



## CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

### AGENDA ITEM

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Report: Adoption of Rules Pertaining to Council Meeting Procedures and Decorum

1. Intro. of Ordinance Amending Glendale Municipal Code, 1995, Sections 2.04.080, 2.04.090, 2.04.120, and 2.04.140 and Deleting Section 2.04.150
2. Resolution Adopting Rules of Order, Procedure and Decorum for the Conduct of City Council Meetings

### COUNCIL ACTION

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**Item Type:** Action Item

**Approved for** May 13, 2025 **calendar**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The City Council received a report on January 28, 2025 on revising public comment on agenda items and non-agenda items during regular meetings, rules of order and decorum, and related meeting management issues. The Council directed staff to prepare the necessary ordinance and resolution to make modifications to the City Council meetings, including oral communications, Council deliberation and instituting rules of decorum. Staff has prepared an ordinance amending the Glendale Municipal Code and a Resolution adopting rules for order, procedure and decorum in Council meetings.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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That the Council introduce the Ordinance amending the Municipal Code and consider the proposed Resolution Adopting Rules of Order, Procedure and Decorum for the Conduct of City Council Meetings

## **ANALYSIS**

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### Oral Communications and Public Comments

At the January 2025 meeting, the Council reviewed different options for providing for public comment on agenda and non-agenda items. Currently, members of the public can speak on agenda items as the items are called and on non-agenda items during Oral Communications. The Council directed staff to prepare revisions to the City's current policy to allow two periods of oral communications. During the First Period of Oral Communications, members of the public can speak on agenda or non-agenda items. Members of the public can speak on agenda items during the First Period of Oral Communications or when the agenda item is called, but not both. The Second Period of Oral Communications will be for non-agenda items only. As directed, staff drafted a resolution adopting Rules of Order, Procedure and Decorum for the Conduct of City Council Meetings ("Rules"). In sum, the Rules will provide for the following with respect to public comment:

- A First Period of Oral Communications ("First Period") will allow comment on agenda or non-agenda items;
- The First Period will be for a maximum of 30 minutes of public comment;
- Members of the public can speak on agenda and non-agenda items during the First Period;
- If a member of the public speaks on one or more agenda items during the First Period, then he or she cannot speak on those agenda items when they are called;
- If a member of the public speaks on non-agenda items during the First Period, then he or she cannot speak during the Second Period of Oral Communications;
- The maximum time limit for individual speakers during First Period is three minutes per speaker, which can be reduced by the Mayor depending on the number of speakers;
- Community Event Announcements will remain, subject to a three minute per speaker limitation.
- The Council had a discussion about limitations on ceding time to other speakers, leaning on requiring the people who were ceding and receiving the time to be in Chambers, but did not provide final direction. Council can provide direction on this item.

### Rules Pertaining to Council Debate and Deliberation

Council also directed staff to include rules governing Council debate and deliberation. The proposed Rules will:

- Prohibit interruptions while a councilmember has the floor, unless a point of order is raised (and the Mayor/Presiding Officer rules on the point of order);
- Allow every councilmember the opportunity to speak before a councilmember has a second opportunity to speak;
- Provide an initial speaking time of five minutes for initial comments by councilmembers, followed by three minutes for subsequent rounds of comments from councilmembers;
- The speaking limits will not include time utilized for questions and may be waived or extended by the Mayor; and
- There will no limit on the number of rounds of deliberation, unless a councilmember calls the question.

### Councilmember Future Agenda Requests

- For Councilmember future agenda requests, Council directed staff to prepare a revision to the Rule to streamline the discussion. As directed, the proposed Rule provides that the requesting Councilmember will have two minutes to make a short presentation as to why he or she would like staff to prepare a report on the item. Councilmember would be able to ask questions for clarification but there would be no further discussion or deliberation. After questions, it would go to a vote.
- Additionally, staff recommends a modification to the Rules that will allow Council to give approval for matters like letters of support or opposition where it deems a subsequent report not necessary.

### Rules for Decorum & Removal of Disruptive Individuals

As directed by Council, the proposed Rules will formalize rules for decorum and removal of disruptive individuals. The Rules will include the following:

- A prohibition on the utterance of threatening, abusive or loud language or sounds, whistling, clapping, booing, hissing, stamping of feet, repeated waving of arms, presenting of signs that interfere with the participation of others in the audience, or other similar disruptive acts;
- A prohibition on any signs, placards, banners/flags, props or similar items larger than 8.5 x 11, illuminated, or attached to any pole, stick or other device;
- A prohibition on all noisemakers;

- A requirement that members of the public only address the body from the audience microphone, unless authorized by the Mayor/Chair to speak from another location;
- A requirement that members of the public direct comments to the body as a whole or the presiding officer, and not to staff, individual members of the body, or the public and that no person shall be permitted to interrupt members of the body, staff presentations, or members of the public who are at the microphone during a meeting;
- Speakers must cease speaking immediately when their speaking time has ended;
- Public comment on agenda items must relate to the subject matter of that item; and
- Non-agenda Oral Communications are limited to the matters within the City Council's subject matter jurisdiction.

