adopting resolutions supporting or opposing state or local ballot propositions, consistent with RCW 29B.45.010.

Rule 1.4 ROBERT’S RULES OF ORDER

Matters of procedure not otherwise provided for herein are, insofar as practical, determined by reference to *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 12th Edition* (hereafter “Robert’s Rules”). Any determination by the council president or presiding officer on a rule of procedure may be challenged by a motion as provided in Rule 2.13 (Chair).

Rule 1.5 AMENDMENT OF COUNCIL RULES

These rules may be amended at any time by resolution of the city council. Suspension of the rules shall be pursuant Rule 2.18 (Suspension of the Rules).

Rule 1.6 EFFECTIVE DATE, EFFECT ON PENDING LEGISLATION.

Unless otherwise stated, the effective date of these rules is April 1, 2026. All legislation and supporting materials timely submitted prior to the effective date of these rules shall

be deemed timely submitted under these rules.

RULE 2 – MEETINGS

Rule 2.1 PLACE AND TIME OF MEETINGS

- A. As provided in SMC 02.01.010, the regular legislative meeting of the city council is at 6:00 p.m. every Monday in the council chambers. If a Monday is a city holiday, that week's regular meeting may be held on the next day that is not a holiday if a quorum is available, unless cancelled at the discretion of the council president.

Commencing July 9, 2026, the regular meeting of the city council is at 6:00 p.m. every Wednesday in the council chambers. If a Wednesday is a city holiday, that week's regular meeting may be held on the next day that is not a holiday if a quorum is available, unless cancelled at the discretion of the council president.

- B. As provided in SMC 02.01.010, in addition to the regular legislative meeting, the City Council shall hold a session titled "agenda review," to consider amendments, deferrals and other changes to published council agendas. Agenda review shall begin at three-thirty (3:30) p.m. each Monday. The agenda review session may also be used to receive staff reports on matters of interest, committee reports, background information from staff regarding matters appearing on the published council agendas. At this time, any council member may make a motion to defer, refer, or withdraw an item on an agenda. Any deferral of an item on the final agenda for the purpose of accommodating future amendments requires at least a two-week deferral. Once the agendas have been reviewed, the city council shall approve the agendas, with any modifications, by motion.

Commencing July 9, 2026, Agenda Review shall begin at 11:00 a.m. each Tuesday. If a Tuesday is a city holiday, that week's regular meeting may be held on the next day that is not a holiday if a quorum is available, unless cancelled at the discretion of the council president.

- C. If two or more consecutive regular legislative meetings are canceled, the council president has the discretion to cancel the preceding or following agenda review sessions due to lack of business. Agenda review may be cancelled at the discretion of the Council President to accommodate City holidays.

- D. At the conclusion of any committee meeting, agenda review session or legislative meeting, or at other time properly announced, the council president or presiding officer may convene an executive session consistent with the Open Public Meetings Act (“OPMA”). Before so doing, the council president or presiding officer shall announce the subject matter of the executive session with as much particularity as will not frustrate the purpose of the executive session and the estimated duration of the executive session. Any council member may then object to convening of an executive session, which decision to convene executive session will be resolved by a majority vote of council members present. The council president determines which person(s) shall attend each executive session, absent an adopted motion by the council to override the council president’s determination. However, all council members and city attorneys shall be permitted to attend.
- E. The 6:00 p.m. council session is the legislative session, during which the council may take public testimony, discuss, and take action on agenda items, and hold the open forum as provided in Rule 2.2 (Open Forum). The council president may combine specific agenda items for purpose of public comment and voting, absent an objection by a majority of council members present, or absent a demand pursuant to Rule 2.17 (Voting, Effect of Deferral; Abstention).
- F. The council members from each district shall have the opportunity to schedule at least one community engagement meeting in their district and, so long as all council members are invited to such meeting, to use council resources and staff to schedule and conduct such meetings.

Rule 2.2 OPEN FORUM

- A. After the conclusion of all legislative business, the council may recess briefly and then shall convene for an open forum, unless a majority of council members vote otherwise. The open forum shall have twenty (20) spaces available. If more than twenty (20) people sign up for open forum, the individuals assigned to the twenty (20) spaces available will be chosen at random, with preference given to individuals who have not spoken at open forum during that calendar month. The council shall conclude open forum after twenty (20) speakers unless a majority of council members vote to allow additional speakers. The city clerk and other staff shall not be required to remain in attendance during the open forum. Nothing in this Rule 2.2 shall be deemed to require open forum or the legislative session to continue after 10:00 p.m.
- B. Members of the public can sign up for open forum beginning no later than 5:00

p.m. on the Friday immediately preceding the legislative session and ending at 6:00 p.m. on the date of the meeting. Members of the public can sign up for open forum via the virtual testimony form linked in the meeting packet or in person outside council chambers beginning at 8:00 a.m. on the day of the legislative session. Speakers must sign themselves in using a name. Members of the public who are unable to sign up during the sign-up period or who attempt to sign up late will be added to the list of speakers at the discretion of the chair, or their designee. The order of the speakers will be determined at the discretion of the chair, taking into account any special accommodations for persons of limited English proficiency as provided in Rule 2.2.F below. Each speaker shall be limited to no more than two (2) minutes unless a majority of the council members in attendance vote on an alternate time limit.

- C. No responses from council members, other than a statement of council members' intent to address the matter in the future or points of order will be permitted by council members during an open forum, unless the question is likely to be of concern by the broader community and can be quickly clarified from the dais by the Council President or whomever she recognizes for such purpose.
- D. The open forum is a limited public forum and all matters discussed in the open forum shall relate to the affairs of the city. "Affairs of the city" shall include (i) matters within the legislative, fiscal or regulatory purview of the city, (ii) any ordinance, resolution or other official act adopted by the city council, (iii) any rule adopted by the city, (iv) the delivery of city services and operation of city departments, (v) any act of members of the city council, the mayor or members of the administration, or (vi) any other matter deemed by the council president to fall within the affairs of the city, which determination may be overridden by majority vote of the council members present. Absent permission of the chair, which may be overridden by a majority vote of the council members present, no person shall be permitted to speak in open forum regarding items on any published agenda. No person may speak at open forum regarding pending hearing items. No person shall be permitted to speak in open forum regarding candidates, initiatives, or referenda in a pending election. Legal or personal matters between private parties that do not impact the governance of the City of Spokane are not a permissible topic of open forum testimony.
- E. No person shall be permitted to display visual information during open forum, including but not limited to photographs, presentations, videos, or other media; however, members of the public may share this information with the council by emailing them at citycouncil@spokanecity.org. Individuals speaking during open

forum shall address their comments to the council president, and speakers as well as members of the audience shall comply with Rule 2.15 (Participation by Members of the Public in Council Meetings).

- F. Participation of individuals with limited English language proficiency in open forum shall be accommodated to the extent set forth in Rule 2.15.J.

Rule 2.3 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETINGS

- A. At the conclusion of the legislative session, unless there is further business before the council, the chair shall request a motion to adjourn the meeting until the next regularly scheduled council meeting.
- B. Any meeting may be adjourned prior to the completion of the city council's agenda to a place and time set by motion. Unless otherwise specified in the motion, the meeting will be adjourned to the place and time fixed for the next regular meeting. If a regular meeting be adjourned to a place and time specified, that adjourned meeting is a regular meeting.
- C. If at the time fixed for the beginning of any meeting, or at any time in the course of a meeting, less than a quorum be present, the council president, or in the president's absence any member, or if there are no council members present then the city clerk, shall declare the meeting adjourned to the next regular meeting.
- D. If a meeting is adjourned prior to the completion of the city council's agenda, all matters on the agenda not disposed of shall be continued to the next scheduled meeting or to a properly noticed special meeting. The city clerk or other person designated by the city clerk shall post a written notice of adjournment conspicuously on or near the main door of the place of any meeting which has been adjourned. The notice shall be posted as soon as possible after the adjournment and shall state the fact of adjournment and the place and time to which the meeting was adjourned.
- E. At 10:00 p.m., absent an adopted motion to remain in session to a time certain, the council's regular meeting shall be adjourned by motion and action shall be continued to the next legislative session. If testimony on an item was not completed before the meeting was adjourned, it shall be continued to the next meeting without allowing for additional members of the public to sign up or for those who were able to testify at the first meeting to give testimony again unless significant changes have been made to the item, per the discretion of the council president or presiding

council member.

- F. In the event noise, disturbance, indecorum, or other circumstances disrupt council proceedings so as to render the orderly conduct of such meeting unfeasible, or if the removal of the individual(s) causing the disruption will not restore order, the council president or presiding council member may request a motion to adjourn the meeting either to the next regularly scheduled council meeting or to an alternate place and time set by motion. Absent adoption of such a motion by a majority of council members present, the meeting shall continue, subject to the chair's discretion to remove disruptive individuals under Rule 2.13 (The Chair).

Rule 2.4 SPECIAL MEETINGS

Pursuant to Section 10 of the Spokane City Charter, special legislative meetings may be called by the city clerk on the written request of the mayor, council president, or a majority of council members. Special legislative meetings may be called by a majority of council members as follows:

1. An individual council member shall notify the city clerk of that council member's wish to call a special meeting at a particular day and time to transact particular business. Prior to making any request, the council member shall consult with the Council Office Director about suitable date and time to ensure, where possible, all council members can attend at the chosen time and date.
2. Upon receipt of the request from the individual council member, the city clerk will notify other council members of the request for a special legislative meeting, stating the requested day and time of the meeting and the particular business to be transacted, and shall ask the other council members if they agree to the request for a special legislative meeting.
3. Upon receipt of the consent of at least three other council members to the request for a special legislative meeting, or upon receipt of consent to a request to an alternative day and time and alternative business to be transacted by at least four council members, the city clerk shall notify council members, the media and the public of special legislative meeting.

Notification under this section may be in writing or via electronic mail. All such special meetings shall be noticed in compliance with the OPMA and Rule 2.12 (Special Meeting Notices) of these rules.

Rule 2.5 STUDY SESSIONS

From time to time, after consultation with all council members' offices, the council president may schedule a study session of the city council to receive information on staff matters, staff briefings, and enable discussion among council members on issues of public concern. Study sessions are held in a workshop format, with no public hearing, and including no council action to dispose of any item unless the study session was noticed as a special meeting in compliance with the OPMA and Rule 2.12 (Special Meeting Notices) of these rules. A quorum of the council is not necessary in order to proceed with a study session. Additional study sessions may be scheduled at the discretion of the council president or by a vote of the majority of council members present at a public meeting of the council.

