

1 **CITY OF SEATTLE**

2 **RESOLUTION _____**

3 ..title

4 A RESOLUTION revising certain General Rules and Procedures of the Seattle City Council;
5 amending Attachment 1 of Resolution 31806, Chapter XI.

6 ..body

7 WHEREAS, by Resolution 31806, the Seattle City Council adopted "General Rules and

8 Procedures of the Seattle City Council" to govern both its internal management and the

9 procedures available to the public, in conformance with the City Charter and the

10 customary practice of legislative bodies; and

11 WHEREAS, the Council procedures and rules guide and facilitate Councilmember duties and

12 meeting deliberations as well as provide the public with an understanding of Council

13 functions; and

14 WHEREAS, periodic alterations to the Council's procedures are appropriate to improve the

15 Council's operations and its interactions with the general public; NOW, THEREFORE,

16 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE THAT:**

17 Section 1. Attachment 1 of Resolution 31806, Chapter XI, Public Participation and

18 Access, of the "General Rules and Procedures of the Seattle City Council," is amended as

19 follows:

20 * * *

21 **B. Public Hearings – Purpose; Duties of Chair.**

22 Public Hearings are opportunities for members of the public to speak on a particular proposed

23 Ordinance, Resolution, Clerk File, Appointment, or other legislative action. If a Public Hearing

24 is scheduled for a particular meeting, the agenda for the meeting shall specify the proposed

1 Ordinance, Resolution, Clerk File, other legislative action, or other subject to be discussed at the
2 public hearing.

3 (See Rule VI.~~(F)~~H. Duties of the Chair.)

4 1. Public hearings may be held as part of a scheduled City Council, select, or standing
5 committee meeting, but the public hearing shall be conducted as a separate agenda item.

6 2. The Chair of the body conducting the public hearing shall:

7 a. Announce at the beginning of the public hearing the rules, guidelines, and time
8 limits for individual speakers; and

9 b. Require all speakers to sign in on registers provided by Legislative Department
10 staff.

11 3. Members of the public who wish to speak at public hearings shall comply with Rule
12 XI.D and XI.E.

13 * * *

14 **D. Disruptions of City Council Meetings and Committee Meetings.**

15 1. Disruptions of City Council and committee meetings are prohibited. Disruptions
16 include but are not limited to the following:

17 a. Failure of a speaker to comply with the allotted time established for the
18 individual speaker's public comment;

19 b. Outbursts from members of the public who have not been recognized by the
20 presiding officer for public comment;

21 c. Comments that are not in compliance with Rule XI.C.2.a or XI.C.3.a, or that
22 are unrelated to the particular proposed Ordinance, Resolution, or other legislative
23 action on which a public hearing is being held;

1 d. Delaying the orderly conduct or progress of the public comment period,
2 including a failure to respect the process of accommodating individuals who wish
3 to provide public comment;

4 e. Use of an allotted individual comment period for purposeful delay, including
5 remaining silent or engaging in other activity without conveying a discernible
6 message;

7 f. Standing in the center aisle or front row of the audience unless speaking as
8 recognized by the presiding officer, waiting to speak during the public comment
9 period, or gathering meeting materials distributed by Legislative Department
10 staff;

11 g. Holding or placement of a banner or sign in the Council Chamber in a way that
12 endangers others or obstructs the free flow of pedestrians or the view of others
13 attending a Council or Committee meeting;

14 h. Behavior that intentionally disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes attendance
15 or participation at a Council or Committee meeting~~((:))~~ ; or

16 i. Failure to follow the direction of a Presiding Officer or security official related
17 to disruptions described in Rule XI.D.1(a) through (h).

18 2. Signs may be displayed during Council and committee meetings in a manner consistent
19 with these Rules. Any written communication intended for a CM may be submitted to the
20 City Clerk for distribution to the intended recipient.

21 3. The presiding officer shall preserve the order and decorum of a Council or committee
22 meeting at all times. If an individual fails to comply with Rule XI.D.1, any CM may issue
23 an oral or written warning to the individual that the individual's behavior is out of order.

1 An oral or written warning may be issued based on an individual's prior conduct at a
2 Council or ~~((Committee))~~ committee meeting. If the individual continues to engage in
3 activity that violates Rule XI.D.1, any CM may:

- 4 a. Terminate the individual's comment period;
- 5 b. Direct security staff to assist an individual to the individual's seat; or
- 6 c. Direct security staff to remove the individual from the meeting room.

7 4. Any individual ordered to be removed from a meeting pursuant to Rule XI.D.3.c shall
8 be excluded from returning to that same meeting from which the individual was removed.

9 5. If an individual fails to comply with the requirements of Rule XI.D.1 over the course
10 of ~~((two or more Council and/or committee meetings occurring within a 30-day time
11 period, or over the course of two or more consecutive meetings of the same committee))~~
12 multiple meetings, any CM may exclude the individual from participation in future public
13 comment periods before the Council and/or committee meetings, or exclude the
14 individual from attendance at future Council and/or committee meetings.

