



*City of Riverside*  
***Rules of Council***



City of  
**Riverside**  
*Pride • Progress • Possibilities*



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***Council Members Handbook***

*(Adopted by Riverside City Council July 2021)*

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## ***POWERS, JURISDICTION, FUNCTIONS AND LIMITATIONS***

Except as otherwise provided under the City Charter, all legislation and other powers of the City are vested in the Council. The Council has the power to enact ordinances, resolutions, and other measures to carry out municipal functions involving the City's departments, divisions, offices, boards, commissions, and employment. (Section 3.01, City Charter)

Council Members have power and may exercise that power only when Council is in session. Council Members and the Council itself are not bound by any statement or action taken by individual members, City officials, or employees unless in accord with Council action.

Individual Council members shall not direct any City official or employee to perform services or take action related to City operations. Except for the purpose of inquiry or investigation incident to carrying out their powers, duties and responsibilities as set forth in this Charter, the Mayor, Council, and its members shall deal with that part of the administrative service for which the manager is responsible, solely through the City Manager. (Section 6.04, City Charter)

Some specific Council functions include:

- Making policy necessary for the operation of the City.
- Appoint a City Manager and establishing a salary for the City Manager (Section 6.01, City Charter)
- Appointing a Clerk of Council and establishing a salary for the Clerk (Section 4.12, City Charter)
- Appointing a City Attorney and establishing a salary for the Attorney (Section 7.01, City Charter)

- Obtaining reports from the City Manager concerning conditions, efficiencies, needs and other affairs and related City matters.
- Evaluating and approving the city budget and appropriations and their modifications.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of City programs and the performance of the City Manager, Clerk of Council and City Attorney.
- Informing the public of City activities and needs.

### ***MEETINGS***

Unless otherwise provided in the Charter, Riverside City Council conducts its meetings according to the procedures contained in Roberts Rules of Order.

Council member is responsible to come to the meetings fully prepared, meaning that you should read through the entire packet of information made available to you prior to the meeting. All questions regarding this information, contact the City Manager or Clerk of Council to direct you to the appropriate resource to research your question prior to the meeting. Council member are expected to vote and take other official action on all matters presented in the packet.

Meetings of Council are all public meetings, except executive sessions as defined and authorized by ordinance of the Municipality. (Section 4.09, City Charter)

- **Regular Meetings:** Regular Council meetings will be held. On the first and third Thursdays of the month. Meetings will begin at 6:00 P.M. and will be held in the Council Chambers at the City Hall Building.
- **Special Meetings:** Special meetings may be called by. The Mayor or City Manager or any three (3) members of Council on seventy-two (72) hours' notice served on each

member personally or left at the member's usual place of residence. Any member of Council may waive this notice by filing within the Clerk of Council a written waiver prior to the of the special meeting. The purpose of the special meeting shall be stated in the notice, and no other business shall be transacted at such meeting. (Section 4.09, City Charter)

- **Council Work Session:** Council Work Sessions are work meetings for Council and are not utilized for legislative action or other formal Council actions appropriate to Regular or Special Council Meetings. Public input is not permitted during a Work Session. Council Work Sessions are held as needed (usually on the second and fourth Thursday). Meetings begin at 6:00 P.M. and will be held in Council Chambers at the City Hall Building.
  
- **Executive Sessions:** Executive Sessions shall be closed, private, and confidential; and shall be held in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code 121.22, the Ohio Sunshine Law. These meetings are to be noted on the agenda of a regular or special meeting, when practicable. Any individual Council member may suggest or motion that Council enter Executive Session when circumstances are such that satisfactory answers or useful discussion may be provided only in Executive Session. A motion to include the general purpose of the Executive Session as specified in the Ohio Revised Code 121.22 and passed by a roll call vote is required for Council to enter into Executive Session.

Minutes of the Executive Session discussions shall not be kept, nor shall any participant record the proceedings of an Executive Session through electronic means.

Discussion in Executive Session is confidential. Participants shall not compromise the confidentiality of an Executive Session. (Admin Code 103.06 (e))

## ***PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS***

The Clerk of Council will make public notice of all meetings.

- *Regular meeting:* Schedule is set at the beginning of each year. Notice of change is 24 hrs. (Admin code 103.02(a))
- *Organization meeting:* Public notice is 48 hrs. (Admin code 103.02(b))
- *Special meeting:* Public notice is 48 hrs. (Admin code 103.03(a))

This public notice will include the date, time, place and purpose for the meeting or session. The public notice will be done in the following manner.

