

CITY OF BETHLEHEM
City Council Memorandum

TO: Bethlehem City Council
FROM: Grace Crampsie Smith, Councilwoman
SUBJECT: Rules of Council
DATE: April 11, 2024

Attached please find revision to my original amendment of council rules.

As previously noted, my intention is to ensure that we are able to execute our duties of addressing the operations and business of the city at council meetings.

As always, I am open to your input re: any further revisions you believe are necessary

Grace C. Smith

Grace Crampsie Smith, Councilwoman

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-_____

WHEREAS, the Rules of Council, set forth at Resolution 2011-214 as amended, govern the business of the Council of the City of Bethlehem; and

WHEREAS, Rule (3)(A) is addressed to the Order of Business of Council; and

WHEREAS, Rules (3)(B), (C), and (D) are addressed to public comment; and

WHEREAS, § 710.1(a) of the Sunshine Act provides for public participation in public meetings such that residents and taxpayers may comment on matters of concern, official action or deliberation which are or may be before council prior to taking official action; and

WHEREAS, § 710.1(a) of the Sunshine Act further provides that a council has the option to accept all public comment at the beginning of the meeting, and if a council determines that there is not sufficient time for public comment at a meeting, it may defer the comment period to the next regular meeting or to a special meeting occurring in advance of the next regular meeting; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire and intention of the Council of the City of Bethlehem that all members of the public in attendance at City Council meetings have the opportunity to address Council on matters of concern, official action or deliberation which are or may be before the board or council prior to taking official action; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire and intention of the City Council of the City of Bethlehem that City business be accomplished at public meetings without undue delay;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Bethlehem that the Rules of Council be further amended as follows:

1. Amendment of Rule 3(A). Rule 3(A), setting forth the Order of Business at public meetings, is amended to provide for the following Order of Business:

Roll Call
Approval of Minutes
Public Comment by residents and taxpayers (*on Ordinances and Resolutions to be voted on this evening - 5 Minute Time Limit.*)
Public Comment by residents and taxpayers (*on any subject not being voted on this evening - 5 Minute Time Limit.*)
Public Comment by non-resident/taxpayers (*on Ordinances and Resolutions to be voted on this evening - 5 Minute Time Limit.*)
Old Business
New Business
Tabled Items
Unfinished Business
Communications
Reports
Ordinances for final passage
New Ordinances
Resolutions
Public Comment by non-residents and taxpayers (*on any subject not being voted on this evening - 5 Minute Time Limit.*)
Adjournment

2. Amendment of Rule 3(D). Rule 3(D), providing that “Public Comment will not be extended for personal insults or personal attacks on any individual, name calling or other behavior that is inconsistent with the purpose and intent of Public Comment” is hereby amended to provide that “Public Comment will not be extended for personal criticism unrelated to City business, nor for disruptive behavior that interferes with the administration and progress of a public meeting.”

3. Addition of Rule 3(E). Section 3(E) shall state as follows:

When any Council Member believes that Council will not be able to address the business before it unless Public Comment is suspended as provided for in §710.1 of the Sunshine Act, Council may, by motion and majority vote, defer the Public Comment period to the next regular meeting or to a special meeting occurring in advance of the next regular meeting.

4. **Full Force and Effect.** Except as amended herein, the Rules of Council shall remain in full force and effect.

5. **Effective Date.** This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

6. **Repealer.** Any resolution or parts thereof which are in conflict herewith are repealed and replaced only to the extent of such conflict.

Sponsored by _____

DULY ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2024, by the Council of the City of Bethlehem, in lawful session duly assembled.

ATTEST:

President of Council

City Clerk