

Rules of Council

Meetings

Stated Meetings of the Council of the City of Scranton shall be held on Thursday of each week at 6:30 P.M. with a caucus of Council to be held at 6:00 P.M. preceding each meeting. Meetings will be held in Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, Municipal Building. Special Meetings of Council shall be held at the call of the Council President, or upon request of a majority of the members of the entire Council.

Council shall recess for the month of August unless a majority of the members of the entire Council vote to conduct weekly or biweekly meetings as per Section 6-3(c)(4) of the City Administrative Code.

Article I **The Presiding Officer**

Section 1. The President, or in his absence the Vice President, shall take the chair and call the Council to order at the hour fixed for the meeting. The President shall request a roll call to be conducted and, if a quorum is present, the meeting shall proceed.

Section 2. The President shall preserve order and decorum during the sessions of Council, confine the members to the question under consideration, enforce the rules and shall authenticate by signature the passage, approval or adoption of any and all ordinances and resolutions.

Article II **The City Clerk**

At the opening of each session of Council, the President shall request a roll call to be conducted. The City Clerk shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of the Council.

Article III Committees

Section 1. All Standing and Special Committees shall be appointed by the President.

Section 2. Standing Committees of the Council shall be named and designated as follows:

- Committee on Rules - Mr. McGoff
- Committee on Finance - Mr. Evans
- Committee on Public Works - Mr. Gaughan
- Committee on Public Safety - Mr. Wechsler
- Committee on Community Development - Mr. Rogan

Section 3. Standing Sub-Committees of the Council shall be named and designated as follows:

- Pension Review/Administration - Mr. McGoff
- Downtown Revitalization - Mr. Rogan
- Boards & Commissions - Mr. Wechsler
- Revenues/Taxes - Mr. Evans
- Intergovernmental Relations - Mr. Gaughan

Section 4. All business requiring examination by committees shall be referred to its Standing Committee as follows:

All subjects relating to the appointments, resignations, leaves of absence, Rules of the Council, procedural and repealing legislation shall be referred to the Committee on Rules.

All subjects relating to revenue for the support of the city government, relating to claims against the city, relating to taxation, to City Treasurer's accounts, to exonerations, to finance and budgetary transfers shall be referred to the Committee on Finance.

All subjects relating to the Bureau of Engineering, paving streets, bridges, sewers and drains, parks and public buildings (except such as are now or hereafter may be used for police purposes or fire engine houses), and all subjects relating to light, heat, water, sewer treatment, recreation and refuse shall be referred to the Committee on Public Works.

All subjects relating to the Bureau of Fire, Police Department, parking, parking meters, health, sanitation, traffic violation maintenance and communication shall be referred to the Committee on Public Safety.

All subjects relating to urban renewal, redevelopment, housing, Bureau of Inspections and Licensing, Office of Community Development and Zoning shall be referred to the Committee on Community Development.

Article IV **Passage of Ordinances and Resolutions**

Section 1. All acts of Council requiring the signature of the Mayor shall be by Ordinance or Resolution. No Ordinance or Resolution shall be passed finally on the day of its introduction except in case of public emergencies, and then only when requested by the Mayor and City Controller and approved by the affirmative votes of a majority of the Council present.

Section 2. No Ordinance or Resolution shall be considered unless referred to the proper Committee and returned.

Section 3. Ordinances on Third Reading may be amended, but only by a majority vote of the members of Council present. Said amendment shall be in writing.

Section 4. No Ordinance or Resolution, except an Appropriation Ordinance, shall be passed containing more than one subject which shall be clearly expressed in its title.

Section 5. On the final passage of all Ordinances or Resolutions the vote shall be taken by Roll Call and the name of the members voting for or against shall be entered upon the journal. No Ordinance or Resolution shall become a law unless a majority of the members of Council present shall be recorded on the journal as voting in its favor.

Section 6. All Ordinances and Resolutions shall be in writing. All amendments shall be in writing. After its passage such Ordinance or Resolution, as adopted, shall be filed and preserved by the City Clerk among the City Records.

Article V
Regulations in Council

Section 1. Any person (or persons) authorized by the State Sunshine Act, 65 P.S. Sub-Section 701 et.seq., who wishes to address Council may do so only in Fourth Order which is designated as Citizens' Participation. Any person authorized to address Council shall be limited to speaking exclusively on matters of concern to the Council that are contained in Third, Fifth, Sixth or Seventh Order of the meeting agenda, and may speak on non-agenda items of concern to the Council.

