



**Rules of Order
of the
Jonesville City Council**

**Adopted November 20, 2024
Resolution 2024-16**

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Rules of Order Jonesville City Council

Article 1. Scope and Authority

Section 6.7 of the Jonesville City Charter provides for the creation of these Rules of Order. These rules shall govern City Council proceedings unless amended pursuant to Article 4.03 of these rules, or suspended by a vote of five (5) Council Members. In any cases of conflict, provisions of the Jonesville City Charter and State Law take precedence.

Article 2. Meetings

All regular and special meetings of the City Council shall be open to the public and conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

2.01 Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Jonesville City Council shall be held in the Council Chambers at the Jonesville City Hall, 265 E. Chicago St., Jonesville, Michigan, on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise provided by Charter or by Council action. Meetings can be rescheduled with the approval of the majority of the Council.

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the schedule of the regular meetings shall be posted at City Hall and on the city website within 10 days after the first meeting of the calendar year.

2.02 Special Meetings

A Special Meeting of the Council shall be called by the City Clerk upon the written request from the Mayor or any three members of Council with at least 18 hours written notice as required by Section 6.2 of the City Charter.

2.03 Work Sessions

- (a) Upon the call of the Mayor or Council and with appropriate notice to the Council members and the public, the Council may convene a work session devoted entirely to the exchange of information related to municipal affairs.
- (b) No votes shall be taken on any matters under discussion nor shall any Council member enter into a formal commitment with another Council member regarding a vote to be taken subsequently.¹

¹ These meetings are frequently less formal than regular Council meetings but are no less subject to all the provisions of the Open Meetings Act.

2.04 Executive Sessions.

- (a) The Council shall meet in executive (Closed) session only for those purposes allowed by the open Meetings Act [Act 267, Michigan Public Acts of 1967, as amended (MCL 15.261 et seq.; MSA 4.1800(11) et sec)].
- (b) A roll call vote of 2/3 of the Council members elected or appointed and serving is required to call a closed session. The Council by majority vote may adjourn a closed session or open the meeting to the public.
- (c) Council members may deliberate during closed sessions, but shall not make any decisions, determinations, actions, votes, or dispositions upon a proposal, recommendation, resolution, order or ordinance in closed session.
- (d) A separate set of minutes of the closed session shall be taken by the City Clerk or other such designated person taking minutes in the closed session. These minutes shall be retained by the City Clerk, and shall not be available to the public and shall only be disclosed if required by a civil action filed under Section 10, 11, or 13 of the Open Meetings Act. The minutes of a closed session may be destroyed one year and one day after approval of the minutes of the regular meeting at which the closed session was approved.

2.05 Organizational Meetings

- (a) Section 3.6 of the City Charter requires that “the Council shall hold its organizational meeting at the first regular meeting following the regular city November...election. At this time, the council shall select a mayor pro tem from its members.”²

Article 3. Conduct of Business

3.01 Rules of Parliamentary Procedure

- (a) The rules of parliamentary procedure as contained in the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order will provide the formal framework for the conduct of business, and shall prevail in matters of parliamentary procedure not otherwise addressed in these Rules of Order
- (b) The Chair shall endeavor to conduct the meeting in a fashion that reflects the informality and congeniality possible in a community the size of Jonesville while also maintaining the decorum and formality necessary to transact business in an orderly fashion.

² The original text of the City Charter references “odd-year” elections. In September of 2014, Council adopted Resolution 2014-14, which established even-year elections, pursuant to Public Act 523 of 2012.

- (c) The Chair shall preserve order and decorum and may speak to points of order in preference to other Council members. The Chair shall decide all questions arising under this parliamentary authority, subject to appeal and reversal by a majority of the Council members present.
- (d) Any member may appeal to the Council a ruling of the Chair. If the appeal is seconded, the member making the appeal may briefly state the reason for the appeal and the Chair may briefly state the ruling. There shall be no debate on the appeal and no other member shall participate in the discussion. The question shall be, "Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?" If the majority of the members vote "aye", the ruling of the Chair is sustained, otherwise it is overruled.