Rule 2.6 QUORUM

A quorum is four (4) or more council members present and qualified to act unless a particular action requires the affirmative vote of more than four. The quorum for the adoption of an ordinance making an emergency expenditure as provided in RCW 35.33.081 and 35.33.091, adoption of an ordinance effective immediately under subsection 19(a)(1) of the Charter, and override of a veto as provided in subsection 16(b) is five (5).

Rule 2.7 SERVICE ANIMALS AT CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- A. For purposes of these rules, only dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability are recognized as service animals. Dogs or other animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under these rules. Service animals are permitted to accompany people with disabilities in city council meetings, as well as all areas where members of the public are allowed to go.
- B. Service animals must, at all times while present in a city council meeting, be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices, in which case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.
- C. When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, city staff may only inquire (1) whether the dog is a service animal required because of a disability, and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform. City staff shall not ask

about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

- D. Allergies and fear of dogs are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people using service animals. When a person who is allergic to dog dander and a person who uses a service animal must spend time in the same room or facility, for example, in a school classroom or at a homeless shelter, they both should be accommodated by assigning them, if possible, to different locations within the room or different rooms in the facility.
- E. A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove their service animal from the premises unless: (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or (2) the dog is not housebroken. When one of these situations exists, city staff shall offer the person with the disability the opportunity to be present at the city council meeting without the animal's presence.
- F. No person with a disability who uses a service animal will be isolated from other people or treated less favorably than another person in the conduct of a city council meeting.
- G. City staff and council members shall not be required to provide care or food for a service animal at a city council meeting.

Rule 2.8 FUNCTIONS OF MEETING AGENDA

- A. The council, with the assistance of the city clerk, shall publish three agendas each week for regular council meetings, the "final agenda," the "draft agenda," and the "updated draft" agenda. The approved draft agenda becomes the updated draft agenda for the next council meeting, and the updated draft agenda becomes the final agenda for the next council meeting. The agendas serve to introduce items to the council, to establish the order of business and to give notice to the public as required under RCW 35.22.288. The notice of a special meeting is the agenda for such meeting.
- B. Regular meeting agendas are prepared by the city clerk in the manner and format prescribed by the city council and consistent with council administrative policies and procedures and these council rules. The agenda for the council legislative session will reflect the order of business set forth in Rule 2.14.

Rule 2.9 INTRODUCTION OF ITEMS

- A. Legislation shall only be placed on a regular legislative meeting agenda by the council president or any council member through the process established in Rule 2.10 (Agenda Process), except as otherwise provided by Rule 2.18 (Suspension of Rules). Except as provided elsewhere in these rules, no resolution or ordinance may appear for consideration on a legislative agenda for consideration by the full council unless (1) it has first been presented in a committee or study session, (2) is sponsored by at least two (2) council members, and (3) is in final (or close to final) form.
- B. Items that need consideration on a compressed timeline due to an unforeseen urgency or emergency may be added to a draft legislative agenda prior to being presented at a committee or study session with either (i) prior written permission from all the council sponsor(s) or (ii) the council president. Notwithstanding the accelerated placement on a draft legislative agenda, the matter must still be heard in committee and sponsored by at least two (2) council members, absent suspension of the rules by the council.
- C. The term “legislation” in these rules means any ordinance, resolution, contract approval, approval of claims, board and commission appointments, and special considerations.
- D. Resolutions to ratify, reject or modify an emergency declaration pursuant to Section 02.04.060 SMC may be placed on the next council agenda at any time with two (2) council sponsors and without appearing in committee.
- E. Special budget ordinances necessary to comply with year-end budget reporting or reconciliation (e.g., carryover special budget ordinances) need not be reviewed in committee before placement on the council agenda, and may be placed on the council agenda the Friday prior to scheduled council action after presentation to the Finance Committee Chair, Finance Committee Vice-Chair and the Council Budget Director at least one week prior to submission to the council agenda.

Rule 2.10 AGENDA PROCESS

- A. The process of submitting agenda items and preparing the agenda for all council meetings shall be consistent with these rules and any administrative policies and procedures governing council meetings and agenda items. In a conflict between these rules and an administrative policy and procedure, these rules shall control.

- B. Except as otherwise provided in Rule 2.9 (Introduction of Items), no agenda item, other than weekly reports of the mayor of pending claims and payments, payroll claims, board/commission/committee appointments, initiative and referendum matters, and letters appearing under special considerations, may appear on a council legislative agenda without (i) first appearing on a standing committee agenda and (ii) meeting the requirements to emerge from the standing committee, as provided in paragraph F of Rule 6.2 (Committee Process). Mayoral nominations and appointments do not require council sponsors, and shall appear on the council agenda upon submission by the Mayor in the manner provided under the City Charter.
- C. Agenda items submitted to a standing committee's agenda must be submitted to the standing committee associated with the division from which the agenda item originates, as illustrated in Attachment A. For purposes of this rule, special budget ordinances (SBO) are assigned either to the committee of the underlying department whose appropriation(s) are affected by the SBO, or the Finance & Administration Committee.
- D. Agenda items may be submitted to a standing committee other than the committee ordinarily assigned with the permission of the chair of the appropriate standing committee and the permission of the chair of the committee to which the item is being submitted. Items uploaded by the Mayor's office shall be submitted to the committee to which the division most affected by the item is ordinarily assigned. The Council President shall have the power to resolve any dispute or uncertainty regarding application of this rule.
- E. Proposed agenda items are added to a final committee agenda after securing confirmation from at least one council member that they will sponsor the item for committee.
- F. To move out of a standing committee and onto a legislative agenda, resolutions and ordinances must secure two (2) council sponsors.
- G. At any time before the updated draft agenda is approved as the final agenda, a council member may remove or add their sponsorship of an agenda item by notifying all council members and the city clerk by email. Change of sponsorship after approval of the draft agenda, or more than two days after any amendment of the legislative item, whichever is later, shall be by a motion approved by a majority of council members. If removal of the sponsorship deprives the legislation of

requisite sponsors, and no additional council member(s) add their name as a sponsor, the matter is referred back to the committee of origin.

H. The timeline and process for formalizing standing committee meeting agendas is as follows:

1. No later than 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday immediately preceding the desired committee meeting, suggested agenda items (for both contracts and discussion items) shall be uploaded into OnBase.
 - a. At that time, the agenda sheet template should be filled out completely and must indicate whether the preparer prefers the item to be a contracts item or a discussion agenda item.
 - b. Supporting attachments, including ordinances, resolutions, and contracts, are due at this time except with express permission by the committee chair.
2. By 9:00 a.m. on the Thursday immediately preceding the desired committee meeting, items submitted into OnBase must receive all OnBase approvals and arrive in the committee queue. Items that do not receive all OnBase approvals by the above deadline may be added to the final committee agenda at the discretion of the committee chair or their designee.
3. Items originating from the council office, except for contract-related items, are not required to gain administration OnBase approvals to be added to a committee agenda.
4. If administration staff need help identifying a sponsor, they should consult with the committee chair, vice chair or their legislative assistants.
5. After the final committee agenda is created, council staff circulates the final committee agenda by no later than close of business on the Friday immediately preceding the committee meeting.
6. Any deviation from the timeline for submitting agenda items (submitting agenda items past the deadlines, for example) must be approved by the committee chair or their designee.

I. The wording for the agenda item and the relevant information placed on the

agenda sheet are to be provided by the person submitting the item. Where indicated, a plain language summary shall be provided to accurately describe the item to make it easily understood by the public. The council president or their designee shall decide any disputes over wording unless verbiage is determined by a majority vote of the council. The council director or designee, the city clerk and city attorney's office staff may edit agenda items for technical, grammatical, or typographical errors.

- J. Regardless of adherence to the submission deadlines set forth in Rule 2.10 (Agenda Process), the committee chair may allow or exclude from a committee agenda any item not containing a fully completed agenda sheet, including items containing incomplete answers or fiscal information. Any council member may object to appearance of a legislative item on a published draft agenda that lacks a fully completed agenda sheet, including items containing incomplete answers or fiscal information. Such objection, when made, shall be recognized by the council president or presiding officer, who shall rule on the objection and whose ruling is subject to appeal. By majority vote of a committee, an agenda item may be referred to the Finance and Administration committee and/or be remanded to the Council Budget Director or designee for additional fiscal review as the committee determines is warranted prior to inclusion on a legislative agenda.
- K. Each council member shall have the continuing duty to be familiar with all agenda items and all accompanying information.

Rule 2.11 NOTICE BY AGENDA

Except as provided below, the agenda is the only required meeting notice.

Rule 2.12 SPECIAL MEETING NOTICES

Notice of every special meeting shall be given in writing to every council member, council staff, the mayor, the city attorney, and to all parties who have on file with the city clerk a request for such notices. The notice shall be delivered personally, electronically, by mail, by facsimile or otherwise, so as to be received at least 24 hours before the meeting or as otherwise provided for in RCW 42.30.080. The notice shall state the place and time of the meeting and the business to be conducted. The council shall not consider or make final disposition of any matter not included in the notice. Notices of special meetings are prepared by the city council office staff and issued by the city clerk's office. Submission of legislative items for consideration at a special session need not conform to Rule 2.9 (Introduction of Items).

Rule 2.13 THE CHAIR

- A. The council president, or in their absence or incapacity, the council member selected by the council to serve as council president *pro tem* pursuant to SMC [02.005.020](#) (each of whom is referred to in these rules as “the chair”) shall preside over meetings of the council and cause the business of the council to be transacted in accordance with these rules. The presiding officer may yield the chair to another council member to conduct a portion of the meeting. If the council president *pro tem* is unavailable, the council member with seniority of tenure on the council shall preside.
- B. The chair shall determine all questions of parliamentary procedure, subject to appeal as provided in this Rule 2.13(B), but shall liberally grant leave to the city council’s policy advisor and/or a city attorney to speak to the question. A ruling of the chair can be appealed, before the ruling is acted on, by any council member’s announcement of an appeal, which appeal is perfected by receiving a second. The chair shall then state the question in terms of upholding the ruling and may state the reasons for the ruling. Then, when the appeal is debatable per Robert’s Rules, the member appealing has the floor to open debate on the appeal. Upon the close of debate, the council shall vote on whether to sustain the chair’s ruling.
- C. The chair may not make a motion. The chair may second a motion. The chair may vote as any other council member.
- D. The chair has the authority to declare the council at ease or to declare a recess of any council meeting in the appropriate circumstances, including when noise, disturbance, indecorum, or other circumstances warrant a recess. In the event disturbance, indecorum, or other circumstances disrupt council meeting, the chair may request a motion to adjourn pursuant Rule 2.3 (Adjourned Meetings). The chair may direct any person or persons disrupting the meeting to be removed from the chambers or to otherwise eliminate a source of disruption. In administering this rule, the chair will be guided by the council’s intent to support robust public, peaceful participation by the public.

