

RULES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF LAWRENCE, INDIANA
(Revised 12-[]-2025)

INTRODUCTION

The Common Council is the legislative and fiscal body of the City of Lawrence with such powers as provided by statutes or ordinances.

Rule 1. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. President

- (A) The President shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Council, preserve order and decorum and decide all questions of order subject to appeal to the Council. He/She shall appoint all standing committees and all special committees that may be ordered by the Council. All standing committees shall be appointed at the commencement of each year of the term of the Council and shall serve only during the term of the President appointing the committees. He/She shall fill all existing vacancies that may occur in any of the committees.
- (B) The President shall sign all ordinances and resolutions adopted by the Council before presentation to the Mayor.
- (C) The President also shall sign the minutes of the proceedings of the Council after the minutes are approved by the Council.
- (D) If a vacancy occurs in the office of President, a new President shall be elected by members of the Council at a regular meeting.

Section 2. Vice-President

The Vice-President shall preside at all meetings of the Council and perform all other duties of the President in the absence of the President; provided, that in the event the office of President shall become vacant, he/she shall not automatically succeed thereto. In the event the office of Vice-President shall become vacant, a new Vice-President shall be elected by members of the Council at a regular meeting.

Section 3. Removal From Office

The President or Vice President may be removed from office, with or without cause, at any time upon the vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the elected members of the Council at any regular meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose.

Section 4. City Clerk

- (A) The City Clerk shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the Council and maintain those minutes in a permanent journal. He/She also shall have

the proceedings of the Council audiotaped in their entirety. He/She shall keep all audiotapes in order by date and stored in a safe area.

- (B) The Clerk shall keep a permanent file of all original papers, documents, reports and correspondence filed with or submitted to the Council.
- (C) The Clerk also shall be custodian of all ordinances, resolutions and all other papers pertaining to the business of the Council, except when such ordinances, resolutions or other papers are necessarily in the temporary possession of commissions, boards or officials for consideration thereof.

Rule 2. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Section 1. Regular Sessions

Regular session shall be defined as the meetings of the Council regularly held on the first Monday of each month and the third Wednesday of each month, or on such other dates when Council members introduce proposed ordinances and resolutions which are then assigned to committee for later discussion, for voting on concurrence and passage of previously introduced ordinances and resolutions that have been discussed and given recommendation, or passed out of committee without recommendation, and for consideration of such other business as may be brought before the Council.

Section 2. Special Sessions

- (A) Special meetings of the Council shall be held upon the call of the President or any five members of the Council, subject to the following provisions:
 - (i) It shall be the duty of the person or persons calling the special meeting to duly notify the Clerk thereof in writing in time to reasonably permit the Clerk to prepare and serve notice on all members in time to allow them to be present at the meeting and to comply with open door and other public notice requirements. Notice of special meetings shall be served in writing, by e-mail or by telephonic notice upon each member.
 - (ii) The Clerk shall give public notice of called special meetings in accordance with I.C. § 5-14-1.5-5.
 - (iii) Only such business as is specifically stated in the call for the meeting shall be considered at the special meeting.
 - (iv) Special meetings may be held upon call, waiver and consent signed by all members of the Council, in which case the requirement of (i) above for notice to members shall not apply.
- (B) Special meetings of the Council also may be scheduled in advance and without special call by action of the Council establishing such meetings at pre-determined dates and times to care for necessary business, such as the approval and authorization of claims, which must be accomplished

between regular sessions, and only such business as is specifically stated in the scheduling authorization and action by the Council shall be considered at such special meetings except pursuant to a valid suspension of this rule provision.