15 a. The CM imposing the exclusion shall inform the individual of the specific
16 reason for, and the specific terms of, the exclusion.

17 b. An initial and any subsequent exclusion of an individual from future
18 participation in public comment periods or future attendance at Council and/or
19 committee meetings may be issued for up to 28 calendar days.

20 c. If an individual is subject to an exclusion from future attendance at Council
21 and/or committee meetings for a period of 28 calendar days, and further engages
22 in activity that violates Rule XI.D.1, other than subsection c, within 60 days after
23 the termination of the exclusion period, an additional exclusion from future

1 attendance at Council and/or committee meetings may be issued for up to 90
2 calendar days.

3 d. If an individual is subject to an exclusion from future attendance at Council
4 and/or committee meetings for a period of 90 or more calendar days, and further
5 engages in activity that violates Rule XI.D.1, other than subsection c, within 60
6 days after the termination of the exclusion period, an additional exclusion from
7 future attendance at Council and/or committee meetings may be issued for up to
8 180 calendar days.

9 e. The length of the period of any exclusion may depend upon the seriousness of
10 the disruption, the number of disruptions, and the individual's prior record with
11 conduct at Council or committee meetings.

12 f. When issuing an exclusion from future public comment periods, or from future
13 attendance at Council or committee meetings, the CM shall include specific
14 notification that the individual may submit written comments to the City Clerk for
15 distribution to the Council at future public comment periods.

16 **E. Abusive and Harassing Behavior During City Council Meetings and Committee**
17 **Meetings.**

18 1. Engaging in abusive or harassing behavior may subject an individual to immediate
19 removal from a meeting and an exclusion from future attendance at Council and/or
20 committee meetings for a period of up to one year.

21 2. Abusive and harassing behavior means actions that purposefully or recklessly alarm
22 other individuals and serve no legitimate advocacy purpose. Abusive and harassing
23 behavior includes but is not limited to the following:

1 a. The use of obscene language and gestures;

2 b. Assaults or threatening behavior; or

3 c. Sexual misconduct, such as indecent exposure, offensive touching, or sexual
4 harassment, including threats of such behavior.

5 3. Engaging in abusive or harassing behavior may subject an individual to criminal
6 sanctions in addition to enforcement of the Council Rules.

7 **F. Appeals of Meeting Exclusions; Other Authority.**

8 ((6))1. The decision of any CM to impose a sanction or exclusion for disruptive activity
9 may be overruled by a majority vote of those CMs in attendance either at the meeting
10 where the disruption took place or at the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.

11 ((7))2. Any individual excluded from participation in future public comment periods or
12 from attendance at future Council or committee meetings for a period of more than two
13 calendar days may appeal the exclusion by submitting a written appeal to the City
14 Council within five business days after receiving notice of the exclusion. Upon receipt of
15 a written appeal, the City Council shall consider the appeal at its next regularly scheduled
16 open public meeting. The individual's exclusion from public comment periods or from
17 attendance at Council or committee meetings shall remain in effect during the Council's
18 consideration of the appeal.

19 ((8))3. The enforcement provisions of these rules are in addition to the authority of the
20 Department of Finance and Administrative Services to enforce Rules of Conduct in City
21 Hall pursuant to Rule 05-02, and Rules regarding City Buildings and Premises pursuant
22 to Rule 06-03. Disruptions of a Council or committee meeting, including interference

1 with City officials or City staff's preparation for a meeting, may be addressed under Rule
2 05-02 or Rule 06-03.

3 **~~(E)~~G. Interruption(s) to Council Meetings and Committee Meetings.**

4 1. It is the responsibility of the presiding officer to maintain order and adjourn any
5 meeting as the presiding officer deems necessary.

6 2. If a meeting is interrupted by any person or by a group or groups of persons so as to
7 render the orderly conduct of the meeting not feasible, and order cannot be restored by
8 the removal of individuals who are interrupting the meeting, the members of the Council
9 or the committee conducting the meeting may order the meeting room cleared and
10 continue in session, or may adjourn the meeting and re-convene at another location
11 selected by majority vote of the CMs present. In such a session, final disposition may be
12 taken only on matters appearing on the agenda. Representatives of the press or other
13 news media, except those participating in the disturbance, shall be allowed to attend any
14 session held pursuant to this Rule XI.~~(E)~~G.

15 3. The Council or the committees may establish procedures for re-admitting an individual
16 or individuals not responsible for disturbing the orderly conduct of the meeting.

17 4. If a meeting is adjourned due to an interruption, CMs and staff may leave the meeting
18 room until the meeting is reconvened.

19 (See RCW 42.30.050 Interruptions – Procedures.)

20 * * *

21 Section 2. The amendments as stated in Section 1 are incorporated, including relettering
22 sections in Chapter XI and updating references to those amendments and the table of contents,

1 into the “General Rules and Procedures of the Seattle City Council,” attached to this resolution
2 as Attachment 1.