3.02 Conduct of Discussion

- (a) During Council discussion and debate, no member shall speak until recognized for that purpose by the Chair. After such recognition, the member shall confine discussion to the question at hand and to its merits and shall not be interrupted except by a point of order or privilege by another member. Speakers should address their remarks to the Chair, maintain a courteous tone and avoid interjecting a personal note into debate.
- (b) No member shall speak more than once on the same question unless every member desiring to speak to that question shall have had the opportunity to do so.
- (c) The Chair, at his or her discretion, and subject to the appeal process mentioned above may permit any person to address the Council during its deliberations.³

3.03 Precedence of Motions

When a main motion is before the Council, other motions may not be entertained except motions to: 1) adjourn; 2) recess; 3) table; 4) call the previous question (to limit debate – requires a two-thirds vote); 5) refer to a committee; or 6) amend. These motions have precedence in the order indicated.

3.04 Roll Call Vote

- (a) In accordance with Section 6.7 of the City Charter, "A vote upon all ordinances and resolutions shall be taken by 'Yes' and 'No' votes and entered upon the record, except that where the vote is unanimous it shall only be necessary to so state."
- (b) In all roll call votes, the names of the members shall be called in revolving alphabetical order such that the person voting first on one issue will be moved to the end of the rotation and vote last on the next.

³ While it is true that "only duly elected members should take part in debate", Roberts Rules permits, and practical consideration requires, that the Chair retain the prerogative to get input from any person he or she deems necessary for the proper conduct of City business.

- (c) Once made and seconded each motion shall be put to a vote.
- (d) The Chair shall announce the result of each vote, at which time the result becomes official.
- (e) The City Clerk or appropriately designated taker of the Minutes shall record all motions and the results of all votes.

3.05 Duty to vote.

Election to a deliberative body carries with it the obligation to vote. Council members present at a Council meeting shall vote on every matter before the body, unless otherwise prohibited from voting by law.

3.06 Abstention From Voting⁴

Council action in this regard is governed by the City Charter, Section 6.7(d).

3.07 Conflict of Interest

A legitimate conflict of interest, as defined by law, shall be the sole reason for a Council member to abstain from voting. Council action in this regard is governed by City Charter, Section 6.7(c) and the separately adopted Conflict of Interest policy that governs the actions of all city officials.

3.08 Reconsideration of a vote

- (a) After the Chair announces a vote any member who voted on the prevailing side may move for a reconsideration of the action at the same or next succeeding meeting, provided, however, that a motion for reconsideration is out of order if the action taken earlier had been implemented or partially implemented.
- (b) A motion for reconsideration does not require a second. If approved, the effect is to place the original action before the Council for further consideration, not to overrule the original decision.

3.09 Attendance

- (a) Attendance by Council members at all regular and special meetings of the City Council is expected. Council members are expected to notify the Mayor or City Manager in advance if they cannot attend a meeting.
- (b) Section 5.6 of the City Charter provides that a vacancy is deemed to exist due to the “unexcused absence from four (4) consecutive regular meetings of the council or twenty-five (25%) percent of such meetings in any fiscal year.”

⁴ Although Robert’s Rules permits counting abstentions with the prevailing side, it is not universally accepted and there is debate as to its propriety and its impact. Better to strictly observe Charter requirements for voting on every issue and Charter provisions for abstentions only in the case of legitimate, Council agreed upon conflicts of interest.

(c) The following individuals shall attend all Council meetings unless otherwise directed:

(i) Mayor and Council Members

(ii) City Manager

(iii) City Attorney⁵

(iv) City Clerk

(v) Police Chief

3.10 Public Hearings

Public Hearings shall be scheduled by the City Council when required by law or applicable regulations or when the City Council has determined that a matter for consideration by the Council is of particular import, magnitude, and/or controversy as to warrant the City Council's request for public comments concerning the matter. Public Hearings shall be held in an orderly fashion, the object of which is to ensure that every person has an opportunity to have his comments heard.