- Posting of the public notice at City Hall
- Posting of the public notice on the City of Riverside official website
- Distribution of the public notice by email via the Internet through an electronic distribution list maintained by the Clerk of Council, to include media outlets and individual members of the public who have requested notification in advance.

The public may obtain notice of the date, time, place, and purpose of all regular or special meetings, work sessions, and committee meetings of Council by calling the office of the Clerk of Council.

## ***QUORUM AND MAJORITY VOTES***

A quorum consists of four (4) members of Council including the Mayor for all Council meetings. Passage of an ordinance requires affirmative vote of four (4) members of Council. A resolution may be enacted on a formal motion by majority vote of the members of council present. (Section 5.02, City Charter)

***ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES AND REMOVALS*** Council members are required and expected to attend all regular and special meetings of Council. Absences from Council may be excused for

reasonable cause. A motion of a simple majority of Council is required to excuse absence member.

Unexcused absences from three (3) consecutive Regular Council Meetings may result in the forfeiture of Office.

Council Members may be removed from a Council meeting for disorderly conduct or violation of the *Rules of Council* by a two-third (2/3) majority of Council. Removals will be considered an unexcused absence.

### ***CLERK OF COUNCIL***

The Clerk of Council serves as the Council administrator. The Clerk attends council meetings, records proceedings, maintains city records, handles public records requests, authenticates legislation and signatures, prepares correspondence and minutes and performs other duties as directed by Council and required by law.

***Minutes:*** Minutes shall record actions taken at the meeting and are not required to be a verbatim transcript of what is said at the meetings. (*Part 1-Administrative Code, Title Three-Legislation Chap 111.05*)

### ***COUNCIL PACKET INFORMATION AND AGENDAS***

Three (3) working days prior to schedule Council meetings, Council members will be furnished an electronic packet with information germane to the meeting agenda items. All electronic documents will be delivered via a city email address. The packet will include an agenda, past meeting minutes, copies of ordinances and resolutions, and additional relevant information. The agenda will normally be finalized on the Friday preceding the scheduled Council meeting. All documents should be submitted by 5:00 P.M. on the Wednesday prior to the Friday packet deadline.

All meeting packets and attachments will be delivered electronically via email. If requesting a paper packet, notify the Clerk and all printed packets will be available for pick-up by 4 P.M. Friday at City Hall. The Clerk will notify all Council members via email if packets are delayed till the following Monday.

*\*Work session:* City manager should provide discussion documents, via email, to council members prior to meeting.

### ***AGENDAS***

- The Clerk of Council shall be responsible for preparing the agendas for all Council meetings in the consultation with the City Manager and the Mayor.
- The presiding officer shall be responsible for approval of the agendas for all Council meetings.
- Format:
  1. Call the Meeting to Order
  2. Invocation
  3. Pledge of Allegiance
  4. Roll Call
  5. Approval of Minutes
  6. Special Presentations
  7. Citizens Registered to Speak on Agenda Items
  8. City Manager Report
  9. Old Business
  10. New Business
  11. Non agenda Public Comments
  12. Council Commits
  13. AOB (Any other business) \*For future business discussions
  14. Executive session



## ***PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS***

During the Public comment portion of the Public Hearings, the Mayor will recognize individuals wishing to speak on the topic.

If the topic to be discussed is not on the agenda, it may be discussed under Citizens Comment section of the meeting. Those wishing to speak on agenda items may do so following the recognition of the mayor. Residents wanting to speak are asked to abide by the following procedure.

- Wait to speak until recognized by the Mayor.
- Approach the microphone and clearly state your name and address.
- Limit comments to three (3) minutes
- Avoid complaints and or remarks directed against individual employee or Council Members. (This type of complaints should be handled through the proper procedures for filing personal complaints.)
- Understand that Council will not address the question or concern at this time. The Council may direct the City Manager to follow up with the concern after the meeting.

## ***LEGISLATION***

### ***Ordinances and Resolutions:***

Council legislative action shall be by ordinance or resolution., Ordinances shall be enactments of the Council establishing permanent rules of conduct or of government. *Resolutions* shall be orders of the Council dealing with a specific matter of temporary nature which expresses the policy of the Council or opinion regarding such matter, and which do establish permanent or

general legislation. (Section 5.01, City Charter) Ordinances shall be reviewed by the Law Director who shall be responsible to see that they are written in the manner prescribed by law.

