



# **City of Westland City Council Policies and Procedures**

## **Sub-Committee:**

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**Revised Effective April 2022**

**City of Westland Westland City Council  
Policies and Procedures**

These policies and procedures outline how I as a local leader will do the following: work collaboratively with my colleagues, think strategically about how our work will impact the community, demonstrate ethical behavior, and be diligent to effectuate meaningful change.

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## **Policies and Procedures for City Council**

### **Article I Election of President and President Pro-Tem**

#### **Section 1. Election of Council Officers**

The President and the President Pro-Tem shall be chosen by a majority vote of the City Council at the first meeting of the Council in January following each odd year General City Election (per City Charter). The election will take place after roll call and the procedure will be the same as paragraph three (3) under "Vacated Elective Positions."

#### **Section 2. Presiding Officers**

- (a) The President shall preside over all meetings of the Council (regular and special Council meetings, public hearings, and study sessions).
- (b) The President Pro-Tem shall preside over the meetings of the Council in the absence of the President.
- (c) If the President and President Pro-Tem are absent from a meeting, the Council member with the longest continuous tenure in office shall preside accordingly.
- (d) President/Pro-Tem acting as council leadership may attend various administrative level meetings on behalf of the city council.

### **Article II Vacated Elective Positions**

#### **Section 1. Filling of Vacancies**

- (a) All vacancies in elective positions shall be filled by majority vote of seated members of Council no later than the second regular City Council meeting following the effective date of the vacancy, provided a majority number of affirmative votes are cast.
- (b) An agenda item shall be scheduled to receive nominations to a vacant elected position, and an agenda item shall be scheduled to vote appointment to a vacant elected position, no later than the second regular City Council meeting following the effective date of the vacancy.

#### **Section 2. Procedures for Filling Vacancies**

- (a) Nomination to a vacant elected position shall occur by the self-nomination of the council applicant or nomination by a Council member.
- (b) All names nominated shall be printed on a piece of rectangle paper of the same size. The paper shall be at or near 3" x 5" in size. The nominations shall not be folded, and all names shall be placed into a covered box or receptacle of

sufficient size to allow mixing or randomness to the selection of the nominations. A motion to close nominations must be made and supported. The paper slips shall be withdrawn one piece at a time from the box by the City of Westland Clerk or designee in the Clerk's absence.

- (c) The order in which the names of the nominees were drawn shall be recorded. Upon recording the names of the nominees, the nominees shall be voted on in the same order as their names were drawn. Voting shall take place by a roll call vote.

### **Section 3 Vacancy in Presiding Office**

Vacancy in the President and/or President Pro-Tem position shall be filled by majority vote of seated members of Council no later than the second regular meeting following the effective date of the vacancy.

### **Section 4 Unfilled Elected Vacancies**

In the event a sufficient number of votes to appoint an individual to a vacancy within an elective position does not occur, this same nomination and appointment procedure shall be utilized at every successive regular City Council meeting until an appointment is approved.

### **Section 5. Provisions for Filling Vacancies**

The provisions for filling vacancies in Article II supersede Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article III General Policy**

### **Section 1. Council Mail**

Members of the Council shall be responsible for checking their mailbox provided in the City Mail Room.

### **Section 2. Absences**

Members of the Council shall notify the President or Pro-Tem electronically, via the City Clerk, if they are unable to attend any meetings and/or study sessions.

### **Section 3. Communications**

A Council member's communications directed to Elected Officials, Directors, City Vendors, and Contractors as it pertains to city business, shall be made via City email.

### **Section 4. Review of Policies and Procedures**

Upon the written request of three or more Council members, these policies and procedures shall be reviewed at a study session. Proposed revisions shall be voted upon at a regular Council meeting.

### **Section 5. City Provided Laptop Computers or Electronic Tablets**

- (a) The City will provide laptop computers or electronic tablets to all Council members to

use for official City business. Council members shall be responsible for the proper and appropriate use of the city provided electronic devices.

