

# City of SeaTac

## City Council

### Administrative

### Procedures

**Resolution No. 00-006 04/11/00; as amended by Resolution No. 02-004 02/26/02;  
Resolution No. 02-007 05/14/02; Resolution No. 03-010 06/10/03; Resolution No. 03-013  
07/08/03; Resolution No. 03-015 07/08/03; Resolution No. 04-002 03/23/04; Resolution No.  
04-003 05/11/04; Resolution No. 04-006 06/08/04; Resolution No. 04-012 08/10/04;  
Resolution No. 05-016 10/11/05; Resolution No. 06-012 04/25/06; Resolution No. 08-017  
07/22/08; Resolution No. 09-006 03/24/09; Resolution No. 10-003 01/26/10; Resolution No.  
10-017 11/09/10; Resolution No. 12-001 01/10/12; Resolution No. 12-003 02/14/12;  
Resolution No. 13-003 04/09/13; Resolution No. 14-008 04/08/14; Resolution No. 15-002  
01/13/15; Resolution No. 15-014 08/11/15; Resolution No. 16-008 02/09/16; Resolution No.  
16-009 03/08/16; Resolution No. 16-014 05/10/16; Resolution No. 16-023 10/25/16.**

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## Section 1. Mayor and Deputy Mayor

- (A) **Chairperson - Mayor** - Per RCW 35A.13.030, biennially at the first meeting of the Council the members thereof by majority vote, shall choose a Chairperson from among their number. The Chairperson of the Council shall have the title of Mayor and shall preside at meetings of the Council. In addition to the powers conferred upon the Mayor, he or she shall continue to have all the rights, privileges, and immunities of a member of the Council. The Mayor shall be recognized as the head of the City for ceremonial purposes and by the Governor for purposes of military law. The Mayor shall have no regular administrative duties, but in time of public danger or emergency, if so authorized by ordinance, shall take command of the police, maintain law, and enforce order.
- (B) **Deputy Mayor (Mayor Pro Tempore)** - Per RCW 35A.13.035, biennially at the first meeting of the Council, the members thereof, by majority vote, shall choose one of their members as Deputy Mayor to serve in the absence or temporary disability of the Mayor. The Council may, as the need may arise, appoint any qualified Councilmember to serve as Deputy Mayor in the absence or temporary disability of the Mayor and elected Deputy Mayor.
- (C) **Councilmember** - In the event of the extended excused absence or disability of a Councilmember, the remaining members by majority vote may appoint a Councilmember Pro Tempore to serve during the absence or disability.

## Section 2. Presiding Officer

- (A) All Meetings of the City Council shall be presided over by the Mayor, or in his/her absence, by the Deputy Mayor. If neither the Mayor nor the Deputy Mayor are present at a meeting, the Presiding Officer for that meeting shall be elected by a majority of those Councilmembers present.
- (B) In the absence of the City Clerk, the Deputy City Clerk or other qualified person appointed by the City Manager may perform the duties of the City Clerk at such meeting.
- (C) The appointment of a Councilmember as Mayor or Deputy Mayor shall not in any way abridge his/her right to vote on matters coming before the Council at such meeting.
- (D) The Mayor shall preserve strict order and decorum at all meetings of the Council. The Mayor shall state all questions coming before the Council, provide opportunity for discussion by Councilmembers, and announce the decision of the Council on all subjects. Procedural decisions made by the Mayor may be overruled by a majority vote of the Council.

## Section 3. Council Committees and Representatives

- (A) The Mayor or a majority of the City Council may establish such Ad Hoc Committees as may be appropriate to consider special matters that require a special approach or emphasis. Such Ad Hoc Committees may be established and matters referred to them at Regular Council Meetings. The Mayor shall appoint Council representatives to intergovernmental Councils, Boards and Committees, including such Ad Hoc Committees.
- (B) Ad Hoc Council Committees shall consider matters referred to them. The Committee Chair shall report to the Council on the final findings of the Committee and shall provide interim status to the Council at a frequency determined by the Mayor. Committees may refer items to the Council with no Committee recommendation.
- (C) There are established the following four (4) Standing Committees of the City Council, that shall consist of not more than three (3) members each. The Mayor shall appoint the Chairperson and the membership of each Committee. Notice of meetings times, locations, and the agenda for any Standing Committee Meeting shall be posted to ensure compliance with RCW 42.30. The Standing Committees shall consider and may make policy and legislative recommendations to the City Council on items referred to the Committee by the Mayor, the Council, or the City Manager. The Standing Committees are as follows:
  - (1) **Transportation and Public Works Committee**, which shall consider matters related to transportation policy, transportation projects, and utility issues..
  - (2) **Administration and Finance Committee**, which shall consider matters related to administrative and procedural issues, financial issues, human services and contracts/negotiations.
  - (3) **Land Use and Parks Committee**, which shall consider matters related to parks, land use and development regulation issues.
  - (4) **Public Safety and Justice Committee**, which shall consider matters related to police and fire issues.
- (D) The Chair of a Council Standing Committee shall issue a status report at the next Council Meeting following the Committee Meeting.
- (E) In addition to the four Standing Committees, the Council may create other advisory committees as appropriate.

