



**TO:** City Manager Elizabeth Pauli  
**FROM:** Bill Fosbre, City Attorney; Doris Sorum, City Clerk  
**COPY:** City Council  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution – amending the Rules of Procedure of the Council of the City of Tacoma – December 13, 2022, and December 20, 2022  
**DATE:** November 21, 2022

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**SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:**

Request for a resolution amending the Rules of Procedure of the Council of the City of Tacoma; to clarify remote participation in meetings; add duties and expectations for members; revise the agenda order of business and Consent Agenda; update public comment and public forum periods; revise the Council Member vacancy appointment process; and provide minor revisions throughout for clarity, consistency, and gender-neutral language.

**COUNCIL SPONSORS:**

Council Member Hines; Chair, Government Performance and Finance Committee.

**BACKGROUND:**

**This Department’s Recommendation is Based On:**

The Rules of Procedure of the Council of the City of Tacoma (Council Rules) were last amended by Resolution No. 40980 in June 2022, to comply with changes in Washington State law relating to open public meetings. On August 16, 2022, the City Attorney and City Clerk provided a presentation to the Government Performance and Finance (GPF) Committee for suggested revisions based on feedback from staff, Mayor Woodards, and Chair Hines. Additional suggestions from GPF and the Finance Director have also been added.

Suggested revisions relate to on in-person meeting attendance, current City Council practice and expectations, staff recommendations, a revised Council vacancy appointment process, and improving clarity and consistency. All the proposed changes were presented to the City Council at a study session on September 20, 2022.

**Summary of Proposed Revisions:**

- Rule 1.F: Clarify that the City Council prefers and values in-person attendance at meetings, add expectations about in-person attendance, and note the preference that meetings are chaired by someone attending in-person.
- Rule 2: Add duties and expectations of the Mayor and Council Members, and note the preference that meetings are chaired by someone attending in-person.
- Rule 4.A: Revise the agenda Order of Business to add Agenda Modifications, and update the Consent Agenda to:
  - clarify which items are placed on the Consent Agenda;
  - add approval of requests to quiet title or clear title issues on real property;
  - add approval of payments (expenses, materials, purchases, and payroll);
  - add approval of purchase resolutions (or amendments) for amounts not exceeding \$2,000,000.
- Rule 9: Replace Virtual Forum with an additional Community Forum on the fourth regular business meeting of the month, and update time limits for Community Forum and individual comments, based on current practices.
- Rule 16: Update the vacancy appointment process to:
  - Create an additional stage of presentations if there are more than 10 applicants.
  - Final votes on finalists are in random order as determined by the City Clerk.
  - If an applicant does not receive a majority vote, the applicant with the fewest votes is removed from consideration, and another vote taken; repeated until an applicant receives a majority of the votes.
- Minor revisions throughout for clarity, consistency, and gender-neutral language.



**2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

**Equity and Accessibility:**

**Civic Engagement:** *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

*Representation at public meetings will reflect the diversity of the Tacoma community*

*Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.*

**Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).**

This resolution updates the Council Rules to provide clarity and reflect actual current practices in various sections, including roles, agendas, and comment periods. The existing format for Virtual Forum as a separate meeting (with its own agenda), started during the COVID-19 Proclamation of Emergency, has caused confusion for those wishing to provide comment. The revisions simplify these options by renaming Virtual Forum to an additional Community Forum, and updating the length of Public Comment and Community Forum periods based on current practice.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Amendments to the City Council Rules of Procedure require two readings of the City Council; first reading is planned for December 13, 2022, with final reading on December 20, 2022.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Proposed Revisions to Council Rules