

# Procedural Rules of the Cedar Rapids City Council (2026)

Adopted by Resolution No. 0547-05-26

## Part I General Provisions

Rule 1. Scope of Rules. These rules shall govern the conduct of the Cedar Rapids City Council (hereinafter "Council") and shall be interpreted to ensure fair and open deliberations and decision making.

Rule 2. Technical Parliamentary Forms. Except as specifically required by applicable law, Council resolution, or these rules, the Council shall not use any formal points of parliamentary order, personal privilege, parliamentary inquiry or other technical forms except as provided in Robert's Rules of Order.

Rule 3. Matters Not Covered. Any matter, order or procedure not covered by these rules shall be referred to the presiding officer, who shall decide the matter with the assistance and advice of a City Attorney in conformity with the purpose of these rules in a fair and expeditious manner. The decision of the presiding officer may be reversed by a majority vote of the Council.

Rule 4. Interpretation. These rules are intended to supplement and shall be interpreted to conform with the statutes of the state of Iowa and the ordinances of the City of Cedar Rapids.

## Part II Time and Place of Meeting

Rule 5. Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Council shall be as set forth by City Council resolution. Council may continue, reschedule, or postpone any regular meeting to another date and time, or may cancel a meeting.

Rule 6. Special Meetings. Special meetings may be called by the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore in the Mayor's absence, or by any five council members. A call for a special meeting shall be in writing and filed with the City Clerk unless the announcement of the special meeting is made at a regular meeting at which council members are present. The call for the special meeting shall specify the day, hour, and subject of the meeting and shall be posted on the bulletin board at City Hall where other official notices are posted.

Rule 7. Quorum. A majority of all members elected to the Council shall constitute a quorum for transaction of business. Passage of an ordinance, amendment, or resolution requires a majority vote of all of the members of the Council except as otherwise provided by law. Passage of a motion requires a majority vote of members present.

## Part III Agenda

Rule 8. Preparation of Agenda. Prior to each Regular Council meeting the City Clerk shall provide notice thereof as provided for by applicable law. Notice shall include a tentative Agenda which shall contain all items the Council anticipates acting upon at the meeting.

Rule 9. Agenda Deadlines. Items are placed on an agenda pursuant to direction by the City Council.

- a. Items proposed for action or discussion may be included on a City Council agenda if the City Manager, City Clerk, City Attorney, or persons authorized by them, submits a request to the City Clerk by the deadline specified by the City Clerk. Items to be included for a special meeting must be submitted at the time the special meeting is called.
- b. Agenda items may be placed on an agenda at the direction of any member of the Council upon concurrence by at least three other council members. When such a member requests the City Clerk to include an item on an upcoming agenda, the member shall also provide the names of the other three members who concur as to the item's placement on an agenda.

Rule 10. Approval of Agenda. The Council has the final authority over meeting agendas. Before taking up either the consent agenda or the regular agenda, the Council shall approve the meeting agenda by motion. As part of the approval, Council members may:

- a. Remove items from the agenda;
- b. Move items from the Consent Agenda to the Regular Agenda;
- c. Change the order of items on the agenda; and
- d. Ask to have any abstentions and recusals noted for the record.

To ensure all items can be adequately prepared for presentation by staff, a Council member should make every attempt to notify the City Manager, City Clerk, and Mayor ahead of the meeting if they intend to remove an item from the agenda or move an item from Consent Agenda to the Regular Agenda. Items may not be added to an agenda at a Council meeting, unless the addition can be completed in a manner that is compliant with Iowa Open Meetings Law and any other controlling law.

#### Part IV Meetings Procedures

Rule 11. Consent Agenda

A. General. The Council will make such use of a Consent Agenda as it sees fit to handle routine matters which are not controversial and do not need further discussion. Items listed under the Consent Agenda may be approved with one motion and one Council vote. To determine whether items are to be placed on the Consent Agenda the following guidelines, not intended to be exclusive or necessarily applicable in all cases, will apply:

1. The item has previously come before the council for explanation and discussion with city staff such that additional discussion will be repetitive and unnecessary.
2. Council has been given typical background supporting documentation regarding the item in the Council's agenda package.
3. It is reasonable for the City Clerk and City Manager to assume that the Council is in general agreement and that the Council will vote to approve the item.

4. The item does not impact more than 10% of the city's annual operational budget.
5. The item does not have a material impact on the organization.