## Section 4. Meetings

- (A) **Meetings declared open and public.** All meetings of the City Council and its Committees shall be open to the public and all persons shall be permitted to attend any

meeting of these bodies.

- (B) **Study Sessions.** The City Council shall hold Study Sessions on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. except if at any time any Study Session falls on a holiday, the Council shall meet on the next business day at the same hour. The City Council shall meet at SeaTac City Hall, unless otherwise publicly announced.

Meetings will be cancelled by one of the following methods depending on purpose of cancellation:

- (1) Cancellation for any reason other than lack of a quorum or an emergency: If any Councilmember(s) requests that a Council meeting be cancelled and/or rescheduled as a Special Council Study Session for any reason other than lack of a quorum or emergency, a majority vote is required.
- (2) Lack of a quorum: In the event the City Manager and/or City Clerk are notified that a lack of a quorum (3 or fewer members in attendance) is anticipated, the meeting will:
  - (A) Automatically be cancelled, and either the entire meeting will be rescheduled as a Special Council Study Session or the items will be moved to a future Council Study Session as appropriate.
  - (B) Continuation or cancellation of other types of meetings, such as workshops and special meetings without voting, may need to be determined individually based on topic(s) and participation needs.

Note: If a meeting is cancelled, public notice will be given by posting such notice at City Hall. Notwithstanding the above, there shall be no City Council Meeting on the fourth Tuesday during the months of August and December for summer and winter recess.

- (C) **Regular Meetings.** The City Council shall meet regularly on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. except if at any time any Regular Meeting falls on a holiday, the Council shall meet on the next business day at the same hour. The City Council shall meet at SeaTac City Hall, unless otherwise publicly announced.

Meetings will be cancelled by one of the following methods depending on purpose of cancellation:

- (1) Cancellation for any reason other than lack of a quorum or an emergency: If any Councilmember(s) requests that a Council meeting be cancelled and/or rescheduled as a Special Council Meeting for any reason other than lack of a quorum or emergency, majority vote is required.
- (2) Lack of a quorum: In the event the City Manager and/or City Clerk are notified that a lack of a quorum (3 or fewer members in attendance) is anticipated, the meeting will automatically be cancelled and either the entire meeting will be rescheduled as a Special Council Meeting or the items will be moved to a future Council Meeting as appropriate.

Note: If a meeting is cancelled, public notice will be given by posting such notice at City Hall. Notwithstanding the above, there shall be no City Council Meeting on the fourth Tuesday during the months of August and December for summer and winter recess.

- (D) **Special Meetings.** Special Meetings may be called by the Mayor or four Councilmembers by written notice delivered to each member of the Council and City Clerk at least 24 hours before the time specified for the proposed meeting. Legal and public notice requirements must be met by posting the appropriate notice of the Special Meeting at City Hall. See RCW 42.30.080.

- (E) **Committee Meetings.** Council Committees shall meet in accordance with the following monthly schedule:

|                           |                 |                       |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| A&F Committee             | First Thursday  | 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. |
| PS&J Committee            | First Thursday  | 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. |
| Code Compliance Committee | Second Thursday | 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. |
| T&PW Committee            | Third Thursday  | 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. |
| Sidewalk Committee        | Third Thursday  | 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. |
| LUP Committee             | Fourth Thursday | 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. |
| SeaTac Airport Committee  | Third Monday    | 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. |

- (F) **Continuances.** Any Hearing being held or ordered to be held by the City Council may be continued in the manner set forth by RCW 42.30.100.

