



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: William C. Fosbre, City Attorney, City Attorney’s Office
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Resolution – Amending the *Rules of Procedure of the Council of the City of Tacoma* by adding a new Rule 8.B, entitled “Amendments to Motions, Resolutions, and Ordinances,” for the purpose of establishing best practices related to amending Council legislation; by changing the name of “Citizens’ Forum” to “Community Forum”; and by changing references from “citizen” to “resident” or “community member” – December 10, 2019
DATE: December 4, 2019

SUMMARY:

Amending the *Rules of Procedure of the Council of the City of Tacoma* by adding a new Rule 8.B, entitled “Amendments to Motions, Resolutions, and Ordinances,” for the purpose of establishing best practices related to amending Council legislation; by changing the name of “Citizens’ Forum” to “Community Forum”; and by changing references from “citizen” to “resident” or “community member.”

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

- Encourage and promote an efficient and effective government, which is fiscally sustainable and guided by engaged residents.

BACKGROUND:

The current *Rules of Procedure of the Council of the City of Tacoma* (“*Rules of Procedure*”) does not contain a process for amending Council legislation beyond *Robert’s Rules of Order*. The Government Performance and Finance Committee (“GPFC”) reviewed the matter and determined that the processing of legislative amendments should be done in a manner that is fair, equitable, transparent, effective and respectful towards the public, constituent groups, and to the Council itself. The GPFC made a recommendation to the full Council that the *Rules of Procedure* should be amended to include a process for amending Council legislation, which the Council considered at its Study Sessions on November 19, 2019, and December 3, 2019, and instructed the City Attorney’s Office to prepare an amendment to the *Rules of Procedure* that encourages Council Members to consider a number of best practices prior to submission of an amendment that will substantially change the policy scope or policy language, use of City resources, or costs to the City if the original legislation is amended.

In addition to the above recommendation, the Mayor requests the name of “Citizens’ Forum” be changed to “Community Forum,” and to change references to the word “citizen” to either “resident” or “community member,” to make public participation in Council meetings more inclusive.

ISSUE:

The City Council does not have a standard process for amending legislation; consequently, varying practices have been used, which can be less fair, equitable, transparent, effective, and respectful towards the public, constituent groups, and to the Council itself.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Council can continue to use varying practices; however, this approach does not reach the Council’s policy goal related to its legislation process.



RECOMMENDATION:

The *Rules of Procedure* should be amended by adding a new Rule 8.B, entitled “Amendments to Motions, Resolutions, and Ordinances,” for the purpose of establishing best practices related to amending Council legislation; by changing the name of “Citizens’ Forum” to “Community Forum”; and by changing references to the word “citizen” to either “resident” or “community member.”

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact.