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To: The Honorable City Council

From: David Whitaker, Director  
Legislative Policy Division 

Date: November 17, 2025

Re: Suggested amendments to Council Rules at the Public Hearing

Attached is the resolution approving the amendments to the Rules of Order for the Detroit City Council. On Friday, at the Public Hearing, there were a few suggested amendments offered. Those suggestions are in red font in the resolution. They will have to be approved or deleted before the resolution is voted on.

11-18-25 Rec at table 9/0

Resolution By the Detroit City Council

RE: To Amend  
The Rules of Order of the Detroit City Council

**Whereas:** Section 4-105 of the 2012 Detroit City Charter states that “The City Council shall determine its own rules and order of business and shall provide for keeping a journal of its proceedings in the English language. The journal shall be a public record.” And,

**Whereas:** The following amendments are being made to the Rules of Order of the Detroit City Council:

2.0 COMPOSITION OF COUNCIL

Pursuant to the authority set forth in Section ~~4-106~~ **4-105** of the 2012 Detroit City Charter, The Detroit City Council is the City’s legislative body composed of nine (9) Council Members. There shall be seven (7) non-at-large districts, and one (1) at-large district established in the City and one (1) member shall be elected from each of the seven (7) non at-large district and two (2) members shall be elected from the at-large district. The two at-large members shall represent the whole City. One member is elected from each of the seven (7) non-at-large districts and two (2) members are elected at-large. All members serve a concurrent four-year term.

~~3.5.2 Joint Committees: Joint committees are created by City Council from two or more standing committees to perform a specific task for a limited duration. In the case of a joint committee, the Chair of the committee designated first by the President in order of referral shall serve as Chair of the joint committee and the Chair of the committee designated second shall serve as the vice Chair of the joint committee subject to the approval of the City Council.~~

~~3.6 Electronic Meeting: Any scheduled meeting of the Detroit City Council may be held as an electronic meeting, subject to the following:~~

~~3.6.1 Agenda: The agenda for every scheduled meeting shall state:~~

~~3.6.1.1 Rational: The reason why the meeting is being held electronically.~~

~~3.6.1.2 Public Participation: How members of the public may participate in the meeting electronically. If a telephone number, internet address, or both are needed to participate, that information must be provided specifically.~~

~~3.6.1.3 Persons With Disabilities: How persons with disabilities may participate in the meeting.~~

~~3.6.1.4 Posting: Be posted to the official City of Detroit, City's Clerk's, website at least 18 hours before the electronic meeting begins and made available to the public at least 2 hours before the electronic meeting begins. This publication of the agenda does not prohibit subsequent amendment of the agenda at the meeting.~~

~~3.6.2.1 Quorum: A quorum shall consist of a majority of members serving on City Council or on a Standing Committee. Once a quorum has been announced, the continued presence of a quorum during the meeting shall be determined by the member's video and audio connection. No member shall leave the meeting, while in session, if that member's departure will cause the loss of a quorum.~~

~~3.6.2.2 Attendance: Members are expected to remain in the meeting for its duration. Members shall maintain video and audio access throughout the meeting whenever present. If a member's audio and/or video is turned off, that member will be considered no longer in attendance. Any member wishing to leave the meeting, temporarily or permanently, shall inform the Chair who shall announce the member's departure.~~

~~3.6.2.3 Assignment to the Floor: To seek recognition by the Chair, a member shall use the electronic meeting's "hand raise" function. If, after a reasonable amount of time, the Chair has not noticed the electronic raised hand the member may physically raise their hand or speak out to get the Chair's attention.~~

~~3.6.2.4 Voting: In order to avoid any questions about how each member votes, any member objecting to the motion will state their name and their nay vote.~~

~~3.6.2.5 Technical: No action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.~~

~~3.6.2.6 Public Participation: Persons wishing to participate in the meeting during the Public Comment section of the agenda, shall follow the procedures outlined at the beginning of the meeting and included on the agenda. Although a public body may not require a person to provide their name or other information to participate, the electronic meeting provider may require such information to participate through their service.~~

~~3.6.2.7 Two way communication: All meetings held electronically must be conducted in a manner that permits two way communications so that~~

members of the body and members of the public can hear each other during the Public Comment section of the meeting.