- (G) **Executive Sessions.** The City Council may hold an Executive Session during any City Council meeting to consider certain matters as set forth in RCW 42.30.110, or as otherwise permitted by law.
- (H) **Quorum.** At all Meetings of the City Council, four members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A quorum is not required to hold a meeting where voting will not take place, such as a Council Study Session or Council workshop.
- (I) **Seating.** Members of the City Council will be seated at the Council table according to position number of Councilmembers, except that, at the Mayor's discretion, the Mayor may be seated at the center seat and the Deputy Mayor may be seated directly to the left of the Mayor.
- (J) **Minutes.** Minutes of all meetings of the Council and its Standing Committees will be included in the Regular Meeting Consent Agenda for consideration and approval. Regular Council Meetings shall be recorded and such recordings shall be maintained and kept for future reference, in accordance with the applicable records retention schedule.

## **Section 5. Format for Agendas for Council Meetings**

- (A) The City Manager and the City Clerk will prepare a proposed agenda for all meetings of Council, which shall be approved by the Mayor or designee. After the proposed agenda has been approved, the City Clerk shall prepare the final Council packet, which shall be distributed.
- (B) The City Council shall hold Study Sessions in order to address City business in advance of Regular Council Meetings.
  - (1) Appropriate members of City Commissions or Advisory Committees, or appropriate subject matter experts may provide presentations and be available to answer any questions posed by the City Council.
  - (2) Items addressed at a Study Session will be handled in one of the following ways:
    - (i) unanimous consent by the Councilmembers present to place the item on a future Council Meeting Consent Agenda;
    - (ii) a majority of Councilmembers present place the items addressed:
      - On a future Council Agenda as an Action Item;
      - On a future Study Session Agenda; or
    - (iii) a majority of the membership of the City Council determine that the item should no longer be discussed at a Study Session or Regular Council Meeting.

- (3) Ordinarily, items may not be referred to the Regular Council Meeting on the same day as the Study Session in which the item was discussed, unless the Mayor or a majority of the Councilmembers present agree that there are extraordinary or urgent circumstances or that it is in the best interest of the City.
  - (4) At the beginning of a Council Study Session, the City Council shall hear Public Comments.
    - (i) Public Comments shall be limited to a total of ten minutes and individual comments shall be limited to three minutes. However, the Mayor or designee may reduce equally the amount of time each speaker may comment so that the total public comment time does not exceed ten minutes.
    - (ii) The Mayor or designee shall be responsible for the allocation of the appropriate time limitations, and any Councilmember may raise a point of order regarding comments that are disrespectful in tone or content, or are otherwise inappropriate.
    - (iii) Public Comments during a Study Session will be limited to Agenda items on the current Study Session.
- (C) The format of the Regular City Council Meeting agenda shall substantially be as follows:
- (1) Call to Order.
  - (2) Roll Call.
  - (3) Pledge of Allegiance.
  - (4) Public Comments.
    - (a) Individual comments shall be limited to three minutes in duration.
    - (b) Group comments shall be limited to ten minutes. To constitute a group, there must be four or more members, including the speaker, at the meeting. Members of the group shall sign in as a group and identify the group's spokesperson. Individuals identified as a part of the group will not be allowed to speak individually.
    - (c) The Mayor or designee shall be responsible for the allocation of the appropriate time limitations, and any Councilmember may raise a point of order regarding comments that are disrespectful in tone or content, or are otherwise inappropriate.
  - (5) Presentations, including introduction of new employees, awards, and Certificates of Appointment, Appreciation, or Recognition.

(6) Consent Agenda.

(a) Contains items placed on the Consent Agenda by the Mayor or Council including but not limited to:

- Approval of vouchers.
- Approval of donations and grant requests to be received by the City.
- Pre-approval or final approval of City Council and City Manager travel related expenses.
- Approval of minutes.
- Enactment of Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions when placed on the Consent Agenda at a Council Study Session or previous Council Meeting.
- Ratification of non-represented employee classification and/or compensation adjustments approved by the City Manager.
- Final Acceptance of public works projects within the authorized expenditure amount.
  - Under \$1 million in total cost – placed directly on the consent agenda, however the City Manager will provide the City Council with a brief written description of the project and a budget synopsis (performance to budget) with the City Council packet.
  - \$1 million or greater in total cost – placed directly on the consent agenda with a presentation made the same night at the beginning of the RCM to present before and after pictures prior to Consent Agenda action.

