

*City of Framingham*  
The City Council of Framingham

CITY OF FRAMINGHAM  
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

2021 FEB 10 P 3:52



ORDER NO. 2020-041  
REQUEST OF COUNCILOR LONG

UPON THE REQUEST OF COUNCILOR LONG, THE CITY OF FRAMINGHAM, THROUGH THE FRAMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL, IT IS SO ORDERED:

That Rule 9 of the Rules of the Framingham City Council be amended by:

Deleting the second sentence, "With the exception of the responsibilities assigned to the finance subcommittee through the home rule charter, the subcommittees or ad hoc committees have full discretion as to the inclusion of items within their scope or charge on said committee agendas, unless a majority vote of the council decides otherwise."

And replacing with the following sentence, "All agenda items of each subcommittee or ad hoc committee meeting shall consist solely of matter that have had prior review and referral to the respective subcommittee or ad hoc committee by a vote or the full City Council."

The Amended Rules of the Framingham City Council are attached and posted on the City website.

YEAS: Bryant, Case, Long, Shepard, Steiner, Stewart-Morales  
NAYS: Cannon, King, Leombruno, Ottaviani, Stefanini,  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: All members were present in person or via teleconferencing  
PASSED IN COUNCIL: APRIL 21, 2020

A True Record, Attest:

2/10/2021

Date Approved

Lisa A. Ferguson

Lisa A. Ferguson, City Clerk  
Emily Butler, Assistant City Clerk



# Rules of the Framingham City Council

Initial Rules filed on May 15, 2018  
Amended and approved on May 21, 2019  
Amended and approved on November 19, 2019  
Amended and approved on January 14, 2020  
Amended and approved on April 21, 2020

## General Rules

### *Meeting Times*

Rule 1. Unless otherwise ordered from time to time, and except on holidays, the regular meeting of the city council shall be the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7:15 p.m. in the Blumer Room, located in City Hall, 150 Concord St. Framingham, MA 01702. During the months of July and August, however, the council will meet only on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month.

1. All sessions of the council and every subcommittee or ad-hoc committee of the council shall at all times be open to the public unless another provision is made by law.
2. City council meetings, subcommittee meetings and ad-hoc committee meetings shall end no later than 11 p.m. No new business may be considered after 10:00 p.m. unless approved by a majority vote of the members present.
3. City council meetings may not begin earlier than 7:15 p.m. except for in the case of an emergency.
4. Subcommittee meetings and ad-hoc committee meetings of the council may be held at a time earlier than 7:00 p.m. upon approval of all members of the subcommittee or ad-hoc committee.

Rule 1a. Special meetings of the council shall be held at the call of the council chair, or, at the call of any four (4) or more councilors, by written notice delivered in hand and electronically to each councilor or to the place of residence of each councilor and which contains a listing of the items to be acted upon. Except in case of an emergency, the existence of which the council chair shall be judge, this notice shall be delivered at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the time set for the meeting. A copy of the notice to councilors shall be posted on (i) the municipal bulletin board and, (ii) published on the appropriate city government webpage on which all such meeting notices are posted, and (iii) as may be required by ordinance or the Open Meeting law.

Rule 1b. Executive session may be entered only after the council has first convened in open session for which notice has been appropriately posted. The presiding officer shall cite the reason for going into executive session and indicate whether the council shall leave executive session for the purpose of adjournment or return to open session. The presiding officer shall ask for a roll call vote of the council members present. The vote of each member shall be recorded in the minutes, with a majority of members present necessary to initiate executive session.

### ***Seating***

Rule 2. Seating is assigned at the beginning of each two (2) year term coinciding with the district councilor election cycle. The council seats from left to right will be numbered one (1) through eleven (11). The vice chair of the council will sit in seat five (5) and the chair will sit in seat six (6). The remaining councilors will randomly select their seats by drawing numbers. The seating assignments will remain for the duration of the two (2) year term.

### ***Office Supplies***

Rule 3. Upon request of each Councilor, he or she will be provided with one or more of the following office supplies at the beginning of each two (2) year term coinciding with the district councilor election cycle:

- 50 letter size pieces of paper with the City Council letterhead
- 50 business size envelopes with the City Council address
- 50 notecards with City Council insignia
- 50 smaller size envelopes with the City Council address
- One box of business cards

### ***Quorum***

Rule 4. A quorum of the council or any subcommittee or ad hoc committee is determined by the Open Meeting Law.

### ***Election of Officers***

Rule 5. At its first meeting in January following the City election, the council shall elect from its membership a chair and a vice chair who shall serve a two (2) year term of office co-terminus with the term of the district councilors. If neither the existing chair or vice chair are present at the meeting, the City Clerk shall preside over the meeting solely for the purpose of the election of the chair and vice chair.

1. The council chair shall preside at all meetings of the city council, shall regulate proceedings including the agenda and shall decide on all questions of order.
2. The council chair shall have the same powers to vote upon all measures coming before the council as any other councilor.
3. The council chair shall perform any other duties consistent with the office that may be provided by charter, by ordinance, by council rules, or by other vote of the council.
4. If the council chair or vice-chair resigns or is unable to complete their term for any reason the city council shall elect from its membership a new chair or new vice-chair to replace the outgoing chair or vice-chair and such new chair or new vice-chair shall serve in such capacity for the remainder of the original chair or vice-chair's term.

### ***Presiding Officer***

Rule 6. The council chair shall serve as the presiding officer of all meetings of the council and all hearings of the council. Each subcommittee chair and ad-hoc committee chair shall serve as the presiding officer of all meetings and hearings of their subcommittee or ad-hoc committee.