Rule 2.14 ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. Agenda Review.

The council will meet each week to review the final and draft agendas for the next two

regular legislative sessions. The meeting chair may make adjustments to the order of business as needed. The regular order of business in an agenda review meeting is as follows.

1. Roll call;
2. Council or staff reports of matters of interest;
3. Staff or council member briefings regarding matters on either of the draft agendas, as may be requested by council members;
4. Discussion of and any adjustments to the final or draft agendas;
5. Approval by motion of the draft agenda as final and the final agenda as amended.

B. Executive Session.

The business of an executive session is determined case by case within the restrictions of the OPMA and other provisions of state law. (See also Rule 2.1.D, Meetings). The meeting minutes shall record the announced purpose of the executive session as well as the time that executive session began and ended.

C. Legislative Session

The regular order of business in a legislative session is as follows. The meeting chair may make adjustments to the order of business as needed, including combining testimony on multiple items.

1. Land Acknowledgement;
2. Pledge of Allegiance;
3. "Poetry at the Podium," words of inspiration, and special introductions;
4. Roll call to establish the presence of a quorum;
5. Reading of proclamations and salutations;
6. Reports from community organizations;
7. Announcement of adjustments to the agenda;

8. Council appointments and consideration of mayoral appointments;
 - a. Testimony from members of the public concerning the appointments;
 - b. Request(s) by an individual council member, if any, to consider any specific appointments separately;
 - c. Action on the appointments;
 9. Reports, Contracts and Claims ("Contracts Agenda");
 - a. Testimony from members of the public concerning the Contracts Agenda;
 - b. Request(s) by an individual council member, if any, to consider any specific Contract Agenda items separately from the entire Contracts Agenda;
 - c. Action on the Contracts Agenda;
 10. Reading of each legislative item by the city clerk;
 - a. Testimony from members of the public concerning the agenda item;
 - b. Deliberation by council, and such further dialogue with staff and community members as council may desire, including any motions by council members concerning the agenda item; and
 - c. Vote.
 11. Special Considerations, Public Hearings;
 12. Open Forum; and
 13. Adjournment.
- D. Items shall be acted upon in the order in which they appear on the agenda; provided, items may be taken out of order, combined, or separated at the chair's discretion, absent the objection of a majority of the council. Items on the agenda may be grouped under various headings or sections and entire sections may be read and acted upon

at one time at the discretion of the chair absent an objection by a majority of council members present, or absent a demand pursuant to Rule 2.17 (Voting, Effect of Deferral; Abstention).

- E. All city council appointments or mayoral appointments which require city council approval shall be announced and voted upon by motion during the legislative session; provided, that the confirmation of mayoral nominations of department heads, the city clerk, and the city attorney, pursuant to Section 24 of the City Charter, shall be by resolution.

Rule 2.15 PARTICIPATION BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN COUNCIL MEETINGS

The council encourages public participation in the legislative process. Council meetings shall be conducted in a manner that provides the opportunity for all attendees to hear, see and participate in the proceedings to the extent provided in these Rules and applicable city, state, and federal law. Speech or conduct that disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of any council meeting is prohibited. In addition to these general principles governing public participation, the following specific rules apply:

- A. Members of the public may address the council regarding the following items during the council's legislative session: board and commission appointments, the Contracts Agenda as a whole, all first reading ordinances together (with the exception of first reading ordinances associated with hearings, which shall be taken separately), final readings of regular and special budget ordinances, emergency ordinances, hearing items, special considerations, review of mayoral vetoes, and other items before the city council requiring council action, except those that are adjudicatory or solely administrative in nature. This rule shall not limit the public's right to speak on issues that are not part of the final, updated draft or draft agendas.
- B. No member of the public may speak without first being recognized for that purpose by the chair. Except for named parties to an adjudicative hearing, a person may be required to sign a sign-up sheet and provide a name as a condition of recognition. Council members must be recognized by the chair for the purpose of obtaining the floor.
- C. Each person speaking in a public council meeting shall verbally identify themselves by name and, if appropriate, representative capacity.
- D. Each speaker shall follow all written and verbal instructions so that verbal remarks

are electronically recorded, and documents submitted for the record are identified and marked by the city clerk.

- E. Those who wish to provide commentary but do not wish to give verbal comments at the podium may provide written comments to the council via letter or electronic mail.
- F. No person shall be permitted to conduct demonstrations, display banners, hold signs, applaud or boo speakers, use profanity, vulgar language or obscene speech, yell or make comments that attack or verbally insult any individual, or engage in other such disorderly conduct that disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the proceedings.
- G. Standing is permitted so long as doing so maintains compliance with applicable fire codes and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), does not interfere with reserved seating areas, and does not impede access to entrances and exits to the Council Chambers, aisles, or pathways inside the Council Chambers. Attendees shall be mindful not to obstruct the views of others in Council Chambers when standing.
- H. A speaker asserting a statement of fact may be asked by a council member to document and identify the sources of the factual datum being asserted.
- I. When addressing the council, members of the public shall direct all remarks to the council president, shall refrain from remarks directed personally to any council member or any other individual, and shall confine remarks to the matters that are specifically before the council at that time.
- J. City employees or city officials (including members of city boards and commissions) may participate in public comment, including testifying at open forum and offering written testimony, providing they are in compliance with the City of Spokane Code of Ethics and they do the following:
 - 1. Announce at the beginning of their testimony that they are there in their personal capacity or their capacity as a member of a relevant board, commission, committee or community group;
 - 2. Protect confidential information, including, but not limited to, confidential financial information and attorney-client communications;
 - 3. Do not use, or be perceived to use, city funds, including giving testimony during

paid work time or while in uniform; or city property, including using a city-issued computer or cell phone, in giving testimony.

- K. When any person, including members of the public, city staff, and others, are addressing the council, council members shall observe the same decorum and process as the rules require among the members *inter se*. That is, a council member shall not engage the person addressing the council in colloquy but shall speak only when granted the floor by the council president. All persons and/or council members shall not interrupt one another. The duty of mutual respect and avoiding unlawful harassment set forth in Rule 1.2 and the rules governing debate set forth in *Robert's Rules* shall extend to all speakers before the city council. The city council's policy advisor and/or a city attorney shall, with the assistance of council staff, assist the council president to ensure that all individuals desiring to speak shall be identified, appropriately recognized, and provided the opportunity to speak. All persons attending city council meetings or city council sponsored meetings shall refrain from harassing other attendees or risk being removed and/or prohibited from attending future meetings.
- L. The city council intends to fully comply with chapter 18.11 SMC, Language Access in Municipal Proceedings. Rules regarding participation of individuals in council proceedings, including legislative sessions and open forum, shall be deemed amended to conform to any Language Access Plan adopted by the council pursuant to SMC 18.11.030. Except as otherwise provided in an adopted Language Access Plan, individuals with limited English language proficiency are encouraged to contact the council office director at least five (5) days prior to a scheduled legislative session for assistance with the signing up to testify or to arrange translation or interpretation assistance.
- M. City council legislative sessions are regularly video and audio recorded and available online (<https://vimeo.com/spokanecitycouncil>). Members of the public may also photograph or film council proceedings so long as doing so maintains compliance with applicable fire codes and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), does not interfere with reserved seating areas, and does not impede access to entrances and exits to the Council Chambers, aisles, or pathways inside the Council Chambers. Attendees shall be mindful not to obstruct the views of others in Council Chambers when photographing or recording. No flash photography or other lighting is permitted.
- N. RCW 29B.45.010 generally prohibits the use of city facilities for electioneering. Therefore, no person may use the council meeting or facilities for

the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office, or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition. In this context, the term “facilities” includes council chambers, the council gallery and the speaking opportunities available through the public comment and open forum procedures set forth in these rules. Nothing in this rule prevents public comment regarding a council resolution or statement concerning any ballot proposition, so long as such public comment is confined to the merits of the council action and not the merits of the ballot proposition.

Rule 2.16 PUBLIC TESTIMONY REGARDING LEGISLATIVE AGENDA ITEMS

- A. Members of the public can sign up to give testimony beginning no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Friday immediately preceding the legislative session and ending at 6:00 p.m. on the date of the meeting. Members of the public can sign up to give testimony on legislative items via the online testimony sign-up form linked in the meeting packet or in person outside council chambers beginning at 8:00 a.m. on the day of the legislative session. Speakers must sign in using a name. Members of the public who are unable to sign up during the sign-up period or who attempt to sign up late will not be added to the list of speakers. The order of the speakers shall be determined at the discretion of the chair.
- B. The city council shall take public testimony on all matters included on its legislative agenda as described at Rule 2.15(A), with those exceptions stated in this paragraph. Public testimony shall be limited to the final council action, except that public testimony shall be allowed at the first reading of ordinances. Public testimony is limited to three (3) minutes per speaker for hearings and legislative items under consideration. For the consent agenda, first reading of ordinances or special consideration testimony is limited to two (2) minutes per speaker. The chair, absent a majority vote of the council, has the authority to lower the per speaker time limit by announcing the new, lower time limit at the legislative session. Public testimony and consideration of an item may be extended to a subsequent meeting by a majority vote of the council. Testimony on a legislative item deferred to a future date certain shall be taken on the future date, unless testimony on the date of deferral is allowed by the Council President.
- C. No public testimony shall be taken on oral amendments to consent or legislative agenda items, or solely procedural, parliamentary, or administrative matters of the council.
- D. No person shall be permitted to display visual information during their testimony,

including but not limited to photographs, presentations, videos, or other media; however, members of the public may share this information with the council by emailing them at citycouncil@spokanecity.org.

- E. For public hearings required by state law, the chair may institute special rules for testimony.
- F. Testimony at council committee meetings shall be governed by Rule 6.2.
- G. Members of the public may provide written testimony for any agenda item. Written testimony can be provided to the council by sending it via regular mail, delivering it to the city clerk at a regular meeting of the council, or emailing comments to testimony@spokanecity.org. To be included in the final agenda packet, written testimony on an agenda item must meet the following criteria:
 - 1. Be delivered to the council via email at testimony@spokanecity.org;
 - 2. Include a title that clearly identifies the agenda item(s) to which the commenter is submitting testimony (e.g. "Written Testimony on Resolution 2026-0001");
 - 3. Include the name of the submitter;
 - 4. Does not include photographs, presentations, videos, or other media; and
 - 5. Be received in the testimony@spokanecity.org inbox no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday immediately preceding the legislative meeting on which the item is to appear on a final agenda.