1. Council members shall be expected to utilize paperless electronic systems to access agendas, meeting packets, memos, and other communications from the Administration, Clerk's Office, Departmental Directors and Council members.
2. Council members agree that the paperless communications system is the primary source of these communications. Council members wishing to print their packets may utilize the printer in the Council Study Room.

- (b) The City shall provide the electronic devices and any training that is necessary to assist the Council members in complying with this policy.

### **Section 6. Seating of Council**

The President Pro-Tem shall be seated to the immediate right of the President. The City Clerk shall be seated to immediate left of the President. The President shall decide the seating arrangement for all other City Council members.

### **Section 7. City Council Travel Policy**

- (a) Purpose and Intent

1. Purpose: This communication establishes policy and procedure for attendance of all City Council members at conferences and training programs, the expense of which is borne, at least, in part by the City. The purpose of this policy is to set forth the allowable expenses and procedures related to City Council member travel. This applies to any travel funded from tax dollars.

- (b) Types of Travel

1. Pre-Approved Travel: City Council is encouraged to attend In-state trainings and conferences hosted by the Michigan Municipal League (MML), the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), and the Conference of Western Wayne (CWW).
2. Travel Requiring Council Approval: Any travel that does not fall within the guidelines expressed in item (a) requires Council pre-approval. Any Council member that seeks to attend travel requiring Council approval must submit a request that includes the conference name, type of conference and an estimated budget. The travel request form shall be available via the City Council portal. The requested proposal will be sent to the City Clerk in accordance with Article IV. Section 1 to be placed on the following agenda for a Council vote.
3. Non-Reimbursable Travel: City Council members shall not be reimbursed for any travel that does not meet the requirements set forth in items (a) and (b).

City Council also shall not submit for any travel reimbursements to training, conferences, or any event hosted, sponsored, or funded by any political organizations to include Political Action Committees (PACs), Caucuses, events hosted by elected officials, Labor Unions, Civic groups, Fundraisers, or anything that would not be considered appropriate and for the general welfare of the entire city and the interests of its residents. Any event that has a political and/or non-citywide purpose shall not be reimbursed.

(c) Authorized Expenses and Reporting

1. Travel expenses: The only authorized expenses for travel will be for conference or training registration, personal vehicle mileage (over 10 miles round trip), and parking fees. Mileage will be reimbursed at the current Federal approved rate.
2. Expense Report: Within ten (10) days after the Council member returns from attending her/his conference, school, or training program, s/he must submit an itemized expense report. The form shall be available via the City Council portal. This report shall be submitted to the Finance Department for approval. Receipts for transportation, hotel bills, meals, gas and oil, registration fees, etc., are MANDATORY. No reimbursement will be made unless a valid receipt is included. Expenses of spouses and/or family members attending conferences, schooling or training programs with public officials or employees will not be paid from public funds.
3. Air Transportation Expenses: The travel expenses for conference, school or training programs will be allowed based on actual cost of air travel. Economy/Main Cabin Class will be reimbursed. Any upgrade will be the responsibility of the Council member and will not be reimbursable by the City. The Council member will be reimbursed for travel to and from the airport, to and from the hotel, to and from hotel conference headquarters and parking vehicle at the airport or in the Conference City based on actual cost. The City will reimburse for personal vehicles, taxi fare, or standard Uber/Lyft vehicles. Any upgrade will be the responsibility of the Council member.
4. Rental Cars: If a car is rented, the city will not pay for anything larger than a mid-size vehicle
5. Expenses for Hotel and Miscellaneous Items: Hotel bills will be reimbursed based on actual expenses incurred. Hotel fees will only be reimbursed for standard rooms. Upgraded room fee differences will be the responsibility of the Council member. Hotel bills will not be refundable unless the conference, school, or training program exceeds sixty (60) miles from the City of Westland.