Section 3. Meetings

- (A) All regular and special meetings of the Council and all meetings of standing committees, the committee of the whole Council and special committees, except for lawful executive sessions, shall be held in the George E. Keller Public Assembly Room except as the scheduling of another government function may prevent. All such meetings, except for lawful executive sessions, shall be transmitted on the Lawrence Government Channel.
- (B) The presiding officer shall call the regular and special meetings of the Council and all meetings of standing committees, the committee of the whole Council and special committees to order and call roll.
- (C) All regular and special meetings of the Council and all meetings of standing committees, the committee of the whole Council and special committees, shall be conducted in accordance with the Indiana Open Door Law (I.C. § 5-14-1.5-3.5, as amended from time to time).
- (D) Virtual attendance for regular and special meetings of the Council and all meetings of standing committees, the committee of the whole Council and special committees is permitted so long as it is done in accordance with I.C. § 5-14-1.5-3.5 (as amended from time to time).

Rule 3. AGENDA AND ORDER OF BUSINESS

Section 1. Agenda

- (A) Except for unavoidable circumstances, the agenda for any meeting of the Council shall be made available to the public by 4:00 p.m. of the fifth (5th) business day prior to the date of the meeting.
- (B) If the Mayor, or a representative of the Mayor, desires to make comments or a presentation to the Council at any one of its public meetings, the Mayor shall make that desire known to the President of the Council through the office of the Clerk by noon on the fifth (5th) business day prior to the date of the meeting at which the presentation or comments will be offered. If the Mayor or a representative of the Mayor does not make the desire known to the President of the Council by this deadline, then the President of the Council may, at their discretion, accept the request no later than two (2) business days before the scheduled meeting. Any requests received after this discretionary extension will not be accepted and may be deferred to the next regular meeting of the Council.
- (C) At any regular session of the Council, the presiding officer may allow time for comments by citizens of the City of Lawrence. Citizens' comments shall be limited to five (5) minutes each unless extended by the presiding officer.

Any person desiring to address the Council must state his or her name and address for the record. Citizens' comments shall be made in an orderly and civil manner. The presiding officer may in all respects limit comments that are repetitive, uncivil, rude, discourteous or insulting. The Council will not engage in a dialogue or debate with any speaker pertaining to any Citizens' comments.

- (D) Members of the public are welcome to utilize other means of communication the Council makes available to the public to contact the Council regarding general matters. If an item placed on the agenda has an advertised public hearing, then the public shall only be permitted to speak on that item when the advertised public hearing is open and not during Citizens' comments at the end of the agenda.
- (E) Pursuant to I.C. § 5-14-1.5-3.3, every person attending a Council meeting shall abide by the order and direction of the presiding officer. Attendees shall not engage in behavior that disrupts a meeting. Attendees shall not engage in audible conversations that are disruptive and shall exhibit respect to the Council, the administration, city staff and other individuals attending the public meetings. All cell phones and other electronic devices should be silenced or turned off during public meetings. Discourtesy, disorderly or contemptuous conduct shall be regarded as a breach of these rules and shall be dealt with as the presiding officer directs, which may include directing the attendee to leave the meeting and, if the attendee refuses, directing a law enforcement officer to remove the attendee from the meeting. Attendees shall not address the Council except as provided herein.
- (F) If an attendee engages in disruptive behavior, then the presiding officer may respond in the following manner:
 - (i) Issue two (2) verbal warnings to the disruptive attendee.
 - (ii) After issuing the second warning, if disruptive behavior from the attendee continues, the attendee will be directed to leave the meeting.
 - (iii) If an attendee refuses to leave the meeting when directed by the presiding officer for a violation of these rules, then the presiding officer may direct a law enforcement officer to remove the attendee from the meeting.
 - (iv) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to prohibit a law enforcement officer from immediately removing an attendee from a meeting if: (i) removal of the attendee is necessary to maintain order or ensure the safety of another person; (ii) the attendee commits a criminal offense; or (iii) the attendee violates these rules and procedures.

