

Minneapolis City Council
Rules of Order

Rules Committee
Thursday, August 29, 2013

“The great purpose of all rules is to serve the will of the assembly rather than to restrain it; to facilitate and not to obstruct.” —Thomas Jefferson

“American parliamentary law is built upon the principle that rights must be respected: of the majority, of the minority, of individuals and of absentees, and of all these together.”

—Henry M. Robert

Rules Revision: Project Goals

- Align with current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* (11th ed.), and incorporate new procedures and updated practices to match the Council's adopted parliamentary authority.
- Organize content into a series of 10 rules, arranged by subject matter.
- Eliminate duplicative/outdated practices.
- Add table of contents, charts, annotations, and notes to facilitate use.

Rules Revision: Examples

- Examples of changes in RONR, 11th ed.:
 - Refines definitions of secondary motions.
 - Modifies characteristics of subsidiary motions as a class.
 - Clarifies the relationship among restorative motions.
 - Substantially revises conditions causing a main motion to be out of order.
- Examples of eliminated matters:
 - Taxes Committee serving as board of equalization.
 - Regulatory, Energy & Environment sub-committee acting as hearing panel on evidentiary hearings for licenses or license applications

Rules Revision: Examples

- Examples of changes to conform to actual practice:
 - Defaulting to voice votes in committee, not roll-call votes.
- Examples of new matters:
 - Added rules about committee management and proceedings.
 - Provided for additional officers (e.g., majority and minority leaders).
 - Added new type and definition of “meeting” to recognize use of study sessions.
 - Added rules clarifying role of the Mayor in legislative processes (formal consideration, approval, or veto).

Rules Revision: Examples

- Examples of clarifications based on current rules:
 - Clarified what constitutes a “new question” with respect to rights in debate, subject to time limitations.
- Examples of annotations and notes:
 - Incorporated an ORDINANCE FLOWCHART to outline the 7 major steps to enact an ordinance.
 - Added a table showing the rank and handling of the ordinary motions.
 - Added a CHART OF REQUIRED VOTES.
 - Added a KEY TO PROCEDURAL CITATIONS & REFERENCES, including explanatory notes on key parliamentary provisions.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution approving the 2013 rules revision and designating the revision as the definitive *Rules of Order* of the Minneapolis City Council.

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