***Majority Required:***

The affirmative vote of four (4) members of Council shall be necessary for the passage of any ordinance unless otherwise provided herein. A resolution may be enacted on a formal motion by a majority vote of the members of Council present. (Section 5.02, City Charter)

***Procedure:***

- ***First Reading:*** Once placed on the agenda, a first reading can be read by title only, unless a full reading is requested by a member of Council. The complete text of the ordinance shall be posted at the Municipal Fire department and the Municipal building. The Clerk of Council shall publish the title of the proposed ordinance in a newspaper and on the municipal web site. Such publications shall specify the time and place for the second reading and public hearing and that copies of the proposed ordinance are available to the public at no cost. The posting of the publication of the second reading shall be posted seven (7) days prior to the time set for the second reading and public hearing. (Ref. Section 5.03, City Charter)
- ***Second Reading and Public Hearing:*** Second reading may be read by title only, unless Council requested ordinance be read in full. All interested persons shall be given an opportunity to be heard prior to the final vote. Council can approve, reject, or amend the proposed legislation. Ordinances that are amended, shall not be adopted till it can be published again and another public hearing is allowed.
- ***Final Adoption:*** Vote of at least four (4) members of Council is necessary for the final passage of an ordinance, unless otherwise provided for in the City Charter. Every ordinance shall be recorded and be authenticated by the signature of the presiding officer of the Council and the Clerk of Council.

- ***Emergency Ordinance:*** Emergency ordinances and resolutions are those necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety, welfare or to provide for special emergencies in the operation of the usual municipal services. Each emergency ordinance or resolution be presented with specific facts necessitating the emergency legislation. Emergency ordinances will become effective immediately.

### ***MOTIONS***

A motion refers to a formal proposal by a Council member that the Council may take action upon. Motions are generally introduced by voice. If a motion is long or involved, the motion should be in writing. (Roberts Rules of Order)

*Requesting additions to future meeting agendas:*

Motion required to add new business to a work session or business meeting. Majority (4) required to move discussion/legislation forward.

### ***BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS***

In addition to the boards and commissions established in the City Charter, the Council may by ordinance, create additional Boards and Commissions it deems necessary or desirable for the efficient operation of the Municipality and provide for their duties and powers. (Section 9.01, City Charter)

### ***COMMITTEES***

When Council deems necessary it may establish a Committee by Ordinance.

- *Standing Committee:* Compose of “x” number of Council members. Membership of all standing committees will be determined at the yearly Organizational meeting

in January. Each committee shall select a Chairperson for one year not to exceed three consecutive terms.

- *Special Committee:* Committee created for a specific length of time to complete a specific task.
- *Citizen's Committee:* Citizens of Riverside appointed by Council to provide input and advice on matters effecting the municipality. Council will determine the number of residents to be appointed and the term of the position being held.
- *Sub Committee:* Committee created for Council members to work on specific projects or legislation that support progress for the city.

### ***COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES***

Council may increase or decrease the compensation of its members by ordinance. However, no ordinance increasing the salaries of the Council members and/or Mayor shall become effective until the commencement of the terms of Council members elected at the next regular municipal election, provided that such election follows the adoption of such ordinance by at least six (6) months. (Section 4.06, City Charter)

Council Members shall be reimbursed their actual expenses incurred in the performance of authorized travel on official business of City for approved training seminars, conference, etc. The Council expense budget is approved annually. All expenses should be logged through the Clerk of Council, and any reimbursements need to be submitted through the City Clerk office.

### ***COUNCIL/ADMINISTRATION COMMUNICATIONS***

Official communications between Council or its individual members and City officers and employees are to be conducted solely through the City Manager (Section 6.04 City Charter)

The City Manager may determine that a request for information is not routine or will require more than minimal effort, in which case the requesting Council member will be informed and has the option of taking the matter before the entire Council for consideration. Similarly, routine complaints or requests received by the City Manager from elected officials will be handled promptly without Council approval.

On matters pending before Council, any new information that is developed by the City Staff will be shared by the City Manager with all Council members prior to the discussion of the matter.

On matters not before Council, any new information requests that would suggest the issue would be a policy matter for the entire Council to consider, the City Manager shall inform all members of Council and seek approval for the staff work necessary to respond to the request. Request for information or reports which will interrupt the established day-to-day utilization of staff time must be approved and authorized by Council. If the request is approved, all information compiled will be shared with all Council members.

### ***CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND ETHICS***

Council members are subject to all Ohio and local statutes and federal and state law regarding conflicts of interest, criminal misbehavior, ethics, and financial disclosure by municipal officials. (Section 13.03, City Charter) Members of Council shall abstain from voting on and the formal discussion of any motion or issue wherein the member might have a conflict of interest. Members

having conflicts are expected to notify other members of the conflict as soon as such conflict becomes evident.