Section 2. Order of Business

The following order of business may be observed by the Council at its regular meetings, subject to the discretion of the Council President:

- (i) Call to order
- (ii) Pledge of allegiance and prayer
- (iii) Roll call of members and determination of quorum
- (iv) Comments of Council members and special recognitions or resolutions
- (v) Approval of minutes
- (vi) Reports of committees
- (vii) Unfinished business
- (viii) New business
- (ix) Comments of the Administration
- (x) Citizens' comments
- (xi) Adjournment

Rule 4. DECORUM AND DEBATE

- (A) When any Council member wishes to speak or present any matter to the Council, he/she shall respectfully address him/or herself to the presiding officer and, upon being recognized, may address the Council and shall confine him/or herself to the question in debate and shall make no comment that is lacking in civility. No Council member shall impugn the motive of any other.
- (B) All comments shall be limited to five minutes, unless further time is granted by the presiding officer. Time consumed in answering questions shall not be considered as part of the speaker's time.
- (C) When two or more Council members request to be heard at the same time, the presiding officer shall decide who shall speak first.
- (D) If any Council member fails to adhere to the rules of decorum during debate, such member shall be subject to a point of order raised by any other Council member to the presiding officer. Upon determination by the President that the conduct is disruptive, the President may issue a formal warning, limit the member's speaking time, or temporarily suspend the member's participation in debate for the remainder of the meeting. Such member shall retain the right to vote on all matters before the Council.

Rule 5. MOTIONS

- (A) When a motion is made, the Council member shall clearly state the motion. The presiding officer is not required to restate the motion unless a member requests clarification. If the motion is submitted in writing, it shall be handed to the Clerk and read aloud upon request. Debate on the motion shall be in order after it has been stated or read. The motion shall be entered in the minutes with the name of the Council member making it, unless it is withdrawn during the same meeting.

- (B) A motion may be made verbally or in writing. After debate has concluded and before the vote is taken, the presiding officer shall clearly restate the motion so that all members understand what they are voting on. The following motions do not need to be in writing: motion for the previous question, to adjourn, to adjourn to a date certain, to recess, to reconsider at the same meeting, to lay on the table, to hold to a date certain, to commit, to suspend the rules, to concur, to approve, to make a matter of record, to place on file and to refer to committee; and every other motion not so reduced to writing shall be out of order.
- (C) Any ordinance or resolution tabled and continued to a certain date shall automatically be placed on the agenda for that date.
- (D) The presiding officer may declare the meeting adjourned at the conclusion of the agenda. Alternatively, any Council member may move to adjourn the meeting at the conclusion of the agenda. Such a motion shall require a second and shall be decided by a majority vote of the members present.
- (E) Any matter laid on the table may be taken from the table by a vote of the Council at any meeting after the meeting at which it is tabled.
- (F) A motion to “reconsider” and a motion “that when the Council adjourn it adjourn to meet on a date certain” are privileged questions and are debatable.
- (G) Any business which by law or necessity must or should be transacted within or by a certain time will be considered a question of privilege.
- (H) A motion to “suspend the rules” is a privileged question, is not debatable, cannot be amended except to the acceptance of the mover, and adoption shall require the affirmative vote of all of the members of the Council who are present.

Rule 6. MOTION TO END DEBATE

The motion for the “previous question” shall preclude all other motions or amendments except the motion to adjourn. If the motion is adopted, the presiding officer immediately shall put the question on the pending motion.

Rule 7. RECONSIDERATION

When any question has been decided once in the affirmative or negative, any Council member voting with the prevailing side may move for reconsideration thereof at the same or next regular meeting; provided, that no such motion shall be introduced at the next regular meeting unless the Council member intending to make the motion shall have given written notice of such intention to all members of the Council at least five (5) days prior to the meeting at which the vote which he/she desires to have reconsidered will be taken.

Rule 8. DIVISION

Any member may demand a division of a question when the question is capable of division.

Rule 9. INTRODUCTION

No matter or proposition on a subject different from that under consideration shall be admitted under color of an amendment.