~~3.6.3 Closed Sessions: Detroit City Council shall be permitted to conduct closed session meetings electronically when circumstances allow such electronic closed session meetings under the authority of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, subject to the following:~~

~~3.6.3.1 Notice: Notice of a meeting of a public body held electronically must clearly explain why the public body is meeting electronically.~~

~~3.6.3.2 Quorum Required: A quorum of the City Council shall be required to hold a Closed Session for representation and indemnification hearings.~~

~~3.6.3.3 Members of the Public Excluded: Members of the general public otherwise participating in a meeting of a public body held electronically under this section are to be excluded from participation in a closed session of the public body held electronically during that meeting if the closed session is convened and held in compliance with the requirements of this act applicable to a closed session.~~

~~3.6.3.4 Independent of Public Meeting: Closed sessions will be scheduled independently of public sessions to prevent inadvertent recording. Electronic "invitations" to attend the closed session will be issued to individual participants.~~

~~3.6.3.5 Participants: Participation in a virtual closed session shall be limited to Council Members, essential participants/witnesses, one designated staff member per Council office, and limited departmental staff (Law, Legislative Policy Division, etc.).~~

#### Section 4.0 Legislative Boards, Commissions, and Appointments:

4.2 Board of Review: Pursuant to Section 9-401 of the 2012 Detroit City Charter, there shall be a Board known as the Property Assessment Board of Review to hear and determine appeals from property tax assessments.

4.2.1 Members: The Property Assessment Board of Review consists of nine members with at least seven (7) members appointed from each of the non-at-large districts. **No more than two (2) members shall be appointed from any one district.**

#### 4.3 Board of Zoning Appeals

4.3.1 Appointment: The City Council shall appoint a nine-member Board. There shall be at least one member appointed from each of City Council's non-at-large districts ~~with at least one each from the non-at-large districts~~

4.3.5 Members: There shall be seven (7) non-at-large districts and one (1) at-large district established in the City and one (1) member shall be elected from each non at-large district and two (2) members shall be elected from the at-large district. There shall be at least one member appointed from each of City Council's non-at-large districts. No more than two (2) members shall be appointed from any one district.

#### 4.4 City Planning Commission

4.4.1 Appointment: The nine-member City Planning Commission shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the City Council.

There shall be at least one member appointed from each of City Council's non-at-large districts. ~~Seven (7) of the members shall be appointed, one (1) each, from the non-at-large districts.~~ No more than two (2) members shall be appointed from any one district. As far as possible, different professions and occupations shall be represented on the Commission.

4.5.1 Appointment: ~~The nine (9)~~ Historic Designation Advisory Board consists of twelve members, nine of whom are appointed to three year terms by the Detroit City Council; the other three are City Department heads (or their representatives) serving as ex-officio. The Historic Designation Advisory Board has a permanent staff of four FTEs. (12) permanent members of the 12 member Board shall be appointed by City Council.

4.5.3 Term: ~~The term of appointment for permanent members is three (3) years on a staggered term basis.~~ Nine of the members are appointed to three-year terms by the Detroit City Council.

#### 4.5 Historic Designation Advisory Board

4.5.1 Appointment: ~~The nine (9)~~ Historic Designation Advisory Board consists of twelve members, nine of whom are appointed to three year terms by the Detroit City Council. There shall be at least one member appointed from each of City Council's non-at-large districts. No more than two (2) members shall be appointed from any one district. The other three members are City Department heads (or their representatives) serving as ex-officio. The Historic Designation Advisory Board has a permanent staff of four FTEs. (12) permanent members of the 12 member Board shall be appointed by City Council.

