

**CITY OF MADISON, WISCONSIN**

AN ORDINANCE \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENTED October 19, 2021  
REFERRED Common Council Executive  
Committee

Amending Sections 2.01, 2.04(1) and 2.29 of the Madison General Ordinances to Change Common Council Meeting Time, Order of Business and Procedures for Registered Speakers.

**DRAFT**

Drafted by: Michael Haas  
Date: October 7, 2021  
SPONSOR: Alder Foster, Alder Wehelie

DRAFTER’S ANALYSIS: This ordinance changes the meeting time and order of business for Common Council meetings and the procedures for registered speakers at Council meetings.

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The Common Council of the City of Madison do hereby ordain as follows:

1. Section 2.01 entitled “Meetings” of the Madison General Ordinances is amended as follows:

**“2.01 – MEETINGS.**

- (1) The stated meeting of the Common Council shall be held in the Council Chambers on the first and third Tuesdays of every month at ~~6:30~~ 4:30 p.m., except in August and December the Common Council will meet only on the first Tuesday. A special November meeting or meetings will be held for the Capital and Operating Budgets. Following a regular City of Madison election, the newly elected Common Council also shall hold an organizational meeting on the third Tuesday of April. The Council will establish the meeting dates for all meetings by resolution and post the schedule at least annually, and may modify meeting dates for holidays and elections.
- (2) Quorum. A quorum of the Council shall be two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of the members, excluding the Mayor, pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 62.11(3). As currently constituted, quorum is fourteen (14) alderpersons.
- (3) The Common Council of the City of Madison shall meet no later than the first Council meeting in December to act upon the adoption of the City Budget.
- (4) The Common Council shall not meet on the following holidays: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Thanksgiving Day, Ho-Chunk Day (the day after Thanksgiving Day), Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first two nights of Passover, the evening before and the day of Eid Al-Fitr, Eid Al-Adha, other holidays designated by the Common Council, and

**Approved as to form:**

any general or primary election day for local, state or national offices, or referenda. Following adoption of the annual schedule for Common Council meetings and the designation of dates upon which meetings shall not be held, the City Clerk shall communicate such dates to Common Council staff, which shall forward said dates to staff of Sub-units.

- (5) Special meetings shall be called by the Mayor by written notice to each member, delivered to the member personally or left at their usual abode, at least six (6) hours before the meeting. (Editor's Note: Only lawful method, See Wis. Stat. § 62.11(2).)
- (6) Adjournment. The motion to adjourn shall be made by any member. All agenda items not dealt with before approval of the motion to adjourn regular meetings shall be automatically referred to the next regular meeting of the Common Council.
- (7) Informal Meetings. The Council may hold meetings other than those established under Section 2.01(1) or (5). At such informal meetings no legislative business may be transacted. At meetings other than those established under Section 2.01(1) or (5), the Council may receive informational briefings from staff, make site visits, receive public comments, or conduct informal discussion, without the presence of a quorum, as long as it complies at all times with the open meeting ordinance and statutes.
- (8) Cancellation of Council Meeting. Only the Council President, or in the President's absence, the Vice President, may cancel a scheduled meeting of the Common Council. Meetings may be cancelled only in the event of a lack of quorum, an emergency, or inclement weather such that it would be unsafe for members of the Council and the public to attend the meeting. Prior to cancelling a meeting, the President shall consult with the Mayor and City Clerk. The public and the news media shall be promptly informed of any meeting cancellation.
- (9) Reserved For Future Use.”

2. Subsection (1) of Section 2.04 entitled “Order of Business” of the Madison General Ordinances is amended as follows:

**“2.04 - ORDER OF BUSINESS.**

- (1) At all stated meetings, the following order shall be observed in disposing of business before the Council:
  - (a) Opening remarks.
  - ~~(b) Suspension of rules.~~
  - (c) Honoring resolutions.
  - ~~(d) Early Public Comment.~~ Presentation of consent agenda.
  - (e) Public Comment and Public Hearings on any items on the agenda as a special order at 5:30 p.m.
  - ~~(f)~~ Petitions.
  - ~~(fg)~~ Communications.

- (gh) Modification of prior Common Council proceedings (upon request of a Common Council member).
- ~~(h) Presentation of consent agenda as special order at 6:45 p.m.~~
- ~~(i) Public hearings as special order at 6:45 p.m.~~
- (ji) Informational hearings as special order immediately following public hearings.
- (kj) Business presented by the Mayor, including appointments and confirmations
- (lk) Business presented by the President of the Common Council.
- (ml) Reports of officers, departments and divisions, committees, boards and commissions presented in continuous rotation, alphabetically, including re-referrals according to the provisions of Sec. 2.05(1).
- (nm) Ordinances and resolutions referred to this meeting and not included in sub. (1)(l).
- (on) Introduction of new ordinances and resolutions for referral without debate.
- (po) Presentation of accounts and other claims against the City of Madison.
- (qp) Late items and addenda.
- (rq) Announcements and introduction of items from the floor.
- (sr) Any items for closed session.
- (ts) Adjournment.”

3. Section 2.29 entitled “Persons’ Right to Address Common Council” of the Madison General Ordinances is amended as follows:

**“2.29 - PERSONS' RIGHT TO ADDRESS COMMON COUNCIL.**

- (1) Except as hereinafter set forth, any person shall have the right to speak on any item of business that is on the agenda for Common Council action if ~~he/she~~ they registers to speak on that item before the ~~item comes up for action~~ meeting is called to order. Any person registering to speak after the meeting is called to order but prior to the close of Public Comments or the Public Hearing on that item will also have the right to speak on that item. Registration shall indicate the person's address.
- (2) Except for informational ~~and public~~ hearings, speakers shall be limited to a three-minute address unless the Common Council agrees by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote to extend the time.
- (3) A speaker who requires an interpreter, either because of ~~his/her~~ limited English proficiency or because of a disability, may speak for six (6) minutes.

- (4) No person shall be permitted to speak on any matter when first introduced before the Common Council when the matter is scheduled to be referred and reported back at a later meeting.
- ~~(5) — No person shall submit a registration or appearance form for any meeting unless that person actually attends some portion of the meeting at which the registration or appearance is submitted, or personally delivers the form at the place of the meeting within thirty (30) minutes of the scheduled starting time of the meeting. This limitation does not apply to any person who is eligible to register with the City Clerk for automatic absentee balloting under Wis. Stat. § 6.86(2)(a).~~
- ~~(6) — The Council shall provide an Early Public Comment period at each Council meeting, prior to consideration of the consent agenda. Persons who have reasons to leave the Council meeting early, due to health, scheduling or child-care needs, may speak to any agenda item at that time. The Council shall pose questions to such early speakers before moving to the Consent Agenda.”~~