Rule 10. DETERMINATION OF RESULTS OF VOTING

- (A) The presiding officer shall decide whether any question is carried by affirmative or negative vote; provided, that if in doubt or if a roll call vote is demanded by a Council member, the Council shall decide by roll call vote.
- (B) When the electronic voting system is used, the voting period shall remain open for a fixed duration of one (1) minute. During this time, members may cast or change their votes. Once the voting period has expired, no changes to votes shall be permitted. The presiding officer shall then close the vote and announce the result.

Rule 11. ROLL CALL VOTES

- (A) All votes upon the passage of ordinances and resolutions, upon motions to suspend the rules or motion to reconsider, shall be cast using the electronic voting system. In the event the electronic voting system is unavailable, voting shall be conducted by roll call or voice vote as directed by the presiding officer.
- (B) If any Council member(s) participates in a regular or special Council meeting virtually, then all votes shall be by roll call.
- (C) Upon a roll call vote on any question, after any one Council member shall have voted, it shall not be in order for any Council member to offer remarks except in brief explanation of his or her vote, which he or she may do only simultaneously with the casting of his or her vote.
- (D) Any Council member may demand a roll call vote upon any question to be voted upon by the Council, and when such demand is made, the Clerk shall call the roll.

Rule 12. ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Section 1. Preparation

Any Council member intending to introduce an ordinance or resolution shall submit the proposed measure in writing to the attorney of the Council for review at least twenty (20) calendar days prior to the scheduled Council meeting at which the measure is intended to be introduced. The submission shall include the full text of the proposed measure and a brief statement of purpose. The attorney for the Council shall review the proposed measure for legal compliance, proper form, and potential issues, and shall return

comments or suggested revisions to the sponsoring member within five (5) calendar days of receipt. The sponsoring member shall finalize the draft and submit it to the attorney for the Council for final review and approval, after which the measure shall be submitted to the Clerk no later than seven (7) business days prior to the scheduled Council meeting. If the attorney for the Council refuses to approve a proposal for introduction, the attorney shall so advise the Council in writing stating briefly the reason or reasons for such refusal.

Section 2. Numbering system prior to introduction

- (A) Prior to introduction, each proposed ordinance shall have assigned to it by the Clerk a proposal number. The proposal number shall begin with a sequential number beginning with One (1) at the beginning of each calendar year, followed by a comma, followed by the calendar year (e.g., Proposal Number 1, 2008). All ordinances, regardless of subject matter, shall be numbered in the same sequence for each year.
- (B) Upon passage of an ordinance, the Clerk shall assign to it a number in the order of its passage. The ordinance number shall begin with a sequential number beginning with One (1) at the beginning of each calendar year, followed by a comma, followed by the calendar year (e.g., Ordinance Number 1, 2008).
- (C) Prior to introduction, each proposed resolution shall have assigned to it by the Clerk a resolution number. The resolution number shall begin with a sequential number beginning with One (1) at the beginning of each calendar year followed by a comma, followed by the calendar year (e.g., Resolution Number 1, 2008).

Section 3. Introduction of Ordinances and Resolutions

- (A) Council members or other persons may initiate proposals for introduction by submitting such proposals to the Clerk for review by the attorney for the Council as to form and legality as provided in Section 1 of this Rule 12. If such person is not a Council member, the person shall indicate the Council member who has agreed to sponsor the proposal.
- (B) Except by consent of a majority of the Council members present, no proposed ordinance or resolution shall be introduced until the duly appointed attorney for the Council shall indicate his/her approval or disapproval as to the form and legality. A proposed ordinance or resolution shall be presented to the Clerk by 4:00 p.m. on the seventh (7th) business day prior to the day of the regular meeting. The only exception to this requirement shall be with the approval of the Council President, the Vice President if the President is unavailable or the Clerk if both the President and Vice President are unavailable. No proposal or resolution may be introduced unless sponsored by a Council member and his/her name is inscribed thereon. Each proposal for an ordinance or resolution also shall contain a title stating the subject matter of the proposed ordinance or resolution.