## 9.0 Standing Committees

9.2 Committee Creation: The following Standing Committees are hereby created: Budget, Finance, and Audit; Internal Operations; Planning and Economic Development; Neighborhood and Community Services; and Public Health and Safety. The following committees are responsible for the associated departments. Line items and issues pertaining to various City departments and agencies will be directed to the Council committees as outlined below.

### **Public Health and Safety Standing Committee**

Airport  
Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environmental (*BSEED*)  
Department of Appeals and Administrative Hearings  
Department of Public Works (*DPW*)  
Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan  
Detroit Transportation Corporation (DTC)  
Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD)  
Detroit Wayne County Health Authority  
Environmental Affairs  
Fire Department  
Greater Detroit Resource Recovery Authority (GDRRA)  
Health Department  
Homeland Security & *Emergency Management*  
Municipal Parking  
Police Department  
Public Lighting  
Traffic and Parking Control  
Transportation

### **Internal Operations Standing Committee**

36<sup>th</sup> District Court  
Board of Ethics  
Board of Review  
~~Cable Commission and Other Broadcast Operations~~  
Citizen Advisory Councils  
City Clerk  
Civil Rights, Inclusion, and Opportunity (*CRIO*)  
Council Appointed Boards and Commissions  
Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT)  
~~Detroit Building Authority~~  
Detroit City Council  
Detroit Wayne Joint Building Authority  
Elections or Election Commission  
~~General Services~~

Human Resources  
Inspector General  
Law  
Mayor's Office  
Pension and Retirement Systems  
Retirement Protection Fund Investment Committee

**Budget, Finance and Audit Standing Committee**

Assessment  
Auditor General  
Budget  
Finance  
Financial Review Board  
Grants Management  
Income and Property Taxes  
Office of the Chief Financial Officer  
Citywide Contracts

**Neighborhoods and Community Services Standing Committee**

Arts  
Belle Isle  
Detroit Building Authority  
~~Cable Commission and Other Broadcast Operations~~  
Citizens Radio Patrol  
Community Advisory Councils  
Cultural Affairs  
Department of Neighborhoods (DON)  
Eastern Market  
General Services  
Historical  
Homeless Coordination  
Human Services  
Library  
Media Services  
Museums  
Neighborhood City Halls  
Ombudsman  
Parks and Recreation  
Riverfront Conservancy  
Senior Citizens  
Southeast Michigan Council of Government (SEMCOG)  
Special Events (including those with street closures)  
Youth  
Zoo

## Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee

Citizens District Council  
Convention Authority  
Detroit Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (DBRA)  
Detroit Building Authority  
Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC)  
Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation  
Detroit Landbank Authority (DLBA)  
Detroit Wayne County Port Authority (DWCPA)  
Detroit Wayne County Stadium Authority (DWCSA)  
Downtown Development Authority (DDA)  
Economic Development Corporation (EDC)  
Empowerment Zone  
Housing and Revitalization  
Licensing and Consumer Protection  
Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA)  
Planning and Development  
Workforce Development  
Zoning

### 10.0 Formal Session

*10.14.2.1 Motion to Waive Reconsideration:* A motion to waive reconsideration of a vote may be applied to any main motion that passes with a vote of two-thirds of the members serving. A motion that fails shall not have a waiver of reconsideration attached. If any member objects to placing a waiver of reconsideration on a vote, the waiver shall not be attached. If adopted, no member may reconsider a vote on the motion to which it is attached. For items approved to have a waiver of reconsideration, those waivers shall take effect just prior to the motion to adjourn.

### 15.0 ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS, AND OTHER LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES

15.5.3 Resolution writing Resolutions shall be prepared by the individual Council Member's office, by the requesting Department, or by the Legislative Policy division.

15.5.3.1 Resolutions in the Name of the Council: Resolutions in the name of the Council must be approved through a motion, requested by the Chair, at Formal Session. If a majority of those present indicate that they want to join the sponsor on the Resolution, then a motion may be made to put it in the name of the Council.

