
City Council Meetings

A Guide for Citizens Who Want to Know More About City Government

City of Ann Arbor
100 North Fifth Avenue
P.O. Box 8647
Ann Arbor, MI 48107
(734) 794-6140

The Agenda

The agenda for each regular council meeting is prepared by the Mayor and City Administrator. The agenda always follows the same format, unless the majority of council members vote to waive the rules:

Moment of Silence

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call of Council

There must be a quorum, six members of council, present to conduct business.

Approval of the Agenda

Council has the opportunity to modify the agenda at this point in the meeting.

Introductions

This portion of the meeting is reserved for presentations by staff members, citizens or community groups and is arranged by the Mayor or City Administrator.

Public Commentary - Reserved Time

Public Commentary is a chance for citizens to bring issues to the attention of the Council and City Administrator. Preference is given to those who wish to speak on a current item listed on the agenda (excluding Public Hearings). Citizens wishing to address Council must contact the City Clerk's Office beginning at 8am on the day of the meeting to sign up as a speaker. The number of speakers available is limited and speakers are given only 3 minutes each. **(SPEAKERS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO SIGN UP FOR OTHER INDIVIDUALS OR GRANT THEIR RESERVED TIME TO AN ALTERNATE SPEAKER)** For more information on signing up for public commentary slots, contact the Clerk's Office at 794-6140.

Public Hearings

Public hearings give citizens a chance to address

the Council on a specific proposed action. Notice of the public hearing is always published in the **Ann Arbor News** and public hearings are always held before final action is taken.

Persons speaking at a public hearing must limit their remarks to the subject of the public hearing and must not speak for more than 3 minutes.

Council Proposed Business

Communications from Council

This is an opportunity to ask questions and share information on various issues.

Reports from Council Committees

Approval of Council Minutes

Council has the opportunity to make corrections to the minutes from the previous meeting.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda consists of administrative resolutions considered routine. The items on the consent agenda are approved by a single motion. Each item is not read aloud as they are in the Motions and Resolutions category.

If Council members want to single out an item on the consent agenda for a separate vote, it must be moved to a portion of the agenda agreed upon by a majority of the Council.

Ordinances - Second Reading

An ordinance amends or adds a law to the code of the City of Ann Arbor. Before an ordinance becomes law, it must receive two readings. Ordinances - Second Reading is the final approval. Ordinances up for a vote under this category have already passed at first reading and a public hearing, if required, has been held.

Ordinances - First Reading

This is where an ordinance receives its initial approval. At this time, the Council may request language changes or clarifications and a public

hearing for a subsequent meeting.

Motions and Resolutions

Motions and resolutions are the vehicle that the Council uses to set policy for the city, and approve purchases, agreements and other courses of action. Some items listed under this portion of the agenda may require a public hearing as well, such as fee increases. Old or unfinished business is placed first on the agenda, followed by new business proposed by Council, followed by other new business.

Communications from the Mayor

During this portion of the agenda, the Mayor makes announcements and proposes nominations to the city's boards, committees and commissions. These nominations are placed on the table at a regular session and confirmed at the next regular session of Council. In some cases, with the consent of 8 members of Council, a nomination can be confirmed at the same meeting.

Communications from the City Administrator/City Attorney

This is an opportunity to ask questions and share information on various issues.

Clerk's Report of Communications, Petitions and Referrals

The City Clerk prepares a report consisting of communications received from citizens and outside agencies to the Council as a whole. The report lists where the communications were referred or if they were filed. In addition, the minutes received from the city's boards, committees and commissions for the information of the Council are listed.

Audience Participation - General

Anyone wishing to address Council may do so at this time. Speakers are limited to 3 minutes each.

Adjournment

Where and When

Regular meetings of the Ann Arbor City Council are held on the first and third Monday of the month at 7:00pm in the Council Chamber on the second floor of the Guy C. Larcom, Jr. Municipal Building (city hall). If the date for a council meeting falls on a holiday, the meeting is held on the following Tuesday of that week. If the date of the council meeting falls on a Monday before an election, that meeting is usually rescheduled for the following Thursday of that week.

The second and fourth Monday of the month or any other day of the month may be set aside for working or special sessions of council. A working session is held to discuss a particular issue. No action is taken at a working session. A special session is held to take action on a specific issue. Special and working sessions usually focus on only one or two issues.

Council meetings are telecast live and in replay on Community Television Network, cable channel 16 and is also now available online for Video On Demand viewing at <http://a2govtv.pegcentral.com/>

Persons with disabilities are encouraged to participate in the wide variety of public meetings held each week. Accommodations, including sign language interpreters, may be arranged by contacting the City Clerk's Office, Information Desk, at 794-6140 (V/TDD) at least 24 hours in advance.

The Mayor and Council

The Mayor is elected on a partisan ballot every even-numbered year. The Mayor is the presiding officer of the City Council and, with the approval of Council, appoints all Council committee members and members of boards and commissions. The Mayor has all the powers and duties of a Council member, including the power and duty to vote. In addition, the Mayor has veto power. If the Mayor vetoes a Council action, the Council has 30 days to override the veto with the concurring vote of 8 members.

The City Council consists of the Mayor and ten Council members, two from each of Ann Arbor's five wards. City Council is elected in partisan elections and members serve two-year terms. The Council is the policy-making body of city government.

Elections

City elections are held every fall on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November. This is the same day as national, state and county elections, which are held in even-numbered years. To vote in a city election, you must be registered in the City of Ann Arbor. To register you must be a US citizen, at least 18 years of age by the day after Election Day, and a resident of the City of Ann Arbor for at least 30 days prior to Election Day. You need to register 30 days before an election.

Absentee ballots and other election information may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office. For more information, call (734) 794-6140.