Section 4. Disposition of Ordinances and Resolutions with Council and Committees

- (A) No ordinance shall be adopted the same day that it is introduced except by suspension of the rules requiring a unanimous vote of all Council members present. At least two-thirds of all the elected members of the Council must vote in the affirmative for passage of any proposal on the same day that it is introduced.
- (B) Upon introduction of a proposal, such proposal shall be given first reading, which reading shall be by title only unless otherwise directed by the presiding officer. In the case of a proposal for an ordinance, no action or debate shall be in order except in the case of urgent necessity and with the consent of a majority of those members present. Following introduction and first reading, a proposal for an ordinance shall be referred by the presiding officer to a committee of the Council for consideration and recommendation, unless the presiding officer feels it is unnecessary to do so.
- (C) At the next regular or at the next duly noticed special meeting of the Council following introduction and first reading, a proposal for an ordinance shall be eligible for second reading, which reading, unless otherwise directed by the presiding officer, also shall be by title only. Such proposal for an ordinance then shall be eligible for possible amendment and adoption.
- (D) Discussion and debate shall be in order prior to adoption of any pending proposal, and the sponsor of a proposal, if available, shall open the debate and explain why they sponsored the proposal. After the conclusion of the debate and discussion, the presiding officer shall close the discussion and debate and call for a vote. Except for matters and at times of public hearing, members of the executive branch of city government, individual citizens of the City of Lawrence, representatives of other units of government and organizations and any other persons may be recognized and heard only with the approval or by the invitation of the presiding officer.
- (E) Any proposal failing to receive a sufficient number of votes on final passage will be considered as lost; provided that the vote thereon may be reconsidered within the time and in the manner set forth in these rules.
- (F) Final vote for passage of a resolution may be taken at the meeting at which it is introduced, or the resolution may be referred to the appropriate committee as determined by the presiding officer.

Section 5. Public Hearings

Public hearings shall be held on all proposals, resolutions and official action when and as required by Indiana statute in the manner and as prescribed by statute after due notice as required by law.

Section 6. Preservation; Proof of Publication

All proposals for an ordinance which are adopted by the Council shall be given an ordinance number by the Clerk as provided by these rules. The original thereof, after it is signed by the presiding officer and the Mayor, shall be placed in a journal of ordinances maintained in the office of the Clerk. If an ordinance is required to be published other than by publication in the Municipal Code, due proof of publication in the form of an affidavit of the printer or publisher shall be procured by the Clerk and attached to or written and attested upon the face of the ordinance.

Section 7. Repeal Not To Revive Former Ordinance

When any ordinance repealing a former ordinance, clause or provision shall be itself repealed, the repeal shall not be construed to revive the former ordinance, clause or provision, unless it shall be so expressly provided therein.

Section 8. Effective Date

Unless otherwise expressly provided therein, any ordinance adopted by the Council and not requiring publication shall take effect from its passage, after it is signed by the presiding officer of the Council, attested and signed by the Clerk, presented to the Mayor and either is signed by the Mayor or passed over the Mayor's veto by the Council in accordance with IC 36-4-6-16. Any ordinance adopted by the Council and requiring publication shall take effect from and after the procedure heretofore described and after the due publication thereof in the manner prescribed by IC 5-3-1 or, in the case of an urgent necessity regarding its immediate effectiveness proclaimed by the Mayor, is posted in the manner prescribed in IC 36-4-6-14(b)(2), unless otherwise expressly provided therein.