Written comments that fail to meet any of the above criteria will not be included in the final agenda packet but should be distributed to the council via email.

Rule 2.17 VOTING, EFFECT OF DEFERRAL; ABSTENTION

- A. Except where a majority plus one vote is required, (e.g., Charter section 19, RCW 35.33.081, RCW 35.33.091), and unless otherwise provided herein, all motions must receive at least four (4) affirmative votes to pass.
- B. If a motion receives less than the required number of affirmative votes, it shall be declared that the motion failed and the status quo shall prevail.
- C. Upon a tie vote, the status quo prevails on the matter upon which the vote was cast.

- D. Any legislative item may be deferred indefinitely or to a specific future legislative session date by motion. Any legislative item deferred indefinitely may be returned to a draft council agenda by a motion by a council member who was on the prevailing side of the original vote to defer the item. A motion to return the item to the council agenda must be presented within six (6) months of the initial deferral and adopted by four affirmative votes. Any item not returned to the council agenda within six months after the initial deferral shall be considered not adopted and may only be returned to the council agenda after introduction pursuant to Rule 2.10 (Agenda Process). Legislative items governed by Section 24 of the City Charter may only be deferred in a manner consistent with the charter.
- E. Any legislative item may be referred to a specific future standing committee meeting by motion. Items referred to committee are automatically included on the agenda of the committee to which the item is referred. To move out of the committee and onto a legislative agenda, the item must secure the minimum number of sponsors pursuant to Rule 2.10 (Agenda Process).
- F. The votes on any ordinance or formal resolution shall be individually taken and recorded. As to any other matter (such as motions), voting shall be by voice vote unless a member requests, prior to action on the next item of business, a roll call vote. Unless otherwise required due to the technical limitations of the specific meeting method or forum, the alternative to voice vote shall be the electronic voting tally system currently in use in the council chambers.
- G. In all cases of voting by other than voice vote, the city clerk shall record the names of those voting on each side of the question and of those abstaining. In cases of voice vote, the chair shall announce, and the record shall reflect, the vote. Regardless of method of voting, each council member shall have the right to explain the reasons for their vote and such a request shall be regarded as a point of personal privilege.
- H. A council member may abstain from deliberating and voting on any matter before the council if they have a direct personal or financial interest in the matter before the council which is not held in common with other members of the council. In order to abstain from deliberation and voting, a council member must describe to the council the basis for the abstention in an open public meeting prior to the vote. A member who abstains from deliberation and voting on a matter may not participate in any procedural vote related solely to the same matter.
- I. Notwithstanding any rule to the contrary, any council member may demand an

individual vote on any matter presented to the city council for approval or adoption.

Rule 2.18 SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

These rules may be temporarily suspended for a particular matter or meeting by the affirmative vote of five council members. Motions to suspend the rules must specify the general purpose of the suspension and, if adopted, shall apply only to the next pending question. No debate on a motion to suspend the rules shall be allowed. Following an adopted motion to suspend the rules, the companion main motion prompting the need for a rules suspension may be presented and disposed of by council. A motion to suspend the rules shall not be combined with any other motion.

Rule 2.19 RECONSIDERATION

All legislative decisions of the city council, including contract items, ordinances, resolutions, veto overrides, and hearing items are final, except that a council member on the prevailing side of a vote or who had an excused absence during the vote may move for reconsideration of all legislative decisions, other than veto overrides and mayoral appointments, within 15 days of council consideration or prior to the mayor's action on an ordinance, whichever occurs first. Nothing in this rule shall be deemed to prevent any council member from otherwise submitting an ordinance or resolution to repeal or modify a prior city council legislative action so long as such repeal or modification is added to the committee and council agenda as provided in these rules.

Rule 2.20 PARTICIPATION BY TELEPHONIC OR VIRTUAL MEANS

- A. A council member may participate telephonically and/or virtually in all or part of a council meeting if:
 - 1. Prior approval is given by the council president or committee chair, as applicable, whose approval shall not be unreasonably withheld;
 - 2. All persons participating in the meeting, including the public, are able to hear each other at the same time, such as by the use of a speaker phone; and
 - 3. The council member participating remotely shall have reviewed all of the applicable material and participated in the relevant portion of the council meeting related to the topic to which the council member is voting on.
- B. Any technical prohibitions or difficulties that prevent all parties present at the

council meeting from adequately communicating with one another will negate any authorization previously given by the council president.

Rule 2.21 COUNCIL MEMBER PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS; DEBATE

- A. Debate shall be governed by Robert's Rules except as set forth under this rule. During committee meetings, legislative sessions, and agenda review, council members may only speak to any pending question after being recognized by the chair or presiding officer. Absent permission from the chair or presiding officer, no council member may speak to any pending question more than twice, and on each occasion shall be limited to 10 minutes.
- B. During commentary, discussion and debate, council members shall confine all remarks to the question under debate.
- C. Committee meetings are an opportunity for council to question staff and other permitted speakers regarding any proposed legislative item. Discussion shall be regulated by the chair, who shall ensure all council members have an equal opportunity to participate and ask questions. At committee meetings, council members are permitted to engage in debate regarding any legislative item subject to the general rules of debate above.
- D. Agenda review meetings are an additional opportunity for council to question staff and other permitted speakers regarding any proposed legislative item. Any council member wishing to have an item on a draft agenda briefed by staff at agenda review shall submit the request in writing to the City Administrator and Council Office Director by 5:00 p.m. the day immediately preceding the agenda review session. Other than questions directed to staff, discussion at agenda review sessions shall be confined to debate on motions to adjust the agenda or to amend or substitute legislative items.

RULE 3 – ADJUDICATIVE APPEALS AND HEARINGS

- A. Council conducts two types of hearings: (1) legislative hearings and (2) adjudicative hearings. Where procedures for legislative hearings and adjudicative hearings have been established by ordinance or statute, the council shall follow those procedures. If a conflict arises between the ordinance or statute, on the one hand, and these council rules, on the other hand, the ordinance or statute shall prevail. Where there are no established or statutory procedures for an adjudicative hearing or legislative hearing, the council shall implement the following procedures.

B. Legislative Hearings. “Legislative hearings” are hearings where the city council, sitting as the legislative body of the City, is required to conduct one or more public hearings prior to taking legislative action. Examples of legislative hearings include, but are not limited to, hearings required under RCW 35.13.182 (annexation), RCW 35.34.090 (biennial budget); RCW 35.79.030 (street vacations); and RCW 36.70A.390 (interim zoning).¹

1. For legislative hearings, the following procedure shall be observed to the extent consistent with the matter before the council:
 - a) Reading of the legislative matter by the Clerk;
 - b) Announcement and opening of the hearing by Council President or presiding officer;
 - c) Receipt of staff reports, if any;
 - d) Receipt of public testimony (3 minutes per speaker);
 - e) Motion to close or continue hearing; and
 - f) Motion to approve, modify, reject or adopt the legislative item.
2. Motions to close, re-open or continue a legislative hearing shall be approved by majority vote.
3. Oral public testimony on the item shall not be accepted or solicited by the council as a whole outside of the legislative hearing; provided, individual council members may communicate with members of the public on any legislative hearing matter. All public testimony shall be provided consistent with Rule 2.16 (Public Testimony Regarding Legislative Agenda Items).
4. Individual council member conduct with respect to any matter subject to a legislative hearing shall be the same as any other legislative matter and shall be governed by Rule 1.3 (Conflicts of Interest).

C. Adjudicative Hearings. “Adjudicative hearings” are quasi-judicial hearings involving named parties, and council is often sitting in an appellate capacity. Examples of adjudicative hearings include, but are not limited to, appeals under SMC 17G.061 (land use applications) and appeals under SMC 13.02.0246 (solid waste collection rates). For adjudicative hearings, the following procedure shall be observed to the extent consistent established or statutory procedures:

¹ A complete list of municipal actions requiring a hearing can be found in “Local Ordinances for Washington Cities and Counties,” Appendix C, published by the Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) (2016).

1. Testimony during adjudicative hearings is limited to the parties involved in the hearing. Public testimony is not accepted in adjudicative hearings. No person shall be allowed to discuss any matter pending hearing with any member or members of the council except in the council chambers in the regular course of a council meeting. Each council member shall vigorously strive to avoid any outside communication from anyone in any form concerning a matter pending hearing or decision. If an outside contact cannot be avoided, the council member shall immediately make a note of the contact and shall at the beginning of the council's hearing on the matter announce the fact of the contact, the identity of the person, and the substance of the communication. If the communication be in written form, the council member shall as soon as possible file it with the city clerk.
2. When the council's discussion and vote on a hearing item is at a meeting other than the hearing, it shall be the obligation of every council member participating in the action to be familiar with the facts in order to reach an informed, independent judgment. When a member discussing or voting on the matter was not present at the hearing, that member will have familiarized themselves with the hearing item based upon any audio or video recording of the hearing and all documents contained in the record. A council member shall not be briefed by anyone except in an open meeting.
3. Council members shall disqualify themselves from participating in an adjudicative hearing whenever bias, interest, or other influences will prevent or appear to prevent them from exercising fair-minded, independent judgment on the facts and established policy. Disqualifying influences include prejudgment of the issues that cannot be swayed by the facts in evidence, a partiality or personal bias for or against a party, and a personal pecuniary interest in the subject matter. Examples of disqualifying bias include a close personal, family, or business relationship with a party, ownership of property the value of which might be affected by the decision, and a business or personal financial situation that might be affected by the decision.
4. Council members who become aware of circumstances which might appear to disqualify them in a matter pending an adjudicative hearing can either disqualify themselves or explain the circumstances before the hearing and let the rest of the council, by majority vote, decide whether they can participate. Should any council member be aware of circumstances which might appear to disqualify another council member, that council member may request by motion that the

other council member be disqualified from participating in the matter, which motion must be approved by at least four (4) council members). The council's discussion concerning disqualification of a member may occur in executive session. A disqualified member shall be absent from the dais during the adjudicative hearing and during discussion and voting.

5. In all adjudicatory appeals, council members are acting in their quasi-judicial capacity and shall comply with all applicable provisions of state law including the appearance of fairness doctrine (Chapter 42.36 RCW) and the code of ethics for municipal officers in contract interests (Chapter 42.23 RCW).
6. Adjudicatory Appeal Hearing Procedures.

