

BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

January 2, 2024 at 12:00 PM

Mayor Ruais called the meeting to order.

Mayor Ruais called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Morgan.

A moment of silence was observed with Mayor Ruais asking that everyone keep the family of Tom Hopkins in their thoughts and prayers.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Morgan, Goonan, Long, Fajardo, T. Sapienza, Kantor, O'Neil, Levasseur, Terrio, E. Sapienza, Burkush, Barry, Vincent, Thomas

Mayor Ruais advised that a motion is in order to adopt the rules of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Alderman Terrio moved to adopt the rules of the Board which are attached. Alderman E. Sapienza duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Long stated I have a few things. Regarding the current rules, Rule 3 Public Participation, it states that public comment sessions shall be a period of time not to exceed 30 minutes. We have always gone over 30 minutes if enough people want to speak. I don't know if we want to keep that in here or if it matters.

Alderman Levasseur stated I don't remember that being a change. Nobody made that change right?

Matthew Normand, City Clerk, stated that has been in your rules for decades.

Alderman Levasseur asked so this isn't a change to any rule that we brought up tonight. Do you want to change the rule Alderman Long? We don't have to change rules today by the way. We can make the rule change at the next meeting if you prefer. Somebody once told us that we could only make rule changes today but that is not accurate. We can make rule changes any time we want. If there is a change that we would like to make, we can do that for the next meeting.

Alderman Long moved to delete that section from Rule 3.

Alderman Terrio stated I was surprised to see that in the rules but I know from the time I have served on the school board and as an alderman that we have never gone by that rule. We have had discussions for hours. We haven't enforced it. We have it but we don't enforce it.

Alderman Long stated this is for public participation. If there are enough people who want to speak, we go for an hour and a half or two hours. This rule tells us that we have to stop at 30 minutes. We have never done that. I am just trying to clean up the rules.

Alderman Burkush stated I agree with Alderman Long. We should delete that section because we have never limited public participation.

Alderman Burkush duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Levasseur stated first of all, it says the public may have two minutes and we have never done two minutes. It has always been three minutes so if we are going to change it, we should change it to three minutes and just delete "exceed 30 minutes" and that would fix that rule.

Alderman Long stated it says two minutes but it also says that at the mayor's discretion, it can be three minutes.

Alderman Levasseur asked do you want to strike that.

Alderman Long responded no. It is at the discretion of the mayor and I am good with that.

Alderman Levasseur moved to table. Alderman E. Sapienza duly seconded the motion. Mayor Ruais called for a vote.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated there is already a motion on the floor.

Alderman Terrio stated a tabled motion takes precedence.

Mayor Ruais called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Alderman Long stated underneath that it says that a member of the public must register their name and topic with the City Clerk prior to the session beginning. I would move to delete that also unless the mayor is going to stick by that. I know in the past the mayor has asked if anyone else wanted to speak who didn't sign up. I don't know if you want to keep it that way but to be consistent with our rules, I would ask that people register with their topic and name. I am not sure, Your Honor, if you are going to be allowing people to speak after everyone who signed up has spoken.

Mayor Ruais stated no; my intention would be if you want to speak, you will write your name down and if you haven't written your name down then you are not going to be called on to speak. I would like it to be a crisp and efficient meeting.

Alderman Long stated okay then we will keep it that way. One other thing that I thought of and I know we haven't addressed this and I have been here for many years but under Rule 9 a) it says the journal of the previous shall be read and if no objection be made it shall stand approved. We have never read our minutes into the record but in our rules, it says we must read our minutes.

Alderman Long moved to delete Rule 9 a). **Alderman Fajardo** duly seconded the motion. Mayor Ruais called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated I thought we tabled this.

City Clerk Normand responded you tabled his amendment regarding Rule 3.

Alderman Long stated I would like clarification on the amendment to Rule 14. It says there is a chair and a vice-chair. If the chair and vice-chair aren't at the meeting, there would be three aldermen left which is a quorum. Could those three people pick a chairperson or do we have to wait for a chair or vice-chair?

Mayor Ruais stated if the chair and vice-chair are not in attendance, I would assume those three would have to pick a chair.

Alderman Long asked so we are still allowed to pick an interim chair if there are only three people that show up.

Mayor Ruais answered yes.

Alderman Terrio moved to adopt the rules of the Board as amended. **Alderman Levasseur** duly seconded the motion.

Alderman T. Sapienza asked are we just voting on the rules and not the changes or does this vote include these changes.

Mayor Ruais answered the vote includes the rule changes.

Alderman T. Sapienza asked so it is one vote.

Mayor Ruais responded correct.

Mayor Ruais called for a vote. *There being none opposed, the motion carried.*

Mayor Ruais entertained a nomination for Chairman of the Board, term expiring January 2026.

Alderman Terrio nominated Alderman Levasseur for Chairman of the Board, term expiring January 2026. **Alderman E. Sapienza** duly seconded the nomination.

Alderman Barry nominated Alderman Long for Chairman of the Board. **Alderman Burkush** duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Terrio moved to close nominations. **Alderman Levasseur** duly seconded the motion. Mayor Ruais called for a vote. *There being none opposed, the motion carried.*

City Clerk Normand stated when I call your name, please state the name of the alderman you are voting for. Aldermen Morgan, Kantor, Levasseur, Terrio, E. Sapienza, Vincent and Thomas voted for Alderman Levasseur. Aldermen Goonan, Long, Fajardo, T. Sapienza, O'Neil, Burkush, and Barry voted for Alderman Long. Mayor Ruais broke the tie in favor of Alderman Levasseur.

Alderman E. Sapienza moved to make the nomination unanimous. **Alderman Terrio** duly seconded the motion. Alderman T. Sapienza requested a roll call vote. Aldermen T. Sapienza, O'Neil, Burkush, Barry, Goonan, Long, and Fajardo voted nay. Aldermen Kantor, Levasseur, Terrio, E. Sapienza, Vincent, Thomas, and Morgan yea. *The motion failed.*

Mayor Ruais stated distributed to you are the committee assignments with the first named as chair.

*This being a special meeting, no further business can be presented and on motion of **Alderman E. Sapienza**, duly seconded by **Alderman Terrio**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Normand". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

City Clerk