Rule 13. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Designated; Composition

There shall be [nine] standing committees within the Council, appointed by the President, consisting of a Chair, a Vice-Chair and up to two (2) other members. The standing committees shall be

- (A) Administration, Budget and Finance
- (B) Code and Rules
- (C) Economic Development
- (D) Energy Savings
- (E) Grants
- (F) Parks and Recreation
- (G) Public Safety
- (H) Public Works
- (I) Zoning

The Council also may act as committee of the whole Council which shall consist of every duly elected member of the Council. The Council, by declaration of the President or by motion duly adopted, may form itself as a committee of the whole Council, whenever by statute or under these rules, the public is entitled to a hearing before the Council upon any matter of business properly before the Council. The committee of the whole Council also may function in the manner of a standing committee upon any matter referred to it by the President or upon motion adopted by the Council. The President shall be chairperson of the committee of the whole Council, but may designate another member to preside or act as chairperson at such times and for such periods as the President may designate.

Section 2. Duties

The duties of the various standing committees shall be as follows:

- (A) To receive, study and provide recommendations concerning proposals introduced before or to be considered by the Council.
- (B) To initiate proposals which the committees determine to be appropriate for the benefit and good order of the city and its citizens.
- (C) To meet from time to time with members or representatives of the executive branch of city government, citizen or public groups, representatives of other units of government and citizens generally to receive information and to consider and to develop, as the committees deem appropriate, recommendations for consideration and possible action by the Council.
- (D) To undertake and perform such other duties and responsibilities as the President may direct.

Section 3. Assignment of Matters

Any matter coming before the Council may be assigned by the President to an appropriate standing committee for discussion and recommendation. If the matter coming before the Council does not fall within the specific province of a standing committee, it may be assigned to such committee as the President determines or to a special committee if a special committee shall be deemed appropriate by the President.

Section 4. Committee Action

Committees may review proposals for ordinances or resolutions or other matters before them for a period up to but not to exceed sixty (60) days or the second regularly scheduled meeting, whichever is sooner, before making a report to the full Council. By the regularly scheduled meeting or special meeting called for that purpose following the maximum period, the committee chair shall provide the committee's report and recommendations concerning those matters reaching the maximum period in committee or shall seek an extension of time for further consideration.

Rule 14. RECORDING AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

News media representatives and other persons may audio or video record meetings of the Council from fixed locations approved by the presiding officer and provided that they do not disrupt the Council proceedings or block the view of any observer. Except for copies of proposed or pending ordinances or resolutions or other information pertaining to the agenda provided and placed by the Clerk, no printed, graphic, electronic or other material may be distributed, placed for general distribution or availability or otherwise disseminated within the Council meeting room preceding, during or following any meeting of the Council without the approval of the presiding officer and with clear disclosure of the person or persons, organization or organizations or any other entity or entities responsible for the distribution or placement.

Rule 15. COUNCIL CHAMBER FLOOR DESCRIBED; ADMITTANCE

The floor of the Council chamber shall consist of that portion of the chamber from the first public seats to the Council bench. No person shall be permitted on the floor of the Council chamber while the Council is in session other than the members thereof, its attorney and staff and accredited reporters of the news media. No other person may be admitted without permission from the presiding officer or by a majority vote of the Council. Any person who is entitled to address the Council pursuant to these rules and the regular procedures of the Council shall be admitted to the floor only during the time such person is permitted to speak.

Rule 16. RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, the latest edition, shall be the controlling authority on all questions of parliamentary law and procedure not specifically covered by these rules for the conduct of business or by statute or ordinance.

Rule 17. AMENDMENT TO RULES

The rules provided for herein may be amended, modified or annulled by a majority vote of all of the members of the Council. All proposed amendments to such rules shall be submitted in the form of a resolution in accordance with Rule 12 herein and shall be referred to the Code and Rules Committee. The Code and Rules Committee shall consider and report to the full Council on the rules in accordance with the procedure specified herein. The committee, however, also shall have the authority to recommend changes in the rules on its own volition at any time; provided, that no vote may be taken on any such recommendation unless notice of its proposal shall have been given by the committee to the Council in writing at a regular meeting of the Council not later than the regular meeting immediately preceding the meeting at which the committee proposes to submit its recommendation.