6. Expenses for Meals: The allowance for meals will be on a maximum per diem rate as set forth by the GSA.gov per travel location per day, including tips. This rate is the M&IE rate only and can be found at: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>. A maximum 20% gratuity will be allowed on meals only. The city will not pay for alcoholic beverages or non-meal items purchased with the meal.
7. Incidentals: The City will not reimburse for newspapers, magazines, food snacks, movies, hotel movies, entertainment, gifts, and non-mealtime beverages. The City will also not reimburse for tips related to baggage, handling, bellhops, concierge, or any other type of service. The only tips that will be allowed are the maximum 20% tips for meals. The city will not pay for internet or cellular roaming fees.

### **Section 8. Best Practices and Customs**

If the Council policies and procedures do not cover a specific item, process, behavior, or procedure, the Council shall use any existing or established best practice and custom which will apply.

## **Article IV City Council Agenda**

### **Section 1. Agenda Deadline –**

- (a) The deadline for agenda items will be 4:00 p.m. Monday, one (1) week prior to the next Council meeting.
- (b) All information pertaining to an agenda item shall be submitted to the City Clerk by 4:00 p.m. on the Monday, one (1) week, prior to the Council meeting date.
  1. Preliminary, draft City Council meeting packets will be posted electronically to a confidential portal within the city website not later than 5:00 PM the Wednesday prior to each meeting unless extenuating circumstances prevent it. The Mayor, City Clerk and staff, and City Council members will be credentialed and have access to the confidential portal.
  2. The Clerk's office will post to the city website the City Council meeting packet – except for items deemed non-public or confidential – not later than 5:00 PM the Friday prior to each meeting unless extenuating circumstances prevent it. People requesting City Council packet documents prior to the documents having been posted to the website may wish to utilize the FOIA process.
- (c) Council members will be notified before any additions will be added to the packet after the deadline.



## **Section 2. Number of Copies**

Each Director and/or petitioner submitting agenda items shall be responsible for providing the original, four (4) copies, and a digital / electronic copy of the proposal and full explanation. Items to be placed on the agenda must be sent to the Clerk's office in electronic format via e-mail or a PDF file.

## **Section 3. Addition to Agenda by Council**

Any item shall be placed on the agenda by the written request of any three (3) Council members.

## **Section 4. Emergency Items –**

Emergency agenda items and/or requests for an addendum to the agenda may be approved at the discretion of the President/Pro-Tem via the City Clerk.

## **Section 5. Order of Business**

**The Agenda/Order of Business shall consist of the following:**

1. Call the meeting to order
2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
3. Roll Call
4. Special Presentations & Announcements
5. Questions or Input on Agenda Items from the Public
6. Consent Calendar
7. Payment of Vouchers
8. Unfinished Business
9. New Business
10. Comments and/or Requests from the Public
11. Comments from the Mayor (or designee)
12. Comments from the City Attorney
13. Comments from Council members
14. Adjournment

# **Article V City Council Meetings**

## **Section 1. Schedule of Regular Meetings**

- (a) The Council shall meet not less than twice a month in the Council Chambers at times and dates to be determined by the Council at the first meeting thereof in January following each odd year General City Election. If any time set for the holding of a regular meeting of the Council shall fall on a legal holiday, then such regular meeting shall be held at the same time and place on the next regular day which is not a holiday.
- (b) The Council has determined that all regular Council meetings shall be held on the first and third Monday of each month beginning at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise designated when the meeting dates for the year are approved or in extreme extenuating circumstances.

## **Section 2. Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the Council may be called by the Clerk on the written request of the Mayor, Council President, or any three members of the Council on 24-hour written notice to each member of the Council, designating the purpose of such meeting and served personally or left at his/her usual place of residence by the City Clerk or someone designated by him/her; but any special meeting at which all members of the Council are present or have waived notice in writing shall be a legal meeting for all purposes without such notice (Section 6.5 of City Charter). On weekdays, Special Meetings of the Council shall not commence before 5:30 p.m.