At the hearing on the appeal, the following rules apply:

- a) Oral argument on appeal is limited to parties of record.
- b) Oral argument on appeal is limited to thirty minutes per side. If there is more than one appellant or more than one person wishing to present oral argument on appeal, the total time allowed to all such persons is thirty minutes. Any time reserved for rebuttal or surrebuttal is deducted from the time allowed for opening argument. Time taken to respond to questions from the city council is not deducted from the time allowed for argument.
- c) Argument is presented first by the appellant in support of the appeal followed by the respondent in opposition to the appeal.
- d) No new evidence may be presented during oral argument. Matters found by the hearing officer or body to be facts in the record are presumed to be true and accurate. Oral argument is limited to stating why the record does or does not support the decision.
- e) The city council may not consider any new facts or evidence on appeal. The city council's review of appeals is limited to the record prepared by the hearing officer or body, including the verbatim transcript of the hearing, the written appeal, memoranda submitted, and, if permitted, oral arguments presented in accordance with the requirements of this section. Closed record appeals before the city council must be concluded within 90 days of the date the appeal is filed unless all parties agree to a longer period.

- f) Supplemental documents:
 - i. The parties to the appeal may file memoranda regarding the appeal. Such memoranda must be filed by the agenda deadline for the meeting preceding the meeting set for consideration of the appeal.
 - ii. Any replies to the memoranda must be filed by the agenda deadline for the meeting set for consideration of the appeal.
 - iii. The city clerk distributes such memoranda and responsive documents to all parties to the appeal, the city council, the city attorney, the planning director, and the hearing examiner.
 - iv. Neither memoranda nor responses may contain any new facts or evidence or discuss matters outside the record. They are limited to stating why the record does or does not support the decision.
- 7. The city council may supplement these rules in a case-by-case situation in order to provide due process to all participants in an adjudicative hearing.

RULE 4 – ORDINANCES AND FORMAL RESOLUTIONS

Rule 4.1 UPLOADING ITEMS FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

- A. All council agenda items, including ordinances and resolutions shall be uploaded into OnBase as provided in Rule 2.10 (Agenda Process).
- B. After presentation at committee, so long as council sponsorship requirements are met as provided in Rule 2.10 (Agenda Process), the council office director, or their designee, will approve items to move forward to the city clerk for consideration at a future council legislative session. All items, whether discussion or contracts, will remain in the council queue and will not advance toward a legislative agenda until having gone through committee unless granted permission to be considered on a compressed timeline as established in Rule 2.9 (Introduction of Items).
- C. To accommodate narrow construction or procurement windows, engineering construction contract items may be submitted to committee prior to bid opening as long as the item includes the engineer's cost estimate and estimated construction timeline. When final construction contract information is received, these items may be re-submitted to the city clerk for inclusion on a future council

legislative agenda without council action.

- D. An ordinance or resolution must have been filed with the city clerk prior to the meeting of which it is an agenda item. No ordinance or resolution, except emergency measures, shall be passed until it has been on file with the city clerk for at least three (3) business days, including the day of the council meeting.
- E. If an ordinance or resolution, or an amendment to an ordinance or resolution, has not been on file with the city clerk for at least three (3) business days, a council member may request that the ordinance, resolution or amendment be read in full prior to consideration by the council. Absent a request by a council member for a full reading, any ordinance or resolution (including any amendments) that has been submitted to the agenda as provided under these rules may be considered after reading of the title or a summary.
- F. Each ordinance or resolution shall have a succinct, plain-language title and summary which briefly describes its purpose and effect. The agenda sheet for every item shall, when filing the same with the city clerk, specify the committee of origin for the ordinance or resolution and the names of the council members who are sponsoring the ordinance or resolution. Subject to Rule 2.18 (Suspension of rules), every ordinance or resolution must be first presented in a committee before it may appear on the council's agenda for first reading (for ordinances) or for council consideration (for resolutions).
- G. Each ordinance or resolution which would have an impact on the fiscal condition of the city must note that fact on the agenda sheet and be accompanied by a brief description of the fiscal impact of the ordinance or resolution on the current year's budget.
- H. At the time of submission of a legislative discussion item to the council agenda, the record relating to the item must reflect compliance with Rule 2.10.I (Public Comment).

Rule 4.2 AMENDMENT AND SUBSTITUTION

- A. "Amendment" of legislation pertains only to legislation on the agenda and occurs at the time proposed legislation is under debate by the council, and may be offered by motion by any council member. "Substitution" of legislation occurs prior to debate of proposed legislation and may only be made by sponsors of the ordinance or resolution. Board, commission and mayoral appointments are not subject to

amendment or substitution. Amendments and substitutions are permitted only as provided in this Rule 4.2.

- B. Every proposed amendment shall be in writing and circulated by the proposing council member or their legislative assistant to the city clerk and city council members and staff prior to 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday immediately preceding the item appearing on the draft agenda; provided, amendments making clerical or technical corrections may be articulated orally during debate. Any amendment submitted after the 5:00 p.m. Thursday deadline, if adopted by council at the next agenda review session following the deadline, shall result in that legislative item being deferred to the next regular council legislative agenda. The purpose of this rule is to ensure, to the extent possible, publication of a final agenda without legislative items that are subject to pending amendments or substitutions.
- C. Proposed amendments shall be included in the draft agenda packet for the benefit of public review and council consideration and shall be identified by the city clerk file number and the council member proposing them (e.g., "ORD CXXXXX (SMITH Amendment)"). Every proposed amendment must include a brief "purpose statement" at the top of the first page explaining the reasons for the amendment and/or changes associated with the amendment. In addition, each amendment must be circulated in "clean" and "redline" format, with the redline version showing changes from the version of the legislation as it currently appears in the agenda. The Clerk shall include only the "redline" version of the proposed amendment in the draft agenda, and, if the amendment is adopted, shall include the "clean" version in the final agenda.
- D. A substitution of all or a portion of the wording of an ordinance or resolution which is to be listed on a draft council agenda may be submitted by the majority of sponsors of the ordinance or resolution without council approval, so long as the substitution is in writing and circulated by the proposing council member or their legislative assistant to all council members and the city clerk by no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday immediately preceding the meeting at which the ordinance or resolution is to appear on a draft agenda.
- E. A portion or all of any grant or contract agenda legislative item may be updated with current documents and materials without a motion for amendment or substitution with the approval of the Council Office Director or his designee if (1) the substitution is intended to make technical corrections in contract or grant materials and (2) the substitution does not result in a material increase in the amount or the term of the contract.

- F. Amendments necessary to incorporate updated assessment rolls for business improvement districts may be considered and adopted by a simple majority vote if circulated no later than noon on the Friday prior to final council consideration, and, if adopted, will not be subject to automatic deferral.
- G. Proposed amendments to the biennial budget or mid-biennial budget modification may be considered and adopted by a simple majority vote if circulated no later than noon on the Friday prior to final council consideration of the biennial budget or mid-biennial budget modification and, if adopted, will not be subject to automatic deferral.
- H. Any motion to amend an ordinance or resolution shall require four (4) affirmative votes to pass. Any motion to suspend the requirements in this Rule 4.2 shall require five (5) affirmative votes to pass.
- I. Amendments and substitute versions not timely filed with the city clerk before the meeting, whenever reasonably possible, shall be posted for public viewing on the city council Facebook page or other similar channels so that interested members of the public may review during council's consideration of the matter.
- J. The deletion of an emergency clause converts the ordinance to a regular ordinance which requires a second reading at a subsequent meeting. The addition of an emergency clause by amendment requires the ordinance to be deferred to allow public hearing.

Rule 4.3 SUBJECT MATTER

The council shall not consider or pass any ordinance or resolution the subject matter of which is not directly related to local affairs or municipal business or if action by the city council does not result in the adoption of a new or amendment to an existing ordinance or resolution or affect any city policy or practice.

RULE 5 – PROCESSING ORDINANCES

Rule 5.1 PUBLICATION, SIGNATURE AND RECORDING

- A. An ordinance passed by the city council shall, within five (5) days thereafter, be presented to the mayor.

B. An ordinance:

1. Making the annual tax levy,
2. Adopting the original annual budget,
3. Making appropriations,
4. Implementing a local improvement district or confirming the assessments therefor,
5. Which is an emergency or special budget ordinance,
6. Which is an emergency ordinance, or
7. Which has been approved by the electors by referendum or initiative

shall become effective immediately upon passage.

C. Ordinances signed by the mayor, and the approved parts of ordinances that have been partially vetoed, will thereupon be filed with the city clerk for recording and publication if not already published.

D. Ordinances not signed by the mayor after ten (10) days will be filed with the city clerk for signature, recording and publication as necessary.

Rule 5.2 VETO

If, within ten (10) days of presentment, the mayor vetoes an ordinance or part of an ordinance, the ordinance or part thereof, along with the veto message (if any), is returned to the city council, which shall provide a copy to the city clerk. The city clerk shall schedule the matter for reconsideration for the next available council meeting, if requested by a city council member. If, within thirty (30) days of the mayor's veto or partial veto, the city council overrides the veto, the ordinance shall be considered enacted on the date that the override occurs and shall take effect 30 days after enactment. Such ordinance will be signed by the council president, council president pro tem, or two council members and filed with the city clerk for publication and recording. Any ordinance vetoed by the mayor, and for which no veto override has been passed by the council, may be resubmitted for council approval as provided in Rule 2.19 (Reconsideration).

RULE 6 – COMMITTEES

Rule 6.1 STANDING COMMITTEES – ESTABLISHMENT AND MEMBERSHIP

A. There shall be four (4) standing committees, as follows:

1. Public Safety and Community Health;
2. Public Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainability;
3. Urban Experience;
4. Finance and Administration.

B. All council members shall be members of each standing committee. Standing committee meetings shall be noticed as meetings of the council where no legislative action shall occur.

C. The council president shall chair each study session, agenda review, and legislative session of the city council. All committee chairs and vice-chairs shall be determined by majority vote of the council and shall preside over the meetings of their respective committees.

D. Each standing committee shall have one (1) chair and one (1) vice chair. The council shall confirm chairs and vice chairs of each standing committee by resolution adopted no later than the second meeting in January of each year or as soon thereafter as possible.

Rule 6.2 COMMITTEE PROCESS

A. The purposes of standing committee meetings are to provide council members an opportunity to discuss potential legislation publicly, to receive public testimony on items included on the committee's agenda, and to provide the city administration and city staff an opportunity to update council members regarding department programs, plans, and other administrative activities and future City council administrative items. Council members should also utilize standing committees to update each other on their board, committee, and commission assignments. At the

chair's discretion, committee agendas may include presentations from community groups, or from administrative staff, on city issues or initiatives germane to the committee's ordinary business, so long as the topic is not related to any legislative item listed on a draft or final council agenda.