Council members are expected to adhere to the Ohio Ethics Law. The Ohio Ethics Law and related statutes are found in the Ohio Revised Code (R.C.) Chapter 102 and Sections 2921.42 and 2921.43. These laws generally prohibit public officials and employees from using their official positions for their own personal benefit or the benefit of their family members or business associated.

### ***SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS FOR COUNCIL***

These Guidelines and Standards apply to City Councilmembers that may maintain and use personal web pages, websites, blogs and social networking sites.

Elected Officials Internet Platforms are not controlled by the City of Riverside. The city does not require or promote such sites, nor provides web space or access for such sites through any official City channels. Communications on Elected Officials Internet Platforms are not created, received, maintained or used by the City of Riverside. Nor are they meant to document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities of the City or its Council as a whole.

#### ***Social Media Guidelines***

- The site should NOT be designated as a “governmental” page.
- The site should NOT appear to be an official City internet platform.
- The site should have a disclaimer predominantly featured on the site, such as:
  - *This is a private page under the sole control of \_\_\_\_\_ . The comments expressed by me are my own and do not reflect the opinions and/or position of the City of Riverside or its officers and employees. This page is not sanctioned or monitored by the City. This Page cannot be used for service of any legal*

*notice, administrative notice or any other legal process directed to the City. This site cannot be used to request City records.*

- Elected Officials should NOT promote their private Internet Platforms at official City meeting or in official City correspondence.
- If the Internet Platform is interactive (allow third party post) the site should expressly provide that it is not intended to be a public forum and that posts that are vulgar, off topic, hate speech etc. will be deleted according to a posted policy advising users.
  - **Sample:** *I reserve the right to remove or edit any posts that are unlawful, threatening, libelous, defamatory, obscene, pornographic, invasive of privacy, infringing of intellectual property rights or otherwise violate any law. This includes comments or content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, genetics, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or intellectual disability or sexual orientation. Spam, links to other sites, information that is clearly off topic and or apparent spamming or trolling will be removed.*

### **Social Media Standards**

- Elected Officials should not disclose information that is considered privileged or confidential. *Example:* Information may include but is not limited to certain personnel information, non-public information from criminal investigations and business trade secrets.
- Elected Officials should be honest and accurate when posting information or news and post a retraction of any mistakes, misstatements and/or factual errors in content upon discovery.
- Elected Officials should never represent themselves as a spokesperson for the City Council, board, commission, or committee.

- Elected officials should not post information about matters involving pending or threatened litigation, items that are or may be appealed to them in their official capacity or to City boards or commissions.
- Elected Officials should not use internet platforms to communicate with city employees about City related matters.
- Elected Officials should not “tag” a matter to a city employee’s personal internet platform site.
- Elected Officials should be mindful of the risks of electronic communication in relation to the Ohio Public Records Laws and the Open Meeting Law. Communication between elected officials should be avoided on internet platforms.
- Elected Officials should not reference any document(s) as a basis for making an official decision unless that document is available through the city as a public record.
- Removing a user’s comment or post criticizing “government actions” is not advisable.
- When an Elected Official desire to have a matter posted to an Official City Internet Platform, the Elected Official shall provide the item or link to the Clerk of Council who will then forward it to the designated person in charge of the City Internet Platform for posting consistent with the City’s Social Media Policy.

### ***COMPLAINTS***

Complaints against employees are to be made to the City Manager. Complaints against Council members, or members of City boards or commissions appointed by Council are to be made to the Mayor. All complaints are required to be in writing. Oral complaints against individual employees by the public or Council members at Council meetings are out of order. The presiding officer shall rule the complaint out of order and explain the proper procedure for filing a complaint.



The City is not denying the rights of the public to criticize, state dissatisfaction or complain about Council or City services, but to protect individuals from public censure without the chance to answer specific complaints.

### ***EVALUATIONS***

It shall be the responsibility of the Council to provide an annual written evaluation of the City Manager, and Clerk of Council. Dates for completion of evaluations will be determined during the Organizational meeting held in January. Evaluations should be completed and submitted to the mayor thirty (30) days prior to annual review date set in January.

### ***SWEARING IN NEW ELECTED OFFICIALS***

Swearing in occurs the first meeting of Jan, following the election.

All newly elected officials shall attend an orientation in December following the election. Clerk of Council should provide newly elected with Council Rules, Sunshine law training and answer any questions.