- (a) Public hearings generally will be scheduled by the City Council, although some public hearings, when required by certain regulations, may be scheduled by the City Manager. The City Manager will ensure that appropriate notices of hearings shall be provided the public, with statements that persons who wish to provide comments without attending the public hearing may write or call the City Clerk with their comments prior to the public hearing.
- (b) Prior to opening the public hearing for public comments, the City Manager may be asked to provide background information concerning the matter for which the City Council will receive comments.
- (c) The Mayor or the Chair of the meeting shall declare the public hearing open and announce the procedure for receiving comments from the public.
- (d) Persons speaking during the public hearing will state their name and home address for inclusion in the record of the public hearing, which shall be included in the minutes of the regular or special City Council meeting at which it was called.
- (e) The Chair may establish time limits and procedures for persons who provide comments at the public hearing.⁶

⁵ Clearly, the Mayor, Council members and City Manager must attend all meetings. It has also proven to be useful and conducive to the efficient conduct of City business to have the City Attorney in attendance. The City Clerk has traditionally been the taker of minutes. The Police Chief or designee serves as the sergeant-at-arms. Other department heads need only attend when requested by the City Manager or Council.

⁶ The Chair must, of course, take care not to discriminate with persons speaking at a public hearing. Any "time limits and procedures" set by the Chair would pertain to any and all persons wishing to speak.

- (f) Written comments and the names and addresses of any persons calling in comments shall be presented. The Chair may require that written comments be read into the record, summarized, or reported as being in favor of or in opposition to the proposal that is being considered.
- (g) At the conclusion of receipt of comments from the public, and following a report by the City Manager concerning persons who had called or submitted written comments, the Chair will declare that the public hearing is closed. The City Council, however may continue to discuss the proposal.
- (h) Action by the City Council that might be necessary at the conclusion of the public hearing may be taken by the City Council immediately, either by consideration of a resolution or an ordinance. Introductions of proposed resolutions or ordinances may be deferred; actions upon resolutions may be undertaken immediately or deferred; but action upon ordinances may only be taken immediately if the ordinance was introduced at the prior regularly scheduled meeting, or it is determined to be an emergency ordinance within the meaning of Section 8.7 of the City Charter.

3.11 Addressing the Council

- (a) Each regular Council meeting agenda shall provide reserved time for audience participation.
- (b) When a person addresses the Council, he or she shall state his or her name and home address.
- (c) Remarks should be limited to matters before the Council, to Council business or policy, or to issues of general concern that the Council has the authority to recommend or act upon
- (d) Persons addressing the Council shall limit their comments to not more than five (5) minutes or other time limit set by the Chair. Persons addressing the Council may have comments presented by other individuals, but may not delegate additional speaking time to others. The Clerk will maintain the official time and notify the speakers when their time is up.
- (e) Remarks shall be addressed to the Chair in a courteous tone. Persons addressing Council who fail to conduct themselves with the decorum described in Article 3.16(c) of these rules may be removed from the meeting at the discretion of the Chair.
- (f) No person shall have the right to speak more than once unless additional opportunities are granted by the Chair.
- (g) Council members and staff will generally not respond to audience participation. Matters may be referred by the Council to the City Manager who may also be directed to provide a report at a subsequent meeting or date.

