



Office of the Mayor

Motion Council Referral – Proposed Changes to Public Comment

That the Agenda and Rules Committee makes a Qualified Positive Recommendation on the Open Government Commission’s proposal “Proposed Changes to Public Comment” with the following amendments/comments:

A. For immediate implementation:

1. Continue to allow the public to participate remotely via videoconference.

Comment: Approve as recommended by OGC

2. Enable live transcription at all committee, board, and commission meetings with a videoconference component. Configure Zoom to permit saving of the transcription by the public.

Comment: Partially approve this recommendation with the clarification that this would only apply to all Committee, Board and Commission meetings which conduct their meetings through videoconference. Also refer to the City Manager to record all other committee, board and commission meetings, and post recordings to the city webpage.

3. Limit councilmember initial comments on action items to 5 minutes/person and enforce this rule.

Comment: Approve as recommended by OGC

4. Start the Consent Calendar with an acknowledgement that consent items are important but should be ready to pass without prolonged discussion. Minimize discussion of items on the Consent Calendar.

Comment: Approve as recommended by OGC

5. Amend City Council Rules of Procedure Section IV Conduct of Meeting, Sub B, Consent Calendar, last paragraph to add “If three or more Councilmembers object to a Consent item by expressing their intent to abstain or vote no, the item shall be moved from Consent to Action.”

Comment: Approve as recommended by OGC

6. Acknowledge and verbally summarize comments received via email.

Comment: Reject

7. Use Berkeley Considers more frequently, especially for controversial issues.

Comment: Approve as recommended by OGC

8. Endeavor to inform attendees of approximate time for high interest items, e.g. "Item 32 will not be heard before 9:30."

Comment: Approve as recommended by OGC

9. Endeavor to determine early if an item will be postponed, e.g. at 9:30 move to continue an item, instead of waiting until 10:50.

Comment: Approve as recommended by OGC

10. Require that City Manager and staff publish supporting materials for Agenda items in advance of the Agenda Committee meeting.

Comment: Reject

11. Amend City Council Rules of Procedure Section IV Conduct of Meeting, Sub B, Consent Calendar, last paragraph as follows: Consent Calendar items will be moved to the Action Calendar if requested by three councilmembers. by the Council. Action items may be reordered at the discretion of the Chair with the consent of Council.

Comment: Approve as recommended by OGC

B. For further consideration and/or research:

1. Schedule more meetings with fewer items on the agenda at each meeting

Comment: Endeavor to schedule multiple meetings with fewer items as recommended by OGC.

2. Schedule separate meetings for items that are controversial or attract especially high public interest.

Comment: Approve as recommended by OGC

3. Have separate meetings for City department reports and/or informational items that will take longer than 20 minutes.

Comment: Approve as recommended by OGC

4. Limit to 20 minutes any City department reports included within a regular meeting.

Comment: Approve as recommended by OGC

5. Have Special Meetings on a different day from Regular Meetings.

OR

Schedule Special Meetings to have a hard stop fifteen minutes before the posted time of a Regular Meeting.

Comment: Explore having special meetings on different days, depending on the Council meeting schedule and the time sensitivity of items. Also approve of an adjournment of 15 minutes before the posted time of a regular Council meeting.

6. Strongly urge that supplemental materials be submitted earlier.

Comment: Approve as recommended by the OGC

7. Change the minimum amount of time for a public comment to 90 seconds, with more time if ceded by others.

Comment: Reject

8. After the meeting, provide a webpage link for transcriptions created by the captioners for any Council, Committee, Board or Commission meetings for which captioners were employed.

Comment: Approve as recommended by the OGC

9. Provide virtual access to Board and Commission meetings which are now held in person.

Comment: Establish a goal and work towards making all Board and Commission meetings hybrid (in person/virtual), dependent on technology and implementation.