15.5.13 Honors: The City Council shall award citizens, visiting dignitaries and others as determined by the City Council with testimonial resolutions, testimonial memoriam resolutions, awards of recognition, Spirit of Detroit awards, and the Distinguished Service Award. Testimonial Resolutions and Spirit of Detroit Resolutions shall only be awarded to individuals deserving higher honors. Individuals deserving higher honors shall be defined as performing an act, an accomplishment, being involved in a socially beneficial unique event, or living a life devoted to social well being and the betterment of humankind and society

All Testimonial resolutions shall have original signatures by the Council member or their designee.

## 18.0 ASSIGNMENTS TO THE LEGISLATIVE POLICY DIVISIONS

18.3 Completed Assignments: All completed assignments will be directed to the Standing Committee whose jurisdiction covers the issue, for review and consideration. The assignments will be addressed to the Chair of the Committee, members of the Committee, the President as ex officio, all City Council members, and the Clerk's Office. Completed assignments shall not go back to the Formal Session for referral to a Standing Committee.

18.5 Annual City Council Calendar. Each year the Legislative Policy Division shall prepare an Annual Calendar for City Council. This annual calendar shall be approved by City Council no later than October 31<sup>st</sup> of the previous year. Changes to the approved Annual Calendar shall be done through resolution approved by the Body.

18.6 Legislative Agenda. A Legislative Agenda is defined as a list of priorities, goals, and polices that City Council plans to address during the Legislative term. In the first year of a new four year term, the Preliminary Legislative Agenda shall be completed by the end of the third-quarter of that first year. City Council shall vote to approve the final Legislative Agenda by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the subsequent year. In the subsequent years of the four year term, City Council shall review and determine if changes are needed to the Legislative Agenda. If changes are needed, they shall be approved by January 31<sup>st</sup> of those years.

## 22.0 PROCEDURES FOR PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

A person shall be permitted to address a meeting of the City Council subject to the following rules:

A brief written notice of a request to address the City Council shall be filed with the City Clerk not later than 2:00 PM of the business day immediately preceding the day of the scheduled meeting to which the request pertains. The Clerk shall provide reasonable assistance in the preparation of such request to any person requesting assistance.

A written notice of a request to address the City Council shall identify the person making the request. Identification shall include: full name, address (both resident and business),

phone number, and shall state the subject matter on which such person wishes to address the City Council.

The petitioner shall include a paragraph stating their standing and/or interest in the subject matter, the relief expected, what they want, and the number of times they have previously petitioned to speak before Council and the issue associated with each petition request.

Council may request the Law Department to opine on whether the petitioner is currently in litigation with the City of Detroit or otherwise has a pending claim against the City.

~~Upon approval of the request by the Body, the Chair of the Standing Committee or Committee of the Whole shall have the discretion as to when during the meeting the person shall be heard and shall also have the discretion to impose a reasonable limitation on the time allotted to hear such person.~~

After the request has been processed by the Clerk's Office, it shall appear as a line item on a Formal Session agenda. The request shall then be voted upon by the whole Body. A majority of the Body must approve the request for the petitioner to present to the whole Body at a Formal Session. ~~Approval by the whole Body is also required for a presentation at a Standing Committee meeting. If the Body approves the Standing Committee presentation the petition shall be referred to the appropriate Standing Committee.~~

The Chair of the Formal Session or of the Standing Committee may determine when the petitioner may be heard and may also have the discretion to impose a reasonable limitation on the time allotted to hear such person.

This procedure shall not apply to scheduled public hearings or to persons invited by the City Council to participate in discussions before the City Council.

### **Now Therefore Be It**

- Resolved:** That the Detroit City Council approves these amendments to the Rules of Order of the Detroit City Council. **And Be It Further**
- Resolved:** That these amended Rules become effective on January 1, 2026. **And Be It Finally**
- Resolved:** That the City Clerk's Office publishes these Rules as required.