Final Acceptance of in kind preservation, repair, or replacement projects within the authorized expenditure amount.

- Notwithstanding the above, any item may be removed from the Consent Agenda for consideration under unfinished business if so requested by any Councilmember.

(b) A motion at this time will be in order.

(c) The Council will vote upon the Consent Agenda.

(7) Public Hearings.

(a) At Public Hearings required by City, State, or Federal law or as Council may direct, where a general audience is in attendance to present input or arguments for or against a public issue:

- The City Manager or designee shall present the issue to the Council and respond to questions.
- Members of the public may speak for no longer than five minutes. No member of the public may speak for a second time until every person who wishes to speak has had an opportunity.
- Councilmembers may ask questions of the speaker and the speaker may respond, but may not engage in further debate.
- The public comments will then be closed but Councilmanic discussion may ensue if the Council so desires. In the alternative, the Public Hearing may be continued by majority vote, or the Council may recess to deliberate and determine findings of fact, if appropriate, and to reach a final decision which may be announced immediately following such deliberations or at a subsequent date.

(b) The following procedure shall apply to quasi-judicial Public Hearings:

- The Hearings Examiner, City Manager, or designee will present a summary of the subject matter and any findings and will respond to Council questions.
- The proponent spokesperson shall speak first and be allowed twenty minutes and Council may ask questions.
- The opponent spokesperson shall be allowed 20 minutes for presentation and Council may ask questions.
- Each side shall then be allowed five minutes for rebuttal.
- After each proponent and opponent has used his/her speaking time, Council may ask further questions of the speakers, who may respond.
- The Mayor may exercise a change in the procedures, but said decision may be overruled by a majority vote of the City Council.

(8) Action Items (as related to a Public Hearing).

(9) Public Comments related to Action Items and Unfinished Business.

(a) Individual comments shall be limited to one minute in duration and group

comments shall be limited to two minutes. The Mayor or designee shall be responsible for the allocation of the appropriate time limitations.

- (10) Action Items. This section of the agenda shall include Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions. The following procedures shall apply to each item listed on the agenda under this section:
  - (a) The Mayor or designee may read the item by title only, or if requested by any Councilmember, the document may be read in its entirety.
  - (b) The City Manager or designee may give a presentation to provide clarification or to discuss changes in an agenda item from what was discussed at a Study Session. Appropriate Staff, appropriate members of City Commissions or Advisory Committees, or appropriate subject matter experts should be available to answer any questions posed by the City Council.
  - (c) A motion at this time will be in order.
  - (d) The Council may then discuss the item. The City Manager or designee will be available to answer any questions by the Council.
  - (e) The Council will vote upon the item under consideration.
- (11) Unfinished Business. This section shall include items removed from the Consent Agenda at the same meeting. The procedures that apply during this section shall be the same as those under Section 10, Action Items.
- (12) New Business. The procedures that apply during this section shall be the same as those under Section 10, Action Items. If the City Council votes on any item under this Section, public comment shall be allowed, with individual comments limited to one minute in duration and group comments limited to two minutes in duration.
- (13) City Manager Comments. Reports on special interest items from the City Manager.
- (14) Committee Updates.
- (15) Council Comments.
- (16) Executive Session, if scheduled or called. However, an Executive Session may be scheduled or called at any time if deemed by the Mayor or by action of the Council to be appropriate at some point in time other than at the end of the meeting. The procedure for conduct of an Executive Session is set forth at Section 12 of these Administrative Procedures.
- (17) Adjournment. Per Robert's Rules of Order, the Mayor, or designee, may adjourn the meeting without a motion as long as there is no further business to discuss.

- (D) The format of any Special Meeting shall be as follows:

Special Meetings are meetings in which the date and/or time are set outside of a regular schedule. Only the designated agenda item(s) shall be considered. The format will follow that of a Regular Meeting, as appropriate. Applicable provisions of Section 7 shall govern conduct of Special Meetings.

