

COTTAGE GROVE CITY COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION MINUTES  
February 26, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Solesbee called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS: Mayor Candace Solesbee and Councilors Alex Dreher, Greg Ervin, Dana Merryday, Chalice Savage and Jon Stinnett.

PRESENT VIA GOTOMEETING:

COUNCIL ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS: City Manager Mike Sauerwein, Assistant City Manager Jake Boone, City Recorder Mindy Roberts, Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart and Finance Director Roberta Likens.

STAFF PRESENT VIA GOTOMEETING

CITY ATTORNEY: Carrie Connelly

MEDIA PRESENT:

City Attorney Carrie Connelly stated that the Work Session would be to review proposed Council Rules starting at rule 11.0, where the prior Council Rules Work Session had ended.

City Attorney verified, as a follow-up to the last meeting, there was Council consensus to keep rule number 10.5 in the same spot on the Agenda.

Councilor Merryday asked to review number 5.0 *Quorum* and for an explanation of a quorum based on the City Charter.

Discussion held and City Attorney clarified that the City Charter, Chapter III, Section 12 states that a majority of the Council members is a quorum to conduct business and Section 7 states that the Council consists of a mayor and six councilors. She added that if Council is reduced to less than a quorum, Council could not conduct City business.

Council, Staff and Attorney Connelly discussed proposed changes in the following sections:

- **11.0 Appearance of Interested Citizens**, proposed as an addition to address virtual participation, allowing additional comments if time permits and being able to see who is attending virtually.
- **12.0 Public Hearings**, time allowed for citizens and applicant to make comments.
- **14.0 Action Items**, time allowed citizens to make comments.
- **15.0 Adoption of Ordinances**, change of wording from Councilor to Council members.
- **15.2.3**, time allowed citizens to make comments.
- **17.0 Duty to Vote**, reason for abstaining, importance of making sure Council member vote is recorded, impact of not voting and roll call vote versus voice vote.

Councilor Greg Ervin arrived at 6:20 pm

- **19.0 Sergeant-at-Arms**, who is designated as Sergeant-at-Arms and the role of the position.
- **21.0 Public Members Addressing the Council**, requiring public to state their address, importance of knowing if comments are being made from a resident of the City, stating outside or inside City limits and the Ward they reside.
- **22.1.1 Order and Decorum**, proposed as an addition to address problems arising from name-calling and disrespect to City Staff, suggested changing the language from “proper title” to the language used in 7.3.
- **23.0 Seating Capacity and Safety Requirement**, proposed as an addition to reflect COVID or other health related guidance for density maximums.
- **24.1 - 24.1.1 - 24.1.2 Code of Ethics**, proposed as an addition to state basic requirements for quick reference, proposed clarifying language that the rule reflects existing Ethics laws.
- **24.2 through 24.8**, proposed as an addition for Council imposed guidance of Council members, clarified when expressing personal opinions that the statement does not represent the position of Council and how to differentiate personal opinion from the majority of Council.
- **28.0**, discussed process of an investigation, who would conduct an investigation, censure being an inherent right and does not have to be a Council rule in order for it to be utilized as a tool to investigate or discipline a Council member.

Council consensus reached to display the name of individuals attending meetings virtually, but said it is not necessary to add it to the Council rules.

Council expressed concern that the Council rules and censure clauses were crafted to provide mechanisms to remove Council members from office.

City Attorney clarified that Council does not have the authority to remove an elected official from office. She added that rules can help set expectations and used as an opportunity to discuss Council member's actions publicly.

Council reached a consensus to conclude the Work Session and continue review of the proposed Council Rules, resuming at rule 28.0, at the next regular Council meeting.

Mayor Solesbee adjourned the Work Session at 7:07 pm

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Mindy Roberts, City Recorder

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Candace Solesbee, Mayor