By example, and not limitation, the following items would ordinarily be placed on the Consent Agenda:

- Payment of bills and payroll
- Purchases of budgeted items
- Beer, liquor and wine applications, transfers, etc.
- Permits and licenses
- Authorizing travel or leave of absences
- Events
- Encroachments
- Accepting easements
- Preliminary plats (minor and major)
- Final plats
- Internal operational or administrative matters
- Accepting maintenance and subdivision bonds and authorizing payment or reimbursement
- Releasing escrow for sanitary sewer bonds and releasing subdivision and sidewalk bonds
- Releasing security deposits
- Installation of stop signs
- Accepting water mains
- Signature cards for bank accounts, drawdowns for HUD, etc.
- Extending storm and sanitary sewer facilities
- Accepting agreements for private storm water detention
- Appointments to boards and commissions
- Setting public hearing dates
- Accepting deeds

- Intent to assess, levy, etc. for nuisance abatement, cleanup, non-payment of utility bills
- Change orders
- Paving and sidewalk petitions and assessment agreements
- Execution of grant agreements
- Execution of 28E Agreements and intergovernmental matters (e.g. IDOT and/or federal/CDBG)
- Awarding bids for public improvements upon which competitive bidding has already occurred
- Referral of condemnation proceedings to the compensation commission.

By example, and not limitation, the following items would ordinarily be placed on the Regular Agenda:

- Ordinances
- Bond Issue Proceedings
- Bid awards for public improvements when the report of bid occurs during the same meeting
- Resolution with respect to the adoption of the Resolution of Necessity
- Items which are to be discussed and then action (resolution or motion) to be taken

B. Procedure. The City Manager and City Clerk, and other staff as necessary, shall consult with each other for the purpose of determining the placement of items on the Consent Agenda. Council consensus as to placement on the Consent Agenda may be solicited as necessary. Once an Agenda is posted, an item may be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda by Council motion as provided for in Rule 10. The item will be placed on the Regular Agenda and considered by the Council in the order in which it was removed and placed.

Rule 12. Ordinance Consideration. Unless prohibited by controlling law, rule or regulation, the Council may consider and act upon an ordinance at the same meeting during which a public hearing was conducted on said ordinance and may do so as it deems necessary to handle such routine ordinances as do not appear to be controversial and do not need further discussion. Similarly, the Council may, as it deems appropriate, combine the second and third readings of ordinances, as expressly provided for by applicable law.

Rule 13. Closed Session. An item may only be placed on an agenda for Closed Session after review and approval by the City Attorney.

Rule 14. Presiding Officer. The Mayor, or in the Mayor's absence or incapacity, the Mayor Pro Tempore, shall be the presiding officer at all Council meetings. If both the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore are absent, any member of the Council present may call the meeting to order and the Council shall then immediately select a temporary presiding officer from those present by a majority vote.

Rule 15. Control of Discussion. The presiding officer shall control discussion of the Council on each Agenda item to ensure full participation in accordance with these rules.

Rule 16. Order of Consideration of Agenda. Except as otherwise provided in these rules, each Agenda item shall be considered in the order as shown on the Agenda. Consent Agenda items shall be considered with a single motion and vote.

Rule 17. Closing Debate. Discussion shall be closed on any item by the presiding officer. A call for the vote shall not close discussion if any member of the Council still wishes to be heard or the presiding officer determines the continued participation by a person as set forth in Rule 34 will be helpful to the Council.

#### Part V Public Participation

Rule 18. Public's Opportunity to Address Council. Persons, including Council members, are afforded multiple opportunities to address the Council during Council meetings, whether during Public Hearings, the Public Comment period, or the Public Input period.

1. Public Hearings. Public Hearings are an opportunity for the public to address the Council on a specific agenda item. Comments will only be accepted that are directed to the agenda item subject to the hearing. Sign-up is not required to provide comment during a Public Hearing.
2. Public Comment Period. The Public Comment period is an opportunity for the public to address the Council on any subject pertaining to Council action scheduled for that meeting. Advance sign-up is required.
3. Public Input Period. The Public Input period is an opportunity for Cedar Rapids residents, property owners, and business owners to speak on issues that are germane to the City but not on the agenda. Advance sign-up is required.

Rule 19. Manner of Addressing Council. A member of the public desiring to address the Council during the Public Comment period or Public Input period shall sign up to speak in writing and must include their name, address, group affiliation (if any) and the agenda topic or subject matter on which they desire to speak. If a person does not include all of this information when they sign up to speak, that person will not be permitted to address the Council.

Rule 20. Time Limit on Remarks by the Public. Members of the public shall be limited to three minutes speaking time unless additional time is granted by the presiding officer. The presiding officer, or designee, may group related comments. All comments from the public on any one topic or agenda item under Council consideration may be limited to a fixed period by the presiding officer. The Council may thereafter extend the fixed period for that topic or agenda item by motion.