## **Section 6. Miscellaneous Agenda Procedures**

- (A) The City Council desires to provide adequate time for administration and staff analysis, fact finding and preparation.
- (1) Except in extraordinary or unusual circumstances, all items that are not routine in nature shall, when presented, include a completed Council agenda bill. The author of the agenda bill shall be responsible for attachments.
- (B) In event of extraordinary or unusual circumstances, items may be placed directly on the agenda of a Regular Meeting when the items are approved by the Mayor or two Councilmembers by motion and second, when:
- (1) The items are routine in nature such as approval of vouchers, proclamations, acknowledgment or receipt of petitions or documents or discussion of claims for damages, or
- (2) An emergency condition exists that represents a personnel hazard, risk of immediate financial loss, or threat to public health, welfare, safety, or property or institutions. In such instances, a summary should clearly define why the special procedure is necessary, or
- (3) In the event the sponsor, other than a Councilmember, of any item to come before the City Council feels it both appropriate and beneficial to the City, he/she may request that such item be considered and, with approval of two Councilmembers, by motion and second, the Council shall decide on the appropriateness of that item being placed on the agenda.
- (C) The Mayor or City Manager may affix an approximate time limit for each agenda item at the time of approval of the agenda.
- (D) All proposed Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions shall be reviewed by the City Attorney to ensure they are in correct form prior to its final passage. All accompanying documents shall be available before Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions can be passed.
- (E) Ordinances and Resolutions of the City Council shall be signed by the Mayor, City Attorney, and City Clerk upon Council approval.
- (F) A joint Resolution of the City Council and the Mayor may be proposed when:

- (1) The subject of the Resolution is of broad City concern, and the subject contains Council policy and administrative procedure; or
  - (2) The subject of the Resolution is of ceremonial or honorary nature.
    - \* Joint Resolutions will be subject to the voting rules and will be signed by the Mayor, City Attorney and City Clerk. The Council may provide for all Councilmembers signing the joint Resolution enacted.
- (G) Councilmembers will inform the City Manager or City Clerk if they are unable to attend any Council Meeting. The City Clerk will announce any absences during roll call at a Regular Council Meeting. If there is no objection from the Council, the absence will be deemed excused and noted accordingly in the minutes.

## **Section 7. Speaking Procedures**

- (A) Speaking procedure for agenda items under consideration is as follows:
- (1) A Councilmember desiring to speak shall address the Mayor or Presiding Officer and upon recognition shall confine him/ herself to the question under debate.
  - (2) Any member, while speaking, shall not be interrupted unless it is to call him/her to order.
  - (3) Any member shall have the right to challenge any action or ruling of the Mayor or Councilmember, as the case may be, in which case the decision of the majority shall govern.
  - (4) Any member shall have the right to question the City Manager on matters before the Council. Under no circumstances shall such questioning be conducted in a manner that would constitute a cross examination or an attempt to ridicule or degrade the individual being questioned.
  - (5) No Councilmember shall speak a second time upon the same motion before opportunity has been given each Councilmember to speak on that motion.
- (B) Procedures for addressing the Council shall be as follows:
- (1) Any person, with the permission of the Mayor, may address the Council.
  - (2) In addressing the Council, each person shall stand and, after recognition, give his/her name and address. All remarks shall be civil and respectful in tone and content, made to the Council as a body, and not to any individual member.
  - (3) No person shall be permitted to enter into any discussion from the floor without first being recognized by the Mayor.
  - (4) Any person making personal or impertinent remarks while addressing the Council

shall be barred from further audience participation by the Mayor unless permission to continue is granted by a majority vote of the Council.

## **Section 8. Parliamentary Procedures and Motions**

- (A) Questions of parliamentary procedure not covered by this Chapter shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised (latest edition).
- (1) If a motion does not receive a second, it dies. Motions that do not need a second include: Nominations, withdrawal of motion by the person making the motion, agenda order, request for a roll call vote, and point of order or privilege.
  - (2) A motion that receives a tie vote is deemed to have failed.
  - (3) When making motions, be clear and concise and not include arguments for the motion within the motion.
  - (4) After a motion and second, the Mayor will indicate the names of the Councilmembers making the motion and second.
  - (5) After a motion has been made and seconded, the Councilmembers may discuss their opinions on the issue prior to the vote.
  - (6) If any Councilmember wishes to abstain from a vote on the motion, pursuant to the provisions of Section 9 hereof, that Councilmember shall so advise the City Council, and shall remove and absent himself/herself from the deliberations and considerations of the motion, and shall have no further participation in the matter. Such advice shall be given prior to any discussion or participation on the subject matter or as soon thereafter as the Councilmember perceives a need to abstain, provided that, prior to the time that a Councilmember gives advice of an intent to abstain from an issue, the Councilmember shall confer with the City Attorney to determine if the basis for the Councilmember's intended abstention conforms to the requirements of Section 9. If the intended abstention can be anticipated in advance, the conference with the City Attorney should occur prior to the meeting at which the subject matter would be coming before the City Council. If that cannot be done, the Councilmember should advise the City Council that he/she has an "abstention question" that he/she would want to review with the City Attorney, in which case, a brief recess would be afforded the Councilmember for that purpose.
  - (7) A motion may be withdrawn by the maker of the motion at any time without the consent of the Council.
  - (8) A motion to table is not debatable and shall preclude all amendments or debates of the issue under consideration. A motion to table is to be used in instances where circumstances or situations arise which necessitate the interruption of the Councilmembers' consideration of the matter before them. A motion to table, if

