



**Minutes of the Oberlin City Council Work Session**  
Held in Council Chambers  
May 21, 20102

**Work Session – 6:30 p.m. – Council Chambers**  
Purpose: Regarding City Council Procedures and Practices

**Members present for the meeting included:** Bryan Burgess, Scott Broadwell, Sharon Soucy, Ronnie Rimbert, Elizabeth Meadows, Aaron Mucciolo, and Charles Peterson

**City Staff Present:** Eric Severs, Law Director; Eric Norenberg, City Manager; Belinda Anderson, Clerk of Council

President Rimbert called the work session to order at 6:39 p.m. The meeting was then turned over to Vice-President Soucy. Soucy explained the purpose for the meeting and reviewed the following key points:

1. Discuss and consider City Council Procedures and Practices:
  - a. Notification procedures regarding Councilmember absences
    - Any member that is absent should contact the City Clerk and Council President with a brief explanation of the absence.
  - b. Meeting operation
    - Political candidates or issue advocates at meetings
      - i. In general Council discourages use of Council meetings for political platforms. However they can contact the Council President, who can poll the members of Council for consent, particularly if it is an issue advocate as opposed to an individual candidate. This would require unanimous consent.
    - Three minute rule
      - i. Rule is not used to limit the rights of any individual.
      - ii. Can be found in Council rules and is used to give more people a chance to speak.
      - iii. This rule operates at the Council Presidents discretion but in general they try to stick to it.
        1. One exception to the rule is for issues of great interest that appeals to a large group of people. If that group has assigned a spokesperson then more than likely the Council President will suspend the three minute rule.
    - Proclamations

- i. Proclamations are approved by the Council President and Vice President.
  - ii. Special Proclamations (Non-routine)
    1. Materials needed three weeks in advance.
- c. Proposed future Agenda items
- Discuss during Council Communications for possible referral
  - Must be reviewed at Agenda Meeting in order to appear on the agenda
  - Written document for packet should be provided
  - Referrals from Boards and Commissions – Liaison role
    - i. Any sort of formal ordinance that a commission member is interested in should come to the City Manager and the Law Director, before it is considered at a City Council Meeting.
      1. No ordinance will be considered by Council without the Law Director’s approval.
    - ii. The Liaison role is to be present in order to report back to Council or to provide information to that particular commission or board.
    - iii. A liaison must not participate in a discussion in any form that tries to influence the outcome of the discussion.
    - iv. Council should conduct its deliberations in a public meeting. In some cases Council acts in a quasi- judicial capacity to some appeals, and those deliberations should take place in Council Chambers, not behind closed doors. (i.e., Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals)
    - v. Boards and Commissions are advisory bodies they advise Council on matters concerning the City. They are not to be used to serve special interest for Council. Council can decide whether or not to accept the advice of one of its advisory boards.
- d. Open Meeting Requirements
- Informal meetings or gatherings
    - i. Council is to avoid meeting with more than three members.
  - Avoid serial communication via e-mail.
    - i. Conducting public business via e-mail with the intent to form a consensus of all Council members is prohibited.
      1. Forward email to Council President and Vice President.
      2. Address the matter under Council Communications.
      3. Address matter in agenda session.
- e. Councilmember Obligations
- Board/Commission Liaison (attendance and communications)
    - Council members will be assigned to at least one or more boards.
    - Must attend the meetings. If you cannot you must notify the chair of that commission.
  - Be thoroughly familiar with agenda materials and ask questions in advance (if possible)

- NIMS and other training – required vs. optional
  - Retreat participation
  - Attendance and participation in community events
    - Would like to see Council Members attend these Community events whenever possible.
- f. Councilmember contact with City staff
- Questions, not direction
  - Keep City Manager (and/or other appointee) informed
  - Avoid involvement in personnel matters (inform City Manager)
2. Discuss and consider forming a City Council Subcommittee to review Council Rules and draft proposed revisions.

Charles Peterson, Aaron Mucciolo, and Scott Broadwell volunteered to serve on a subcommittee to reexamine Council Rules.

3. Wrap-up

Tony Mealy, Oberlin resident, expressed his concerns with Council speaking under Item 2 on the agenda titled:

Any Concerns that are not on the Agenda May be Brought to the Attention of Council at this time. He stated that this item was on the agenda for Public Comment not Council. Council would get its turn at the end of the meeting under Council Communications.

Soucy explained to Mr. Mealy that under Council Rules that item is also there for Council comments. She remarked that the subcommittee would take his concerns under advisement as it begins its review of the Council Rules. Burgess added that if Council did speak under this portion of the agenda the Public could be confident in knowing that no action would be taken under that item and additional discussion would be held allowing for public input at a later date.

Being that there was no further business to come before Council the meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

**Attest:**

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BELINDA B. ANDERSON, CMC  
CLERK OF COUNCIL

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RONNIE RIMBERT  
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

Approved: 6/18/2012

Posted: 6/19/2012