No person shall address Council for more than five (5) minutes unless extended by the Council President. Council members may respond to citizen questions and/or comments during Fifth Order or during Citizens' Participation. The five minute time limit shall include any time that Council members may speak in response to citizen questions or comments if an immediate response is requested by a citizen. No person, including members of Council, shall use their time during Citizens' Participation to personally insult or attack any individual. Name-calling, profanity, racial or ethnic slurs and any other behavior that is inconsistent with the purpose and intent of conducting official business shall not be permitted. The Council President shall have sole discretion in determining if and when any person violates these rules. Any person in violation shall be ruled out of order by the Council President and may be removed from the podium and/or meeting at the Council President's request.

Section 2. Every motion shall be entered on the minutes together with the names of the members making and seconding the same, unless the motion should be withdrawn.

Section 3. When a motion is made and seconded it shall be stated by the Council President before debate upon it.

Section 4. No Amendment shall be entertained which destroys the general sense or intent of the original motion, or that tends to negate the same.

Section 5. The yeas and nays on any question shall be called on the demand of one member. Any member may change their vote before the result is declared, but no member shall be allowed to change their vote after the result is declared if the result be changed thereby.

Section 6. Members speaking shall address the President. When presenting a paper members shall first state its import. No member shall be interrupted while speaking except by a call to order by the President, or by a member through the President, or by a member to make an explanation, or by a call for the previous question.

Section 7. When a question is under consideration no motion shall be received except for adjournment, for the previous question, for postponement, for amendment or for reference. These questions shall have precedence in the order stated and the first two shall be decided without debate. A postponement greater than one (1) year shall be equivalent to a rejection.

Section 8. A motion to adjourn shall be decided without debate. This motion is always in order except when the previous questions shall have been ordered, when a vote is being taken or when a motion to adjourn was the last preceding motion.

Section 9. A call for the previous question shall be seconded and the votes taken upon such a call shall decide only the question: "Shall the main question be put?"

If this be decided in the affirmative the vote shall be taken on the main question without debate or amendment. If it be decided in the negative consideration of the main question shall be postponed until the next meeting, but the main question shall not be put until amendments previously offered be decided in their order, but all such amendments shall be decided without debate.

Section 10. A motion to reconsider shall not be entertained after the next regular meeting of Council, unless by consent of a majority of the entire Council.

Section 11. On the call yeas and nays no member shall be excused from voting, unless by consent of a majority of the members of Council present.

Section 12. The files of the Council may be inspected by the members in the Office of the City Clerk, but no paper or copies may be taken without permission from the Council President.

Section 13. All Committees shall meet at the call of the Chairperson who shall be the first person named on such Committee. In case of absence or sickness of the

Chairperson the next person named by the President may call the Committee together.

Section 14. No Ordinance, Resolution or Communication not properly belonging to the business of the Council shall be received or considered except by consent of the majority of the entire Council. No Ordinance or Resolution which is in substance, in nature or in intent and purpose the same as one rejected by the Council shall be introduced and considered again during the same fiscal year except by consent of a majority of the entire Council.

Section 15. Application or reference to the City Solicitor by Council or Committee for information of law and his replies shall be in writing, and shall be filed by the City Clerk.

Section 16. No rules shall be suspended except by a majority of the members of Council present.

Section 17. No nominations by the Mayor or heads of departments shall be considered without reference to a Committee unless by consent of a majority of the entire Council. No Committee shall report on such nominations sooner than the next regular meeting after they have been presented to the Council unless by consent of the majority of the entire Council. Neither shall any motion to take nominations from the hands of a Committee for consideration by Council be entertained until the next regular meeting.

Section 18. All motions requesting investigation into any and all charges against any Councilperson(s) shall be in writing and shall contain the nature of the charge, the name(s) of the Councilperson(s) so charged, and the name of the parties so making the charges. No written motion shall be entertained unless the foregoing requisites be embodied therein and unless by a majority of the entire Council.

Section 19. The Rule of Parliamentary practice contained in "Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 1981" may govern this body in all matters to which they are applicable, and which are not contained in the Rules of Council.

Section 20. Any person who requests information from Council during Citizens' Participation shall do so in writing and shall include the name of the person making the request. All requests for stop signs, street lights, street signs, safety signs and traffic signs shall be made in writing and signed by the requesting party. All such

requests will be acted upon by Council. A majority of the Council, in its sole and absolute discretion, shall determine whether to place such requests on the Council agenda.

All persons wishing to lodge complaints to Council shall do so in writing by stating the nature of the complaint, all facts including the time and place of the event, all names and addresses of individuals with knowledge of the event, and the name, address and telephone number of the complaining party. All complaints must be signed by the complaining party.

Section 21. All videotaping, recording, photographing or broadcasting of Council meetings shall be done from the rear of Council Chambers.

Approved by Council vote on January 6, 2014.

Revised September 11, 2014
Article III Committees; Section 2. Standing Committees
And Section 3. Standing Sub-Committees