

I. GENERAL RULES OF ORDER FOR STURGIS CITY COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Mayor, or in his absence the Vice-Mayor or appropriate designee, shall preside over the City Commission Meeting. Modern Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of the meeting except as modified pursuant to provisions of the City Charter or special rules adopted by the City Commission.

II. RULES TO GOVERN DEBATE AT A COMMISSION MEETING

1. The maker of the motion is entitled to speak first.
2. A Commissioner may not speak against his own motion, but may vote against it.
3. All remarks must be limited to the merits of the subject immediately under discussion.
4. All remarks must be addressed to and/or through the Mayor.
5. Personal comments about other individuals should be avoided.
6. Commissioners are seldom referred to by name; rather by title.
7. No Commissioner may comment adversely on any prior act of the council that is not under consideration.
8. A two-thirds vote is required to close debate.
9. A Commissioner may abstain when there is a conflict of interest or where he or she lacks knowledge of the issue.
 - A) A Commissioner who intends on abstaining must announce their intentions. They may not debate the issue but may be called upon for information.
 - B) Commissioners who intend to abstain because of lack of knowledge may vote on the issue if they feel they have obtained enough information during discussion. They should announce their intentions to the Mayor.
10. A Commissioner may bring before the City Commission any business that he or she feels should be elaborated upon by the Commission. These matters need not be specifically listed on the City Commission Agenda, but formal action on such matters should be deferred until a subsequent City Commission meeting except that immediate action may be taken upon a vote of two-thirds of all members.

III. RULES TO GOVERN DEBATE DURING PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. The speaker should state name and address before speaking.
2. Remarks must be confined to the pending question.
3. Remarks shall be limited to two minutes.
4. No person shall speak a second time on a motion as long as another is requesting recognition to speak for a first time on the motion. The cumulative time for remarks shall not exceed four minutes by any one speaker.
5. Speakers shall not enter into debate with other members of the audience, but shall always address the Mayor.
6. During open debate, the Mayor shall make an effort to alternate between supporting and opposing arguments.
7. Rights in regard to debate are not transferable.
8. Only members of the Commission or City Staff may advance in front of the podium without permission of the Mayor.
9. These rules may be suspended or modified by the Mayor upon a showing of just cause and shall be suspended or modified upon a two-third (2/3) majority vote of the Commission.

MOTION REFERENCE SHEET

- I Determine whether a motion is appropriate
Issues will often be determined by general consensus without formal resolution, but sometimes a motion is appropriate. Examples:
 - A. No clear consensus of the City Commission can be reached
 - B. A Commissioner wants a formal resolution (If a Commissioner wants a formal resolution, it should be granted. Common reasons a Commissioner may want a formal resolution are: to show that he or she dissents from the decision, to show constituents that he or she voted a particular way, to show that the Commission is acting unanimously)
 - C. A formal resolution is required by a third party (e.g., a lender)
- II Determine the type of issue that the motion addresses
 - A. Meeting Conduct Issues
Two Types:
 - 1. Those decided by the Mayor
 - a. Point of Privilege (e.g., inability to hear speaker)
 - b. Point of Procedure (e.g., inquiry about proper procedure)
 - 2. Those decided by majority vote
 - a. Appealing Ruling of Mayor
 - b. Recess Meeting
 - B. Disposition Issues
Four Types:
 - 1. Those decided by the Mayor
 - a. Withdraw Motion
 - 2. Those decided by majority vote
 - a. Postpone Consideration
 - b. Refer Question to Committee
 - c. Amend Motion
 - 3. Those that require 2/3s vote to pass
 - a. Limit, Extend or Close Debate
 - 4. Those determined by the moving Commissioner
 - a. To Count the Vote
 - C. Action Issues (Main or Substantive Issues)
One Type: Those decided by majority vote
- III Follow the Guidelines for the type of motion
 - A. Those Decided by Mayor: Mayor simply decides. No second, debate, or vote.
 - B. Those Decided by Majority Vote: More formal procedure. Requires a second, possibility of debate and amendment. Vote is required.
 - C. Those Decided by 2/3s Vote: Same guidelines for majority vote issue, except 2/3s vote required.
 - D. Those Decided by Moving Commissioner: If the moving Commissioner makes this type of motion, it should be granted without debate or vote.

Note: Due to the nature of discussion and debate, Meeting Conduct Motions are usually addressed before Disposition Issues are usually addressed before Action Issues.

Remember the guiding principle of the Rules: Give as much deference as possible to the Mayor in issues of procedure. The rules set forth above are merely guidelines.