

Resolution providing notice to referrals prior to Common Council action.

Whereas the City of Madison Common Council refers items to various committees, commissions and boards for their input, consideration and judgment, which the Alderpersons then use in their deliberations on issues, reporting back to the Common Council “within a period of 45 days unless ... a different time is set by the (Common Council)” [MGO 2.05(1)(a)] and

Whereas members of the various committees, commissions and boards often take a substantial amount of time and effort in considering various ordinances and resolutions which are referred to them; and

Whereas members of committees, commissions and boards, as officials of the City of Madison, may provide insights and perspectives to Alderpersons as they consider actions during the meeting of the Common Council; and

Whereas committee, commission and board members provide their time and expertise with no compensation; and

Whereas members of committees, commissions and boards may wish to speak directly to the Common Council regarding items of importance which came before their respective bodies; and

Whereas, currently, there is no mechanism to know when items will be on the Common Council agenda before the Friday publishing of the Common Council agenda; and

Whereas agendas for the City of Madison offer interpreters and other accommodations to people who call “at least three business days prior to the meeting,” and

Whereas having one or two business days may not be sufficient time to arrange for attendance at an additional meeting; and

Whereas Common Council meetings have extensive agendas, and specific items at the Common Council meetings are often taken up after several hours, thus necessitating an entire evening of waiting to speak for 3 minutes to the Common Council; and

Whereas the best interests of democratic decision-making include access to information and a real ability to participate fully in the deliberative process;

Therefore be it resolved that:

1. Before final action on any item is taken by the full Common Council, each City committee, commission or board which had an official referral of the item shall receive a full ten-day notice of the Common Council meeting; and
2. An ordinance will be drafted as an amendment to MGO Chapter 2: Standing Rules for the Government of the Common Council.