passed, shall cause the subject matter to be tabled until the interrupting circumstances or situations have been resolved, or until a time certain, if specified in the motion to table. To remove an item from the table in advance of the time certain requires a two-thirds majority vote.

- (9) A motion to postpone to a certain time is debatable, amendable and may be reconsidered at the same meeting. The question being postponed must be considered at a later time at the same meeting, or to a time certain at a future Regular or Special Council Meeting.
  - (10) A motion to postpone indefinitely is debatable, not amendable, and may be reconsidered at the same meeting only if it received an affirmative vote.
  - (11) A motion to call for the question shall close debate on the main motion and is not debatable. This motion must receive a second and fails without a two-thirds' vote; debate is reopened if the motion fails.
  - (12) A motion to amend is defined as amending a motion that is on the floor and has been seconded, by inserting or adding, striking out, striking out and inserting, or substituting.
  - (13) Motions that cannot be amended include: Motion to adjourn, agenda order, lay on the table, roll call vote, point of order, reconsideration and take from the table. A motion to amend an amendment is not in order.
  - (14) Amendments are voted on first, then the main motion as amended (if the amendment received an affirmative vote).
  - (15) Debate of the motion only occurs after the motion has been moved and seconded.
  - (16) The Mayor or City Clerk should repeat the motion prior to voting.
  - (17) In the event a reason exists to proceed in a manner inconsistent with these rules, a motion to Suspend the Rules is appropriate. Suspend the Rules requires a second, may neither be amended nor debated, and requires a two-thirds vote.
- (B) The City Clerk will take a roll call vote, if requested by the Mayor, a Councilmember, or as required by law.
  - (C) When a question has been decided, any Councilmember who voted in the majority may move for reconsideration, but no motion for reconsideration of a vote shall be made until the next Regular Council Meeting.
  - (D) The City Attorney shall decide all questions of interpretations of these rules and other questions of a parliamentary nature which may arise at a Council Meeting. All cases not provided for in these rules shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

## **Section 9. Voting**

- (A) Silence of a Councilmember during a voice vote shall be recorded as a vote with the prevailing side, except where such a Councilmember abstains because of a stated conflict of interest or appearance of fairness. Each member present must vote on all questions before the Council and may abstain only by reason of conflict of interest or appearance of fairness. Abstentions from any votes for any other reasons shall be construed as silence during voting, and shall be recorded as a vote with the prevailing side.

For the purposes hereof, "conflict of interest" and "appearance of fairness" shall be defined as those terms used and set forth in Chapters 42.20, 42.23 and 42.36 of the Revised Code of Washington, and as they may be amended by legislative action or construed by judicial review.

- (B) A roll call vote may be requested by the Mayor or any member of the Council.
- (C) All matters before the Council shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the Councilmembers present, unless otherwise provided by State Law (RCW Chapter 35A et. seq.).
- (D) For meetings where voting will take place: Any Councilmember who is unable to be physically present for any meeting of the Council may participate in discussions and may vote on any matter before the Council, including proposed Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions, by telephone or other means of telecommunication, providing that:
  - (1) A quorum of the Council is physically present at the meeting site; and
  - (2) Electronic facilities exist and are operational so that the absent Councilmember will participate in Council discussions in a manner that comments, discussions, and voice votes of the absent Councilmember are audible to the assembled Council and audience, and that the absent Councilmember can hear all comments, discussions, and votes that are audible to all Councilmembers who are physically present.