## **Section 3. Robert's Rules of Order Adopted**

The rules of parliamentary procedure as contained in Robert's Rules of Order, most recent edition, shall govern the City Council in all cases to which they are applicable, provided they are not in conflict with (1) the, "Policies and Procedures," adopted by the Westland City Council, (2) the Charter of the City of Westland, or (3) State or Federal Law. In certain cases, these Policies and Procedures intentionally supersede Robert's Rules of Order. The city attorney or representative shall act as the parliamentarian, per Article V section 7c.

## **Section 4. Suspension of Rules**

Westland City Council Policies and Procedures may be suspended for good cause pertinent to a specific agenda item by a 2/3 majority vote of City Council, provided no less than five affirmative votes are recorded.

## **Section 5. Open Meetings Act Compliance**

All regular and special Council meetings shall be open to the public pursuant to Public Act 267 of 1976, as amended by Act. No. 256 of 1978, known as Michigan's Open Meeting Act.

## **Section 6. Recording of Minutes**

Westland City Clerk or Clerk's designee shall take the meeting minutes and provide the keeping of the Council records as per the City Charter.

## **Section 7. Duties of City Attorney**

- (a) The City Attorney or a representative shall be present at Council Meetings. If any Council member feels the City Attorney should be at any other meeting, that Council member should contact the President/Pro-Tem prior to the Council meeting with specific reasons why the City Attorney should be present.
- (b) In the City Attorney's absence and during a meeting of the Council, all requests for legal opinions, etc. shall be sent to the attorney in writing through the City Clerk's office.
- (c) The city attorney or representative shall serve as the parliamentarian.

## **Section 8. Requests for Information**

Any Council member's request for information shall be submitted to the Mayor and the appropriate Director. This request shall be made electronically and copied to the President/Pro-Tem... Responses from the Mayor or appropriate Director shall be copied electronically to the entire City Council.

## **Section 9. Comments and/or Requests from the Public**

- (a) Chapter 6, Section 6.7 of the Westland City Charter states, "Citizens shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard." Section 15.263 (5) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act provides that persons shall be permitted to address the meeting of a public body under the rules established by the public body, and provides that the public body may limit the right to address the public body to prescribed times.
- (b) Council hereby establishes a three (3) minute time limit for speakers under these three (3) categories:
  - 1. "Questions or Input on Agenda Items from the Public." This section will allow a person to be recognized only at the beginning of the meeting to address the Council pertaining to items that are specifically on the business agenda at the meeting.
  - 2. "Comments and/or Requests from the Public." This section will allow a person to be recognized at the conclusion of the Council's regular business to make general comments that may or may not pertain to the business that was before the Council at that meeting."
  - 3. All Open Study Sessions.
- (c) Any person may additionally speak once at a public hearing for three (3) minutes.
- (d) The Council President shall have the authority to maintain order during the meeting.
- (e) Persons wishing to make an "announcement or special presentation" during that section of the agenda shall notify the Clerk's office by Friday at 12:00 noon before the Council meeting in which they wish to speak. The Council President shall have the authority to permit announcements or special presentations at any public meeting.
- (f) When a person is done addressing the Council, or when their time has been exhausted, they must immediately be seated. They may not return to the podium for any reason – unless requested to do so by the Council President or meeting chairperson.

## **Section 10. City Council Comments**

Council members may not engage in any political discussion or campaigning of any kind as it relates to elected officials, including themselves. No discussion shall take place regarding the Council members support or opposition to a current or past elected official as well as any potential future candidates. The spirit of this policy is

to ensure that Council members shall not engage in campaigning or campaign-like behavior from the dais. Council comments shall be conducted in the same spirit as outlined in Section 14D.

### **Section 11. Suspension of Three Minute Rule**

(a) Persons with an elected or appointed position, who are representing a subdivision, condominium, business, community, or civic association during one of the above-mentioned sections and wishing to make a special presentation regarding a specific item that may take longer than the allotted three (3) minutes shall notify the City Clerk or Council President prior to the meeting. The Council President shall decide when the presentation will be made. Each group may be limited to one (1) exception per meeting.