The Rules pertaining to decorum and disruptions will be enforced as follows:

- The Mayor or presiding officer will provide at least one warning to a speaker that is being disruptive. The presiding officer should explain the conduct that is disruptive, and what will be the consequence of failing to abide by the warning, e.g. that the speaker will be terminated from speaking or removed from Chambers.
- After providing at least one verbal warning, if an individual continues to speak in violation of an order to cease speaking (e.g. is off-topic or has exceed the allotted time) or is otherwise disrupting the proceedings, the presiding officer may order the individual to be removed from chambers. Again, when providing the warning, the presiding officer should explain the conduct that is disruptive, and what will be the consequence of failing to abide by the warning, e.g. that the individual may be removed from the Council chambers. Before ordering the sergeant-at-arms to remove a disruptive individual, the presiding officer should give the disruptive individual the opportunity to leave chambers voluntarily.
- Warnings will not be required for use of force or true threats of force.
- The enforcement of rules – whether it be enforcing the requirement to stay on topic, to stop speaking when the allotted time is up, or removing individuals for disrupting the proceedings – must be neutrally applied and may not discriminate against viewpoint of the speaker/attendee.

## Other Agenda and Meeting Management Issues

- Cutoff Time: Council authorized a Rule that would continue remaining agenda items at 11 p.m. subject to the conclusion of the item pending as of 11 p.m. and the Council's right to extend the meeting after conferring with the City Manager. Additionally, the meeting will not be adjourned until completion of the Second Period of Oral Communications and New Business (closed session reporting out).
- Removal of Agenda Item After Posting of the Agenda: The Council directed preparation of a Rule that requires items to be removed from posted agendas only at the Council meeting and only if there are no objections or a vote of the Council if there is an objection.
- Removal of Agenda Preview: Council directed removal of the Agenda Preview item on the agenda in light of the publication of the Agenda Forecast.
- Wide Angle of Cameras During Public Comment. At the January 2025 meeting, Council directed the showing of a wide angle of the Council dais during public comments on agenda and non-agenda items, subject to a carve-out for public hearing items. The Mayor has inquired about returning the cameras to their previous display or doing a split screen during public comment. As he was with the minority during the January discussion, a councilmember on the prevailing side would be required to reconsider this item.
- Reconsideration and Rescission. This Rule would clarify that whether a motion previously passed or failed, it would take a member of the prevailing side to request reconsideration or rescission. The proposed Rule would also permit motions for reconsideration to be raised at a subsequent meeting. Last, the proposed Rule would codify the existing interpretation of allowing a request for rescission or reconsideration to be made by a councilmember who was not on the Council at the time of the decision being reconsidered.
- Rotation of Voting: Staff requests whether Council would like to incorporate a policy to rotate the alphabetical order of the votes taken on items and staff can incorporate that into the policy. Alternatively, the voting order can be randomly selected; however, that will likely require more work than simply rotating alphabetically.

## Ordinance Amending Municipal Code

Staff also recommends introduction and adoption of an ordinance to amend the Municipal Code to remove the Order of Business and other changes from the Code and implement it by Resolution. The Code will refer to Council adopted resolutions but

removing the Order of Business and other provisions from the Code, such as oral communications and time limits, will make future revisions easier to implement.

## **STAKEHOLDERS/OUTREACH**

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N/A.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

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There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA/NEPA)**

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This activity involves organizational and administrative activities of the government related to election procedures and eligibility requirements, and such internal procedural and eligibility changes have no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. As such, this action is not a “project” subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) 14 Cal. Code Regs § 15378.

## **CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE**

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This item is exempt from campaign disclosure requirements.

## **ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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1. Council can choose not to adopt the proposed Rules of Order, Procedure and Decorum.
2. Council can choose an alternative not identified by staff.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION**

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### **Submitted by:**

Michael J. Garcia, City Attorney

### **Prepared by:**

Michael J. Garcia, City Attorney

### **Approved by:**

Roubik R. Golanian, P.E., City Manager

## **EXHIBITS/ATTACHMENTS**

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