Rule 21. Scope of Remarks by the Public Limited. Public comments accepted shall be limited as follows:

1. Comments must be germane to City business and limited only to those subject(s) identified in sign-up. The presiding officer shall rule on the germaneness of public comments. Comments are not germane if outside the scope of the City's jurisdiction.
2. Only speech protected by the First Amendment is permissible. Personal, irrelevant, slanderous, or obscene remarks, as well as loud, threatening, or abusive language is not allowed.

3. Persons other than an employee, employee's representative, employee's attorney, or member of an employee's immediate family will not be allowed to provide comment on personnel matters involving city employees. The Cedar Rapids City Council will not entertain comments on personnel matters regarding an employee who is represented by an attorney outside the presence of that attorney. The council will not allow or entertain public comment or discussion of personal matters or other matters under consideration by the Civil Service Commission or subject to the Iowa Public Employees Relations Act.
4. Comments alleging criminal conduct or illegal activity by any person other than a member of the Council are not germane to City business and will not be permitted. Members of the public are instead encouraged to report their concerns to the police officer in attendance at the Council meeting.

Rule 22. Rules of Conduct by Public. All persons attending Council meetings must adhere to the following rules of conduct:

1. No person shall engage in disorderly, disruptive, disturbing, delaying or boisterous conduct, such as, but not limited to, handclapping, stomping of feet, whistling, making noise, use of obscene language or gestures, yelling, or similar demonstrations, which conduct substantially interrupts, delays, or disturbs the peace and good order of the proceedings of the Council.
2. When called upon by the presiding officer or designee, the person shall step to the lectern, state their name, community where they live, and group affiliation (if any) and speak clearly into the microphone, unless authorized otherwise by the presiding officer.
3. Speakers must remain at the lectern while speaking.
4. Do not approach the dais.
5. Documents are not accepted as part of the Public Comment or Public Input periods. However, documents can be made available to the Council by handing those to the police officer to the right of the lectern.
6. Failure to follow these rules may result in forfeiture of the opportunity to speak, removal from the meeting, etc. pursuant to Rule 35 herein.

#### Part VI Council Action

Rule 23. Motion Required. All action requiring a vote shall be moved by a member of the Council.

Rule 24. Motion to Reconsider. A motion to reconsider may be made by a Council member and shall require a majority vote of all Council members unless a greater number was required for the original action.

Rule 25. Motion to Defer. The City does not recognize a motion to table. Instead, items may be deferred to a later meeting (whether to a date specified or not). Any motion to table shall be construed as a motion to defer.

Rule 26. Call for Vote. At the conclusion of debate the presiding officer shall call for a vote, provided however, a majority of the Council may require a vote at any time.

Rule 27. Failure to Vote. A member of the city council who fails to vote, for any reason other than properly abstaining, will be deemed to have voted with the majority of the votes cast.

Rule 28. Consideration Out of Order. With the consent of the Council any Agenda item may be considered out of order at the request of a Council member.

Rule 29. Recording Names of Moving Members. The City Clerk shall record the name of the Council member making each motion, the second, and the vote of each Council member.

Rule 30. Consideration of Matters Not on the Agenda. Except as to matters which by law require the publication of notice before consideration by the Council, any member of Council may, at the close of the regular Agenda, bring a matter not on the Agenda to the Council's attention. Council may act upon such matters or direct such matter be included upon a later Agenda subject to complying with the open meeting requirements of state law.

#### Part VII Miscellaneous

Rule 31. Motions. At any appropriate place on the Agenda any member of the Council may make a motion for the Council to act upon any matter if the motion is germane to the matter under consideration.

Rule 32. Suspension of Rules. These rules or any part hereof, may be suspended for a specific purpose by a two-thirds majority of the Council.

Rule 33. Hearings. Any other rules to the contrary notwithstanding, unless required by statute or necessary to conform with requirements for a special purpose, a hearing shall commence when declared open by the presiding officer and shall close when closed by the presiding officer or by other formal action of the Council.

Rule 34. Informal Requests. A member of the Council, before or during the consideration of any matter, or in the course of a hearing, may request and receive information, explanations or the opinions of any City employee, or any other person.

Rule 35. Enforcement. Any person who violates Part V of these rules, whether by making threatening, abusive, personal, impertinent, irrelevant, slanderous or profane remarks which disrupt, disturb or otherwise impede the orderly conduct of the council meeting, or who otherwise engages in any other conduct which disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of any council meeting, shall be upon the direction of the presiding officer or a majority of the council, barred from further attendance at that council meeting. In that event, it would be the duty of a peace officer, upon the request of the presiding officer, to issue such commands and take such actions as may be necessary to eliminate the disruptive conduct and restore peace and order to the proceedings.