(b) Any other person wishing to make a special presentation regarding a specific item that may take longer than three (3) minutes shall notify the City Clerk no later than 12:00 noon the Friday before the meeting. The Council President will decide if the presentation will be made and at what point during the meeting it will be allowed.

### **Section 12. Yielding of Time Prohibited**

Robert's Rules of Order does not allow a person to yield time to another person. The Westland City Council shall not allow a person to yield time to another person.

### **Section 13. Time Keeping**

- (a) The Council President, President Pro-Tem, City Clerk and/or Secretary shall be responsible for keeping track of the public's allotted time of three (3) minutes and notifying the President/Pro-Tem when time has elapsed. A time clock will be kept within view of the timekeeper. The clock will start upon the first words of the speaker and will not stop while the speaker is recognized from the floor. It is the speaker's option to use up their time if they wish to have questions answered at this time. The clock will not be stopped by request once it is started. The clock will continue to run until the speaker is completed or their speaking time is exhausted.
- (b) If the President/Pro-Tem announces the intention to close "Comments and/or Requests from the Public" and there are no requests to be recognized by the public, then the President/Pro-Tem shall close the Comments and/or Requests from the Public section of the agenda for the remainder of the meeting.

### **Section 14. Public Comments Policies**

- (a) A public notice of sufficient size and easily readable print shall be posted on the premises during the City Council meetings and/or printed at the top of the agenda with a brief and understandable explanation of the Council's procedures for a person speaking at Council meetings. A duly adopted City Council Policies and Procedures shall be posted on the city web site and be available at the City Clerk's office.

1. Signs, placards, banners, or similar items shall not be permitted at any time

in the Council Chambers. This rule does not apply to a display board pertaining to an agenda item.

- (b) Any person wishing to address the Council shall provide their name and city of residence and shall address their comments to and through the Chair when speaking from the podium. Only the person recognized by the Chair shall be allowed to speak during the “Public Comments and Requests” portion of the agenda without Council and/or others commenting, unless a question is directed through the Chair, by that person, toward a specific Council member, the Mayor or other City official. All City officials may elect to respond to questions directed to them through the Chair. Additionally, the Mayor (or designee in the Mayor’s absence), or any Council member may elect to respond to any comment directed toward them or another City official at any time during a meeting in order to correct an error or misstatement of fact. The response from a Councilmember, Mayor or other City official shall be limited to the same time (3 Minutes) that citizens are allowed.
- (c) If the Mayor, City Council member or other City Official interrupts the speaker and it is not in response to a direct question, then the clock will be stopped and then re-started when the person is again allowed to speak.

*Everyone speaking before the Council should do so in a civil manner. Speakers shall refrain from abusive or profane remarks, vulgar language, disruptive outbursts, threats, racial slurs, or other conduct that interferes with the orderly conduct of the business meeting. Personal attacks on Council members, the Administration, City Staff, other speakers, or members of the public will not be tolerated.*

*Comments shall be directed to the Chair and not to people in the audience. The Chair shall call to order any person who is being disorderly by speaking when not having been recognized by the Chair or is being disruptive to the proceedings. If any person, after being called to order, continues to be disorderly and disruptive to the meeting, the Chair may order that person be removed from the meeting immediately. This subsection to be strictly enforced.*

### **Section 15. Motions**

- (a) A motion shall be made and seconded prior to any discussion on that subject or pending action by Council members. All discussion shall be confined to the merits of the pending motion. Speakers shall address their remarks through the Chair.
- (b) Members of the Council may speak on all agenda items. The maker and supporter of a motion shall be recognized to provide discussion as first and second speakers after the director or designee presents the submitted item, If they so desire. No member of Council shall speak a second time on an item under discussion until all other members wishing to speak on that item have been heard. The presiding officer of the Council shall be permitted to participate in debate regarding an agenda item without relinquishing the chair.

- (c) When a Council member is recognized to speak, the Chair shall turn on the microphone if so equipped.