- B. All standing committees shall be video recorded and open to the public using the appropriate method (i.e., webcasting or streaming when physical presence is not possible due to law or regulation) except during such time as the committee is in executive session consistent with the OPMA. Public testimony is taken during standing committee meetings, and speaker conduct shall be governed by Rule 2.15 (Public Participation). Notwithstanding the public testimony section of the meeting, participation in a standing committee meeting shall be limited to standing committee members, appropriate staff and other individuals recognized by the committee. Administrative support for each committee will be provided by council office staff.
- C. Each committee shall meet monthly at 12:00 noon in the council chambers, except where cancelled or rescheduled to a different time or date at the discretion of the chair, in the following order:
 - 1. Public Safety and Community Health: First Monday of each month.²
 - 2. Public Infrastructure, Environment, and Sustainability: Second Monday of each month.
 - 3. Urban Experience: Third Monday of each month.
 - 4. Finance and Administration: Fourth Monday of each month.
 - 5. If there is a fifth Monday in a month, that date is reserved for a study session as convened by the council president pursuant to Rule 2.5 (Study Session).
- D. Committee meeting agenda are formalized pursuant to Rule 2.10 (Agenda Process). The regular order of business for committee meetings shall be as follows, unless modified by the committee chair in his or her discretion:

² Commencing July 9, 2026, all committee meetings will be held on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. and this section 6.2.C shall be deemed revised accordingly.

1. Briefing by administration and staff
 2. Public testimony on committee agenda
 3. Council discussion and confirmation of sponsors
- E. Testimony sign-up for committee meetings shall open no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Friday immediately preceding the meeting. The maximum number of public speakers at committee shall be fifteen (15). In the event that more than fifteen (15) speakers have signed up to speak, preference will be given to those who signed up first. Each speaker shall be limited to two (2) minutes to speak to the entire committee agenda. A majority of the council members in attendance may vote to alter the time limit or number of speakers.
- F. Each item presented in committee must have a fully completed agenda sheet when uploaded into OnBase, and any additional briefing or research documents necessary. Items not meeting this requirement are subject to removal from the council calendar pursuant to Rule 2.10.J (Agenda Process).
- G. Absent an exception under Rule 2.9.B, each ordinance or resolution must be presented by the council sponsor or their designee in the appropriate committee as set forth under Rule 2.10 before it may move forward for inclusion on the council's legislative agenda. With written permission from the council president, this requirement may be met by conducting a presentation of the item in a council study session which has been noticed as a public meeting.
- H. By motion of the council, any matter before the council may be referred to a committee, except that no committee shall investigate the facts of, nor shall any member or members of the council take independent action on, any pending or contemplated adjudicated matters.
- I. All presentation materials provided at a Standing Committee meeting must be published to the respective Standing Committee webpage no later than 5 p.m. on the Friday immediately following the respective Standing Committee. The Legislative Assistants of the Chair and Vice Chair of a Standing Committee shall be responsible for providing presentation materials for the webpage.

Rule 6.3 INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

Unless governed by other regulations, statutes, or ordinances, the nomination of the full slate of council members to inter-governmental committees or boards shall be made by

the council president, subject to confirmation by a majority of the city council. All appointments shall be made consistent with the governmental documents creating the inter-governmental committee. The council president shall appoint proxies to attend meetings when the assigned council member is unable to attend a meeting.

Rule 6.4 AD HOC COMMITTEES AND WORK GROUPS

Council ad hoc committees (also known as work groups) with specified functions may be established for a designated term or for a specific task or to advise the council on specific subject matter, by resolution. Unless specified in the resolution which created the ad hoc committee, matters of committee business such as the appointment process and qualifications for membership, the number of members, and the deadline for any resulting reports of the ad hoc committee shall be determined by the committee itself. Council ad hoc committees and work groups shall not include more than three council members unless the meetings of such a working group publishes notices of its meetings consistent with the OPMA.

Rule 6.5 BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The city council shall interview mayoral nominees for appointment to boards and commissions prior to considering their appointment and shall take action on each such nomination in an open public meeting. Re-appointments do not require an interview unless requested by a council member.

RULE 7 – MISCELLANEOUS

Rule 7.1 COUNCIL POSITION VACANCY

- A. Upon receipt of a written notice of a vacancy or an impending vacancy of a city council position other than that of council president, the council president or designee shall announce the vacancy within seven (7) days of the receipt of the vacancy notice occurring and call for interested parties to submit their applications for consideration by a deadline stated by the council president set with concurrence of the council.
- B. Upon the close of the deadline, each council member shall review the applications, interview on an individual basis whichever applicant(s) they desire to interview and send the council president a prioritized list of who they believe should be interviewed by the entire city council. Each council member shall have the

opportunity to advance at least one prospective candidate forward in the process.

- C. The council president shall compile the council members' prioritization of candidates to be interviewed and schedule the top-ranked candidates to be interviewed by the entire city council. Additional candidates may be selected for interviews by a majority vote of the council. Once the slate of candidates to be interviewed by the entire council is announced, no council member may communicate with any candidate outside of the formal interview by the entire council.
- D. The council shall conduct interviews of each individual candidate selected for interviews in an open public meeting. No public comment is permitted in such public meetings.
- E. After conducting interview of the individual candidates, the council, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(h), may go into executive session to evaluate the qualifications of each candidate.
- F. Following this evaluation, the council may narrow the field of potential candidates to no fewer than two candidates in an open public meeting.
- G. The city council shall then host at least one public meeting where members of the public will have the ability to pose the same question to each candidate remaining under consideration.
- H. Upon completion of the public meeting(s), the council, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(h), may go into executive session again to further evaluate the qualifications of each candidate.
- I. The council shall take final action by resolution appointing a candidate to fill the vacancy during an open public meeting.
- J. Provisions regarding the selection of a candidate for a city council vacancy not set forth by these rules shall be determined by the city council by motion during an open public meeting.
- K. If the council president position becomes vacant, the city council may elect to appoint one of the existing council members to fill the position of council president without following the selection procedure set forth above. If, upon a motion of the city council, the city council decides to consider someone other than an existing

council member to fill the vacant position of council president, the city council shall follow the selection procedure set forth above.

Rule 7.2 COUNCIL MEMBER DISCIPLINE

Council members may be subject to disciplinary action only by motion adopted by the affirmative vote of five (5) members of the council, taken in an open public meeting. Disciplinary action may be based on violation of these rules, the City Ethics Code (SMC 01.04B), or any standards of behavior expected of elected officials, including apparent conflicts of interest, and may include, without limitation, censure, removal from membership on a standing committee, or removal from membership on an intergovernmental board or commission. Nothing in this rule shall be deemed to prevent the council from adopting a non-binding resolution formally admonishing, rebuking or denouncing any other elected official, to the extent otherwise permitted by law.

Rule 7.3 COUNCIL STAFF

- A. Each council member has the sole authority to hire, direct, and discharge one legislative assistant, subject to limitations under Section 02.005.030 of the Spokane Municipal Code.
- B. The Council Office Operations Workgroup shall develop procedures for assignment of central staff to ensure efficient operation of the council office and uniform support for council members.
- C. Responsibilities with respect to council central staff are set forth in Section 02.005.030 of the Spokane Municipal Code. The city council delegates to the council president the power to hire, supervise, discipline and discharge central office staff, subject to the following requirements:
 - 1. Prior to initiating, authorizing, or approving any formal action to hire a temporary or full-time central staff member at an annual cost above \$10,000, the Council President shall first refer the proposal to the Council Budget Committee for review and recommendation, which shall be shared with each Councilmember. Any Councilmember may request an executive session be convened at the next regular meeting (or a special meeting called for that purpose) to discuss the matter.
 - 2. Prior to initiating, authorizing, or directing any formal disciplinary action or discharge of a central staff member, the Council President shall convene an

executive session of the City council for the purpose of notifying each Councilmember of the decision and to review all material information supporting the proposed action. If the Council President determines that alleged conduct is sufficiently egregious to warrant immediate removal, the Council President may place the staff member on paid administrative leave pending the executive session.

3. Following notice to council members and any requested executive session, the council president may proceed with formal action or take no action, in his or her discretion.

Nothing in this subsection shall permit the council president to hire or discharge central office staff in a manner inconsistent with Section 02.005.030 of the Spokane Municipal Code.

- D. Council Operations shall provide direction to the Council Director regarding day-to-day operations, including the creation, maintenance and implementation of a Council Operations Guidebook.
- E. The Council Office Director will manage the workflow of policy projects requested by Council Members or Central Staff. Projects may be initiated/requested by communicating directly with the Council Office Director or by working directly with the central staff member who will coordinate with the Council Office Director.
- F. The Council delegates full supervisory authority to the Council Office Director to manage central staff workflow on a day-to-day basis and accommodating changes as needed.
- G. The Council Office Director shall be responsible for advancing the LA II position in consultation with the Council Operations committee.
- H. Council Members shall have full supervisory of legislative aides.
- I. All staff overtime must have prior written approval by the Council Office Director and Council President in consultation with the Council Budget Director. To the extent unauthorized overtime is incurred by a legislative assistant and otherwise payable, it will be payable from the budget of the council member by whom the legislative assistant is employed.

Rule 7.4 COUNCIL OFFICE BUDGET

- A. Any council member may propose to the council president allocation of funding from the approved council office budget beyond that which is reserved for the salaries of council members, personal staff, and approved shared council office

staff. The council president has the authority to either approve or deny any expenditure request of \$10,000 or less.

- B. All council office budget allocation proposals over \$10,000 that differ from the adopted council budget must be approved by the affirmative vote of four (4) council members at an open public meeting.
- C. On at least a quarterly basis, the council's budget manager shall make available to all council members a report on the status of and balances of all individual line items in the council office budget. The budget manager will also work with the Administration to pursue dashboard capability for public and council review of all city budget line items.

Rule 7.5 COUNCIL MEMBER AND STAFF ORIENTATION

- A. New council members and newly appointed staff shall receive on-boarding and orientation meetings and information within thirty (30) days of their swearing-in or appointment.
- B. Orientation materials shall be generated by the council office director in consultation with the central staff and shall consist of at least the following:
 - 1. City Charter and Spokane Municipal Code overview;
 - 2. Overview of the city's budget process and statutory budget requirements;
 - 3. Overview of the council rules of procedure and meeting process, including the sign-up process for public testimony;
 - 4. Summary of often-cited parliamentary process (i.e., motions, decorum, etc.);
 - 5. Overview of all standing and outside boards and commissions to which council members are appointed, including their functions, history, and composition;
 - 6. Overview of policies and procedures relating to the publication of council materials and use of social media; and

7. Completion of open government training as set forth in Administrative Policy No. 0520-17-06 and RCW 42.30.205.

Nothing in this section precludes the administration from providing onboarding and orientation as to the activities and procedures followed by administration staff.