1. At all council meetings, in the event of the absence of the council chair, the vice chair shall preside. In the event both the chair and the vice chair are absent the council shall elect from its membership a temporary chair for that meeting. At all subcommittee meetings and ad-hoc committee meetings, in the event of the absence of the chair, the vice-chair shall preside.
2. Subcommittees and ad hoc committees cannot meet if both the subcommittee chair and vice-chair are absent.

### ***Recess***

Rule 7. The presiding officer may at any time, during debate or otherwise, declare a recess for not more than twenty (20) minutes. Such action shall not be subject to appeal, nor shall any motions apply thereto.

### ***City Council Agendas and Supporting and Background Materials***

Rule 8. The council chair has full discretion as to the inclusion of items on the city council agenda, unless a majority vote of the council decides otherwise.

#### **Rule 8a. Meeting Materials**

1. Members of the council and municipal staff who prepare background and supporting materials including visual presentations (power point, Google slides, etc..) shall have all such materials submitted to the city council office by **12:00 noon Thursday before the Tuesday meeting**. If background and supporting materials including visual presentations are not received by the deadline, the Chair at his/her discretion (or a majority vote of the Council) may postpone the related agenda item
  - In the case of a Monday holiday, this deadline is moved to 12:00 noon on Wednesday before the Tuesday meeting.
2. **By 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the Tuesday meeting**, the agenda and all background and supporting materials shall be:
  - provided to each member of the council (in written or electronic form per each council member's stated preference) and,
  - published on
    - i. the appropriate city government meeting portal on which all such meeting notices and materials are posted, and
    - ii. as may be required by ordinance or the Open Meeting law.
3. All Councilors shall be notified weekly of all meetings of the council, subcommittees and ad hoc committees and related events taking place the following week.

Rule 8b. Unsigned communications of any kind which are submitted to the city council anonymously shall not be introduced in the council.

***Subcommittee and Ad-Hoc Committee Agendas and Supporting and Background Materials***

Rule 9. Subcommittees and ad-hoc committees serve at the will of the council and have no independent authority. With the exception of the responsibilities assigned to the finance subcommittee through the home rule charter, all agenda items of each subcommittee meeting or ad-hoc committee meeting shall consist solely of matters that have had prior review and referral to the respective subcommittee or ad-hoc committee by a vote of the full City Council.

**Rule 9a. Meeting Materials (Subcommittees and Ad-Hoc Committees)**

1. Members of the subcommittee or ad-hoc committee and municipal staff who prepare background and supporting materials including visual presentations shall have all such materials submitted to the city council office by **12:00 noon three business days prior to the committee meeting or ad-hoc committee meeting**. If background and supporting materials including visual presentations are not received by the deadline, the Chair at his/her discretion (or a majority vote of the Committee) may postpone the related agenda.
  
2. **By 5:00 p.m. two (2) business days before the subcommittee meeting or ad-hoc committee meeting** the agenda and all background and supporting materials, shall be
  - provided to each member of the subcommittee or ad-hoc committee (in written or electronic form per each member’s stated preference) and,
  - published on
    - i. the appropriate city government meeting portal on which all such meeting notices and materials are posted, and
    - ii. as may be required by ordinance or the Open Meeting law.

Rule 9b. Unsigned communications of any kind which are submitted to subcommittees or ad-hoc committees anonymously shall not be introduced in the subcommittee or ad-hoc committee.

***Order of Business and Debate***

Rule 10. At every regular meeting of the council, the order of business shall be as follows:

- a. Public Participation
- b. Public Hearings
- c. Report of the Mayor
- d. Approval of Minutes
- e. Report of the Council Chair
- f. Reports of Subcommittees
- g. Old Business
- h. New Business
- i. Report of Councilors
- j. Adjournment



Rule 10a. The above order shall not be changed except by vote of a majority of the council members present at the meeting and upon a motion to change the order.

Rule 10b. The council meetings and all council subcommittee meetings and ad-hoc committee meetings shall be guided by “Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised” in all questions of parliamentary practice not provided for in these rules with the presiding officer having the final determination as to applicability and enforcement.

Rule 10c. Report of the Mayor Agenda Item.

- The Mayor (or Mayor’s designee) is encouraged to provide a general list of topics to be discussed and any related background materials to the Council in advance of the meeting.
- Councilors are encouraged to suggest topics to the Mayor (or the Mayor’s designee) in advance of the meeting but the Mayor (or the Mayor’s designee) is not required to include the topics suggested.
- Councilors are encouraged to submit questions related to topics in advance of the meeting, but are not restricted to ask only those questions at the meeting.
- The Chair will recognize Councilors who want to ask questions after the Mayor or Mayor’s Designee has finished his/her report.
- If the discussion during the Report of the Mayor continues for 45 minutes the Chair will then ask the Council to vote whether or not to continue the discussion or move to the next agenda item. An affirmative majority vote of the Council members present advances the meeting to the next agenda item.

### ***Public Participation***

Rule 11. Any resident of Framingham may be recognized and speak to any agenda item on the current council agenda, subcommittee agenda or ad-hoc committee agenda (subject to Rule 11a) or during public participation (subject to Rule 11b) or during a public hearing (subject to Rule 12) and time shall be allotted for the public to speak at each open meeting or public hearing of the council, subcommittee or ad-hoc committee

- Speakers will be expected to use the following format when addressing the council, a subcommittee or an ad-hoc committee:
  1. State their name and address
  2. State the issue that they are bringing to the council’s, subcommittee’s, ad-hoc committee’s attention.
  3. Describe specifically the requested action.
  4. State the reasons that they support the requested action.
- Decorum:
  1. No person may address the council, subcommittee, ad-hoc committee without permission of the presiding officer
  2. All persons shall be silent at the request of the presiding officer.