**Section 16. Duty to Vote**

- (a) Duty to Vote – Whenever a question is put before the Council, every member shall vote Yes, No, or Abstain, provided, however, that an Abstention vote shall be cast only if a conflict of interest exists or in instances where the matter presented for a vote is approval on the minutes for a regularly scheduled meeting or study session where the Council member was not present. An absence from a prior meeting shall not constitute the basis of lacking sufficient information as referenced above.

- 1. If a Council member intends to Abstain from the vote, the Council member shall state, for the record, their intention to abstain and the reason for doing so. The Council member shall be prohibited from participating in further discussion or debate on the item under consideration. Whereas a person must be present to abstain from a vote, another option shall be afforded to Council members when a known conflict of interest exists. The Council member may choose to announce for the record the Conflict of Interest, remove immediately themselves from the proceedings, and cause a vote of Absent to be cast on their behalf.

**Section 17. Recesses**

The President/Pro-Tem may call a recess for an indefinite amount of time. During the recess, all council members are to vacate the council chambers until the President/ProTem indicates that the meeting will be reconvened.

**Section 18. Extension of Time for Meetings**

- (a) Regular Council meetings shall be adjourned no later than 12:00 a.m. One (1) extension of the adjournment time may be considered for not more than 30 minutes. Extensions shall be offered in the form of a motion and shall be subject to a vote by the City Council.
- (b) If a Council meeting has not been completed, a Council meeting shall be posted and scheduled to commence at 7:00 p.m. the following non-City holiday business day.

**Section 19. Reviving Denied Agenda Items**

Items that are brought before Council and denied, shall be placed onto any subsequent agenda as a New Business item at any meeting succeeding its denial, provided the President or any three Council members request such action in writing.

**Section 20. Televising of Meetings**

All regular and special Council meetings shall be cable televised.

## **Article VI City Council Study Sessions**

### **Section 1. Calling Study Sessions**

- (a) Study Sessions shall be held when necessary, at the call of the President/Pro-Tem. Study Sessions scheduled for weekdays shall not start earlier than 5:30 p.m. Saturday Study Sessions shall not start earlier than 9 AM and must conclude by 2 PM. There will be no Study Sessions scheduled for Sunday's or Holidays.
- (b) The President/Pro-Tem shall determine if a Study Session is needed. The President/Pro-Tem shall schedule dates and times of the Study Sessions. The City Clerk shall notify the petitioner and appropriate people of the scheduled Study Sessions.

### **Section 2. Study Session Procedures**

- (a) Written requests for Study Sessions shall be sent to the City Clerk, addressed to the President/Pro-Tem and must state the reasons for the request.
- (b) In order to maintain an effective meeting, Council members must be recognized by the Chair prior to speaking.
- (c) Minutes of all Study Sessions (Closed and Open) shall be recorded.

### **Section 3. Multiple Study Sessions on One Date**

If more than one Study Session is scheduled for any specific evening, the first session will be determined by the President/Pro-Tem and other sessions will immediately follow. An effort will be made to give approximate times; however, if the petitioner is not available for their session when Council is ready, they will be moved to the end of the schedule on a time-permitted basis.

### **Section 4. Agenda**

All Study Session notices should include the topics of discussion, including a provision for Public Comments. Public comments will be at the end of the meeting, after all presentations have been made and the Council comments have been concluded.

### **Section 5. Televising Study Sessions**

- (a) Closed Study Sessions shall not be recorded in any fashion by any person or with any device.
- (b) An open Study Session may be cable televised if a vote is requested by the President/Pro-Tem and a majority vote of the Council passes such action.

## **Article VII Cable Television Policy**

### **Section 1. General Policy**

Council members scheduling programming time with WLND shall inform the City Council President of said programming. All programming shall conform to the policy guidelines of the Westland Cable Department, WLND.

## **Article VIII Line of Succession**

### **Section 1. Line of Succession**

The line of succession of the City Council shall be President, President Pro-Tem and the Council member with the longest continuous tenure in office.

### **Section 2. Ceremonial Events**

In ceremonial events such as parades, the established line of succession is hereby approved and shall prevail.

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