Rule 7.6 COUNCIL MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. A time commitment of approximately 30-50 hours per week is normally required to adequately fulfill the role of city council member.
- B. Unless excused by the council president or committee chair, as applicable, council members must attend the following recurring engagements:
 1. City council agenda review and legislative sessions;
 2. Standing committee meetings as scheduled;
 3. Study sessions, as scheduled by the council president;
 4. Ad hoc working groups as assigned;
 5. Outside boards and commissions as assigned (typically between 6-9);
 6. Neighborhood council meetings from their respective council district on a regular basis but not necessarily every scheduled meeting (typically at least two a week district wide during each of the first three weeks of a month);
 7. Constituent meetings as necessary;
 8. Staff meetings as necessary;
 9. Other council member meetings as necessary; and
 10. Community events as time permits.
- C. Council member absences shall be deemed unexcused unless (1) prior notice of the absence has been provided to the council president or committee chair, as

applicable, when it was practical to do so, and (2) the council president or committee chair approves the absence, which approval shall be liberally granted in instances of illness or medical necessity, family emergency or other unforeseen circumstance.

Rule 7.7 CITY COUNCIL PLANNING

- A. Council shall consider annual council member appointment to boards, commissions, and committees by resolution no later than the second council meeting of each calendar year.
- B. Council shall consider the Plan Commission's annual work program by resolution no later than February 28 of each calendar year.
- C. Council shall consider and adopt changes to the council rules by resolution no later than February 28 of each calendar year. Additional adjustments to the rules may be made by resolution.
- D. The council president shall schedule a council retreat annually. Additional retreats may be scheduled throughout the year at the council president's discretion.

Rule 7.8 LEGAL INQUIRIES

All inquiries by council members and council staff to the city legal department regarding City Charter provisions, any proposed or existing ordinance, any proposed or existing resolution, or any rule or procedure shall be directed to the appropriate attorney and the city attorney with a copy sent to the city council policy advisor, who shall forward the legal department's response to the inquiry to the full council when (a) any related legislation appears on a committee or council agenda, (b) upon the request of any council member, or (c) if the policy advisor deems the communication relevant matters of interest to council members. All other inquiries may be directed to the city attorney alone, and the response from the legal department to the individual council member's inquiries shall not be forwarded to the city council policy advisor. All inquiries to and responses from the legal department, regardless how originated, shall remain confidential privileged communication unless the privilege is waived by the full council pursuant to Rule 1.3.B (Duty of Ethical Conduct). During legislative debate or other public meetings, council members shall refrain from disclosing the content of legal advice provided by the city legal department or outside counsel, except to disclose (a) the fact that the city legal department was consulted on a matter, and (b) that based on said legal advice, the council member is adopting a particular position regarding the matter discussed with the city legal department. For example, the following statements would comply with this rule:

“I consulted with city legal on this legislation, and I think the proposal needs more work before we adopt it.”

“This resolution was forwarded to city legal. Based on their review of this resolution, I am not supporting it.”

“City legal reviewed this contract. Therefore, from a legal standpoint I see no reason not to approve it.”

Adopted by Resolution 2026-0009 (03/09/26)

Attachments:

- A. Division Standing Committee Assignments (Rule 2.10.C)
- B. Rule Changes Effective July 9, 2026
- C. Form of Agenda, Effective July 9, 2026

SPOKANE CITY COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE
ATTACHMENT A

2026 Spokane City Council Board, Commission, & Committee Appointments									
Attachment A:									
Council President Pro Tempore Member									
Standing Committee Chair									
City of Spokane									
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SPOKANE CITY COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE ATTACHMENT B

Effective July 9, 2026, Rules 2.8, 2.10.A, 2.14, 2.15, 2.16 and 4.2.B will be superseded by the following:

Rule 2.8 FUNCTIONS OF MEETING AGENDA

- A. The council, with the assistance of the city clerk, shall publish a single agenda listing “proposed,” “pending” and “final” legislative items. The agenda serves to introduce items to the council, to establish the order of business and to give notice to the public as required under RCW 35.22.288. The notice of a special meeting is the agenda for such meeting.
- B. Regular meeting agendas are prepared by the city clerk and shall be substantially in the form set forth in Attachment C, and shall so far as practicable be consistent with council administrative policies and procedures and these council rules. The agenda for the council legislative session will reflect the order of business set forth in Rule 2.14.

Rule 2.10 AGENDA PROCESS

- A. The process of submitting agenda items and preparing the agenda for all council meetings shall be consistent with these rules and any administrative policies and procedures governing council meetings and agenda items. In a conflict between these rules and an administrative policy and procedure, these rules shall control. Absent expedited placement on the council calendar pursuant to Rule 2.9 (Introduction of Items), the expectation of council is that legislative items will follow the schedule below, unless amendments are offered (See Rule 4.2):
 - 1. Contract items, emergency ordinances, board and commission appointments, and special considerations will appear as pending legislative items on the Council’s agenda eight (8) days after appearance in committee and will appear as final legislative items on the council’s agenda for final action fifteen (15) days after appearance in committee.
 - 2. All other ordinances and resolutions will appear as proposed legislative items on the Council’s agenda eight (8) days after appearance in

committee, will appear as pending legislative items on the Council's agenda fifteen (15) days after appearance in committee, and will appear as final legislative items on the council's agenda for final action twenty-two (22) days after appearance in committee.

3. Following the above timeline, on a day when a regular legislative session is canceled, the item stays in its legislative status until the next available regular legislative session.

Rule 2.14 ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. Agenda Review.

The council will meet each week to review the proposed, pending and final action items appearing on the agenda, and any pending amendments. The meeting chair may make adjustments to the order of business as needed. The regular order of business in an agenda review meeting is as follows.

1. Roll call;
2. Council or staff reports of matters of interest;
3. Staff or council member briefings regarding matters on the agenda, as may be requested by council members;
4. Discussion of and any adjustments to the agenda;
5. Approval by motion of the draft agenda as final and the final agenda as amended.

B. Executive Session.

The business of an executive session is determined case by case within the restrictions of the OPMA and other provisions of state law. (See also Rule 2.1.D, Meetings). The meeting minutes shall record the announced purpose of the executive session as well as the time that executive session began and ended.

C. Legislative Session

The order of business in a regular legislative session is as follows. The meeting chair may make adjustments to the order of business as needed, including combining testimony on multiple items.

1. Pledge of Allegiance;

2. Announcement of adjustments to the agenda (including any amendments adopted or deferrals approved during agenda setting);
3. "Poetry at the Podium," words of inspiration, and special introductions;
4. Roll call to establish the presence of a quorum;
5. Reading of proclamations and salutations;
6. Reports from community organizations;
7. Express Testimony
8. Hearings
9. Proposed Legislative Items (First Reading by Clerk)
 - a. Special Budget Ordinances
 - b. Resolutions
 - c. Ordinances
10. Pending Legislative Items
 - a. Boards and Commission Appointments
 - b. Reports, Contracts and Claims (Contracts Agenda)
 - c. Emergency Ordinances
 - d. Special Budget Ordinances
 - e. Resolutions and Ordinances
 - f. Special Considerations
11. Final Legislative items (Final Reading by Clerk)
 - a. Boards and Commission Appointments
 - b. Reports, Contracts and Claims (Contracts Agenda)
 - c. Emergency Ordinances
 - d. Special Budget Ordinances
 - e. Resolutions and Ordinances
 - f. Special Considerations
12. Open Forum; and
13. Adjournment.

- D. Items shall be acted upon in the order in which they appear on the agenda; provided, items may be taken out of order, combined, or separated at the chair's discretion, absent the objection of a majority of the council. Items on the agenda may be grouped under various headings or sections and entire sections may be read and acted upon at one time at the discretion of the chair absent an objection by a majority of council members present, or absent a demand pursuant to Rule 2.17 (Voting, Effect of Deferral; Abstention).
- E. All city council appointments or mayoral appointments which require city council approval shall be announced and voted upon by motion during the legislative session; provided, that the confirmation of mayoral nominations of department heads, the city clerk, and the city attorney, pursuant to Section 24 of the City Charter, shall be by resolution.

Rule 2.16 PUBLIC TESTIMONY REGARDING LEGISLATIVE AGENDA ITEMS

- A. Members of the public can sign up to give testimony beginning no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Friday immediately preceding the legislative session and ending at 6:00 p.m. on the date of the meeting. Members of the public can sign up to give testimony on legislative items via the online testimony sign-up form linked in the meeting packet or in person outside council chambers beginning at 8:00 a.m. on the day of the legislative session. Speakers must sign in using a name. Members of the public who are unable to sign up during the sign-up period or who attempt to sign up late will not be added to the list of speakers. The order of the speakers shall be determined at the discretion of the chair.

The testimony sign-up form shall include at a minimum fields for the following:

1. Name and Jurisdiction;
2. The agenda item being addressed and, if applicable, the proposed amendment(s) being addressed, identified by amendment number or other designation sufficient to clearly identify the amendments. Multiple contract items or first reading agenda items may be selected;
3. The speaker's stated position on the matter, designated as one of the following: Pro, Con, Technical, or Neutral/Unsure;
4. The speaker's intended mode of participation, designated as one of the following: No Testimony (position only), In-Person Testimony, or Remote Testimony; and

5. Any requested language-access or accessibility accommodations for testimony where available; and.
- B. The city council shall take public testimony on all matters included on its legislative agenda as described in this rule. Public testimony and consideration of an item may be extended to a subsequent meeting by a majority vote of the council. Testimony on a legislative item deferred to a future date certain shall be taken on the future date, unless testimony on the date of deferral is allowed by the Council President. No public testimony shall be taken on oral amendments to contracts or legislative agenda items, council consideration of mayoral vetoes, or solely procedural, parliamentary, or administrative matters of the council.
- C. Public testimony will be permitted during the legislative session as follows:
1. After announcements, members of the public will be provided up to three (3) minutes to provide “Express Testimony” on any item on the legislative agenda;
 2. Each speaker will be provided up to three (3) minutes to speak to each hearing item;
 3. Each speaker will be provided up to two (2) minutes to speak to all items listed as “Proposed Legislative Items;”
 4. Each speaker will be provided up to two (2) minutes total to speak to all board and commission appointments, two (2) minutes total to speak to all reports, contracts, and claims, and two (2) minutes to speak individually to any other item listed as a “Pending Legislative Item;” and
 5. Each speaker will be provided up to two (2) minutes to speak to all items listed as “Final Legislative Items.”
 6. Each speaker will be provided up to two (2) minutes to speak to each Second Reading / Final Action ordinance and resolution;
 7. Individuals who choose to speak during the “Express Testimony” will not be permitted to speak again during the same legislative session, except for hearings and Open Forum.
- D. No person shall be permitted to display visual information during their testimony, including but not limited to photographs, presentations, videos, or other media; however, members of the public may share this information with the council by emailing them at citycouncil@spokanecity.org.
- E. For public hearings required by state law, the chair may institute special rules for testimony.
- F. Testimony at council committee meetings shall be governed by Rule 6.2.