3.12 Minutes

- (a) The Clerk shall attend the regular and special meetings of the Council, and shall record all the proceedings and resolutions of the Council in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. In the absence of the Clerk, the Council may appoint the Deputy Clerk or another person to temporarily perform the Clerk's duties.
- (b) Proposed minutes shall be available for public inspection at the City Hall within eight (8) business days after a meeting.
- (c) Approved minutes shall be available for public inspection within five (5) business days of the meeting at which they are approved.
- (d) Minutes are intended to be a record of the actions of the City Council. and shall contain:
 - (i) Starting time, date and location of the meeting.
 - (ii) Attendance by members of the City Council, City Staff and others.
 - (iii) Summarize discussions of members of the Council and Staff.
 - (iv) Sequential number and summary of all resolutions and ordinances that are finally acted upon by the Council.
 - (v) A tally of all votes taken in conjunction with actions of the City Council.
 - (vi) Paraphrase of miscellaneous comments of Council members, city staff and the public.⁷
 - (vii) The time of the meeting's adjournment.

3.13 Quorum

A quorum is required for the conduct of any city business. A quorum is defined by Section 6.5 of the Charter as "four (4) members of the Council".

3.14 Agenda and Council Packet

- (a) The City Manager, in consultation with the Mayor, shall prepare an agenda for each City Council meeting.

⁷ Minutes are intended to be a record of what was done, more than what was said. However, action does not take place in a vacuum, and a City Council meeting is not a sterile environment of motions and votes taken. Comments of Council members, staff and the public often provide context and substance to the skeleton of parliamentary proceedings, especially when viewed in historical perspective.

- (b) The City Manager shall cause the agenda, along with a packet containing supporting documents or information the Manager believes necessary and useful to be delivered to each Council member's city-issued email address or place of residence not later than the afternoon of the Friday of the week before the meeting.
- (c) All such meeting agenda materials shall be made available for inspection by the public and the news media upon request, except for any material that has been deemed by the City Manager, with the concurrence of the City attorney, to be confidential in nature.
- (d) Members of the Council may request that the City Manager include items on the agendas of regular meetings of the Council.

3.15 Order of Agenda

- (a) Call to Order
- (b) Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence
- (c) Public Comment
- (d) Presentations and Recognitions
- (e) Approval of Council Minutes
- (f) Board and Commission Minutes
- (g) Public Hearing and Council Action
- (h) Unfinished Business
- (i) New Business
- (j) Accounts Payable
- (k) Department Reports
- (l) Adjourn

3.16 Decorum and Order

- (a) Each member of Council shall be responsible for maintaining order and decorum. Each member shall conduct himself or herself with dignity befitting a public official, and shall maintain a courteous and polite demeanor at all times. Members shall treat each other, staff, media and members of the public with respect.
- (b) Administrative Staff and employees shall also maintain order and decorum. While maintaining order of the meeting resides with the authority of the Chair, the City Manager shall also be responsible for ensuring the orderly conduct of employees under his direction and control.

- (c) Public shall maintain same rules of decorum propriety and good conduct applicable to the members of Council. Any person making personal or slanderous remarks or who becomes boisterous shall be removed from the meeting if so directed by the Chair.
- (d) Any member of the public may address the Council on any issue during the Public Comment portion of the agenda. The person shall state his or her name and address for recording in the public minutes.
- (e) Any member of the public desiring to address the Council outside the Public Comment portions of the agenda shall do so at the discretion of the Chair and only upon being recognized by the Chair.⁸

Article 4. Miscellaneous

4.01 Tape Recording, Videotaping, Telecasting, Media

These actions are governed by Section 3 of the Open Meetings Act, and shall be conducted in such a way as to maximize public access while minimizing disruption of the proceedings.

4.02 Administrative Contact

Section 3.8 of the City Charter describes the limitations of, and conditions for, contact between Council members and Staff.

4.03 Amendment of Rules Of Order

These Rules of Order may be amended by the City Council at any regular or special meeting by a vote of five (5) of the members elect.

4.04 Severability

Any part of these Rules of Order which shall conflict with any state or federal law now or in the future, or with the Charter of the City of Jonesville or any ordinance of the City duly adopted now or in the future shall be null and void, but only to the extent of the conflict. All other parts shall continue in full force and effect.

⁸ See Footnotes 3 and 6 above.