

COUNCIL MEETING GROUND RULES

The Davis City Council will use the California League of Cities publication, “Rosenberg’s Rules of Order: Simple Parliamentary Procedures for the 21st Century” as a reference and will generally follow the guidelines in that publication for the conduct of its meetings. These rules of order are meant to create an atmosphere where the members of the body and the members of the public can attend to business efficiently, fairly, and with full participation. Highlights of these Rules of Order are:

1. It is the responsibility of all five Council members to maintain common courtesy and decorum, participate responsibly within these guidelines and to assure the successful conduct of each meeting. Each Council member should treat each other with respect and dignity, even when disagreements arise. The presiding officer may limit time for discussion in the interest of time. The presiding officer has the right to cut off conversation that is too personal, too loud, or too crude.
2. Each Council member should prepare for the meeting in advance and should pay attention to process during the meeting.
3. The presiding officer is responsible for preparing the agenda and order of the meeting, conducting the meeting and maintaining order. The presiding officer’s rulings on the sequence and conduct of the meeting, points of order, and process of discussion will prevail, unless challenged and overturned by a vote of the majority of the Council following appeal of a ruling of the presiding officer.
4. In most instances, the Presiding Officer shall make every attempt to call on others first and speak last. The presiding office has all rights of any member to participate in the deliberations.
5. Any Council member may raise a point of order (refer to Rosenberg’s Rules of Order). When a point of order is raised it will receive the attention of the presiding officer who will interrupt the proceedings and make a ruling on the point of order.
6. For consideration of individual agenda items, the Presiding Officer will follow the “Basic Format for an Agenda Item Discussion” described on pages 1-2 of “Rosenberg’s Rules of Order” and guide the Council through the process below:
 - Announce the item and describe the format for presentation, discussion and action.
 - Call on City Manager or appropriate staff first to introduce topic and explain how it fits within the body of work, goals and other contexts. Listen to staff presentation.
 - Ask questions for technical clarification. If a Councilmember does not have questions, that person should pass. The Council will have opportunity for motions and discussion after public comment.
 - Request and listen to public comment.

- The Presiding Officer shall request a motion and a second. The presiding officer will restate the motion to be sure it is understood by all members.
 - Discuss issue/motion among Council members. The person who made the motion shall give first comment. The Presiding Officer shall make every attempt to call on others first and speak last.
 - Restate and clarify the motion. Announce the maker of the motion and the member who provided the second.
 - Vote on the motion. The presiding office will clearly and specifically ask for yes votes and no votes. The presiding officer will announce the vote.
 - Repeat as necessary.
7. Individual members of the Council will prepare for the discussion in advance and ask questions of staff or others prior to the meeting whenever possible. Council members may ask questions at the meeting that might be helpful for the public to hear.
 8. Council members should actively pay attention when others are talking. Council members should be aware that side conversations, note writing and nonverbal expressions made by Council members can be distracting to the meeting. Be aware that other Council members, staff and the public in attendance can hear and see these actions.
 9. Speakers should ask the presiding officer to be recognized prior to speaking. It is always best for one person at a time to have the floor.
 10. Any concerns with staff should be handled through the City Manager outside of the regular meeting.
 11. In order to be most effective, Council members should craft their motions in advance for clarity. Write a motion down, if necessary.
 12. Remember that, ultimately, the Council, staff and community are on the same team, striving to make Davis a better place to live, work and play.