G. Members of the public may provide written testimony for any agenda item. Written testimony can be provided to the council by sending it via regular mail, delivering it to the city clerk at a regular meeting of the council, or emailing comments to testimony@spokanecity.org. To be included in the final agenda packet, written testimony on an agenda item must meet the following criteria:

1. Be delivered to the council via email at testimony@spokanecity.org;
2. Include a title that clearly identifies the agenda item(s) to which the commenter is submitting testimony (e.g. "Written Testimony on Resolution 2026-0001");
3. Include the name of the submitter;
4. Any photographs, presentations, videos, documents or other media will not be published, and only text included in the correspondence itself will be published in the agenda packet; and
5. Be received in the testimony@spokanecity.org inbox no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday immediately preceding the legislative meeting on which the item is to appear on a final agenda.

Written comments that fail to meet any of the above criteria will not be included in the final agenda packet but should be distributed to the council via email.

Rule 4.2.B AMENDMENT AND SUBSTITUTION

B. To be published in the next legislative agenda packet for council deliberation at the next Agenda Review meeting, every proposed amendment shall be in writing and circulated by the proposing council member or their legislative assistant to the city clerk and city council members and staff prior to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday. The following rules will apply to amendments:

1. If an amendment to an ordinance or resolution is circulated *prior* to the 5:00 pm Thursday deadline immediately preceding the item appearing as a proposed legislative item on the council agenda, the amendment will be published in the proposed section of the legislative agenda and is guaranteed an opportunity for public comment at the next legislative session prior to council action on the amendment. Council action on the amendment and the related ordinance or resolution will occur no sooner than the next agenda review session after public comment is received on the amendment.
2. After an ordinance or resolution has appeared as a proposed legislative item on the council agenda, any related amendment that is circulated thereafter is not guaranteed an opportunity for public comment prior to

council action. Instead, any subsequent adoption of the amendment by four (4) votes will result in the ordinance or resolution staying in its legislative status for an additional reading and public comment on the item as amended, while any adoption of an amendment approved by five (5) or more votes may result in the ordinance or resolution advancing on its ordinary timeline under Rule 2.10.A.

3. If an amendment to an emergency ordinance, contract, or special consideration item is circulated prior to the 5:00 pm Thursday deadline immediately preceding the item appearing as a pending legislative item on the council agenda, the amendment will be published in the pending section of the legislative agenda and is guaranteed an opportunity for public comment at the next legislative session prior to council action on the amendment. Council action on the amendment and the related ordinance or resolution will occur no sooner than the next agenda review session after public comment is received on the amendment
4. If an amendment to an emergency ordinance, contract, or special consideration item is circulated after the emergency ordinance, contract, or special consideration has appeared as a pending legislative item on the council agenda, any subsequent adoption of the amendment by four (4) votes will result in the emergency ordinance, contract, or special consideration item staying as a pending legislative item for an additional reading and public comment on the item as amended, while any adoption of an amendment approved by five (5) or more votes may result in the emergency ordinance, contract, or special consideration item advancing on its ordinary timeline under Rule 2.10.A.

The purpose of this rule is to ensure the public's right to provide testimony as early in the process as possible, and to the extent possible, prevent dispensing with or adoption of amendments without first receiving public input while then ensuring a hearing on the legislation in its final amended format.

**SPOKANE CITY COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE
ATTACHMENT C**

THE CITY OF SPOKANE



COUNCIL AGENDA

REGULAR MEETINGS FOR WEEK OF MARCH __ - ____, 2026

MISSION STATEMENT

**TO DELIVER EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SERVICES
THAT FACILITATE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
AND ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE.**

MAYOR LISA BROWN

COUNCIL PRESIDENT BETSY WILKERSON

COUNCIL MEMBER MICHAEL CATHCART

COUNCIL MEMBER PAUL DILLON

COUNCIL MEMBER SARAH DIXIT

COUNCIL MEMBER KITTY KLITZKE

COUNCIL MEMBER KATE TELIS

COUNCIL MEMBER ZACK ZAPPONE

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS 808 W. SPOKANE FALLS BLVD. CITY HALL SPOKANE,
WA 99201**

City of Spokane Guest Wireless access for Council Chambers:

Username: **COS Guest** (Please note the space in username)

Password: **K8vCr44y**

Both username and password are case sensitive.

Public participation in City Council meetings is governed by Council Rules 2.2, 2.15 and 2.16.

A complete copy of the council rules can be found here: [City Council Rules.](#)

SPOKANE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REVIEW SESSIONS (BEGINNING AT 11:00 A.M. EACH TUESDAY) AND LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS (BEGINNING AT 6:00 P.M. EACH WEDNESDAY) ARE BROADCAST LIVE ON CITY CABLE CHANNEL FIVE AND STREAMED LIVE ON THE CHANNEL 5 WEBSITE. THE SESSIONS ARE REPLAYED ON CHANNEL 5 ON THURSDAYS AT 6:00 P.M. AND FRIDAYS AT 10:00 A.M.

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA: The City Council agendas may be obtained prior to Council Meetings by accessing the City's website at <https://my.spokanecity.org/citycouncil/documents/>.

AGENDA REVIEW SESSION

(11:00 a.m. Tuesday)
(Council Chambers Lower Level of City Hall)
(No Public Testimony Taken)

ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL

INTERVIEWS OF NOMINEES TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

COUNCIL OR STAFF REPORTS OF MATTERS OF INTEREST

AGENDA REVIEW (Staff or Council Member briefings and discussion)

**CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRALS OR AMENDMENTS OF ITEMS ON COUNCIL
AGENDA**

APPROVAL BY MOTION OF AGENDA

EXECUTIVE SESSION

(Closed Session of Council)
(Executive Session may be held or reconvened during the 11:00 a.m. Agenda Review
Session or the 6:00 p.m. Legislative Session)

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

(6:00 p.m. Wednesday)
(Council Chambers Lower Level of City Hall)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

**POETRY AT THE PODIUM, WORDS OF INSPIRATION, AND SPECIAL
INTRODUCTIONS**

ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL

PROCLAMATIONS AND SALUTATIONS

REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Announcements regarding Changes to the City Council Agenda)

EXPRESS TESTIMONY

Speakers may address any items on this entire council agenda, including any ordinance, resolution, appointment and special consideration, and may speak for up to three (3) minutes. Speakers who opt to speak during this time may not speak again during the legislative session except for Hearings and Open Forum.

FINAL HEARINGS

Speakers have up to three (3) minutes to address each final hearing item. Final action will be taken by council on these items.

PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE ITEMS

Speakers have up to two (2) minutes to address the entire proposed legislative items section as a whole. No final action is expected to be taken by council on these items during this legislative session.

A. Special Budget Ordinances

B. Resolutions

C. Ordinances

PENDING LEGISLATIVE ITEMS

Speakers have up to two (2) minutes to address each item individually in the pending legislative items section. No final action will be taken by council on these items.

A. Boards and Commissions Appointments

B. Reports, Contracts and Claims

PUBLIC SAFETY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

URBAN EXPERIENCE

- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

REPORT OF THE MAYOR OF PENDING:

- 13.
- 14.

MINUTES

- 15.
- 16.

C. Emergency Ordinances

D. Special Budget Ordinances

E. Resolutions and Ordinances

F. Special Considerations

G. Hearing Items

FURTHER ACTION DEFERRED ON PENDING LEGISLATIVE ITEMS

FINAL LEGISLATIVE ITEMS

Speakers will have up to two (2) minutes to address all final legislative items as a whole. Council is expected to take final action on these items during the evening legislative session.

A. Boards and Commissions Appointments

B. Reports, Contracts and Claims

PUBLIC SAFETY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

URBAN EXPERIENCE

- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

REPORT OF THE MAYOR OF PENDING:

- 13.
- 14.

MINUTES

- 15.
- 16.

C. Emergency Ordinances (Require 5 Affirmative Votes)

D. Special Budget Ordinances (Require 5 Affirmative Votes)

E. Resolutions and Ordinances (Require 4 Affirmative Votes)

F. Special Considerations

OPEN FORUM

At the conclusion of legislative business, the Council may recess briefly and then convene an open public comment period for up to twenty (20) speakers, unless a majority of council members vote otherwise. If more than twenty (20) people sign up for open forum, the individuals assigned to the twenty (20) spaces available will be chosen at random, with preference given to individuals who have not spoken at open forum during the calendar month. Each speaker is limited to no more than two (2) minutes. In order to participate in Open Forum, you must sign up beginning at 5:00 p.m. on the Friday immediately preceding the legislative session and ending at 6:00 p.m. on the date of the meeting via the virtual testimony form linked in the meeting packet (<https://my.spokanecity.org/citycouncil/documents/>) or in person outside council chambers beginning at 8:00 a.m. on the day of the legislative session. The virtual sign-up form can also be found here: <https://my.spokanecity.org/citycouncil/meetings/signup/>. (If you are unable to access the form by clicking the hyperlink, please copy and paste the link address into your browser window.) Speakers must sign themselves in using a name. Instructions for virtual participation are provided on the form when you sign up. The Open Forum is a limited public forum; all matters discussed in the open forum shall relate to the affairs of the City other than items appearing on the final or draft agendas, pending hearing items, and initiatives or referenda in a pending election. Individuals speaking during the open forum shall address their comments to the Council President and shall not use profanity, engage in obscene speech, or make personal comment or verbal insults about any individual.

ADJOURNMENT

The _____, 2026 Regular Legislative Session of the City Council will be held and is adjourned to _____, 2026.

NOTE:

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) INFORMATION: The City of Spokane is committed to providing equal access to its facilities, programs and services for persons with disabilities. The Spokane City Council Chamber in the lower level of Spokane City Hall, 808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd., is wheelchair accessible and is equipped with an infrared assistive listening system for persons with hearing loss. Headsets may be checked out (upon presentation of picture I.D.) at the City Cable 5 Production Booth located on the First Floor of the Municipal Building, directly above the Chase Gallery or through the meeting organizer. Individuals requesting reasonable accommodations or further information may call, write, or email Human Resources at 509.625.6373, 808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd., Spokane, WA, 99201; or ddecorde@spokanecity.org. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may contact Human Resources through the Washington Relay Service at 7-1-1. Please contact us forty-eight (48) hours before the meeting date.