## **Section 10. Council Relations with Staff**

- (A) There will be mutual respect from both Councilmembers and staff of their respective roles and responsibilities when, and if expressing criticism in a public meeting. City staff acknowledges the Council as policy makers and the Councilmembers acknowledge staff as administering the Council's policies.
- (B) Neither the Mayor nor any Councilmember shall direct the City Manager to initiate any action or prepare any report that is major in nature, or initiate any major project or study without the approval of a majority of the Council.
- (C) All requests for significant information, statistics, interpretations, or answers to questions from a Councilmember shall be directed to the City Manager by means of hardcopy or

electronic version (e-mail) of the Council Information Request. The City Manager shall reply by acknowledging receipt and by providing an estimated time or date for substantive response. The City Manager shall forward the request to the appropriate Department Director for written or electronic response.

- (D) All written material accumulated and/or prepared in response to an individual Councilmember shall be provided by the City Manager, to all Councilmembers.
- (E) All requests for minor information, statistics, interpretations, or answers to questions may be directed to the City Manager or directly to involved staff. It is understood that staff receiving such requests are required to advise their supervisor and/or Department Director of any request for the purpose of assuring integrity of the chain of command and chain of communication to the City Manager.
- (F) Councilmembers shall not attempt to coerce or influence staff in the selection of personnel, the awarding of contracts, the selection of consultants, the processing of development applications or the granting of City licenses or permits.
- (G) The Council shall not attempt to change or interfere with the operating rules and practices of any City department.
- (H) The following definitions shall apply to this Section:
  - (1) “Major” information, statistics, interpretations, or answers to questions means any effort which is reasonably estimated to entail more than two hours of staff time.
  - (2) “Significant” information, statistics, interpretations, or answers to questions means any effort which is reasonably estimated to entail one hour or more, but less than two hours, of staff time.
  - (3) “Minor” information, statistics, interpretations, or answers to questions means any effort which is reasonably estimated to entail only an immediate response or less than one hour of staff time.

## **Section 11. Confidentiality**

- A. Councilmembers should keep all written materials and verbal information provided to them, on matters that are confidential under law, in complete confidence to insure that the City's position is not compromised. No mention of information read should be made to anyone other than other Councilmembers, the City Manager or the City Attorney or by City staff designated by the City Manager.
- B. If the Council, in Executive Session, has provided direction or consensus to staff on proposed terms and conditions for any type of issue, all contact with the other party should be done by the designated staff representative handling the issue. A Councilmember should not have any contact or discussion with the other party, or their representative involved with the issue, and should not communicate any discussion

conducted in Executive Session.

## **Section 12. Executive Sessions**

- (A) It is acknowledged that the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) of Chapter 42.30 RCW is a mandate that the “people, in delegating authority, do not give their public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know”. Any action taken in violation of the OPMA is subject to being declared by the courts to be “null and void”, participating Councilmembers may be personally liable for fines, and the City may be subject to payment of court costs and attorney’s fees. Accordingly, Executive Sessions of the Council shall be used only when allowed by law and when confidentiality is deemed necessary.
- (B) The scheduling, notification, announcing, and conduct of an Executive Session during a Council Meeting, as permitted by Section 4(G) of these Administrative Procedures and applicable law, shall conform to the OPMA and shall comply with this Section.
- (C) Whenever possible, an Executive Session shall be noted on the Council Meeting agenda provided and posted pursuant to Section 5 of these Administrative Procedures. If deemed necessary by the Mayor or by action of the Council, an Executive Session may be called and added to the agenda during a Council Meeting. If an Executive Session is to be held during a Special Meeting, every effort shall be made to set forth the intent to hold an Executive Session on the notice of the Special Meeting as required by law.
- (D) Certain Council deliberations, discussions, considerations, reviews, evaluations, and final actions (“actions” as defined by the OPMA) are, by law, exempt from all provisions of the OPMA. Examples include the following: Proceedings concerned with business, occupation, or professional licenses and related disciplinary proceedings; deliberations following an appeal or other quasi-judicial matter; and collective bargaining strategy, positions, and proposals, as well as union grievance procedures and mediation. Nonetheless, the provisions of this Section 12 may be used to recess a Council Meeting to such an exempt proceeding just as if it were an Executive Session.
- (E) In addition to topics exempt from the OPMA, as described in Subsection (D), above, the OPMA permits discussion and consideration (but not “final action”) in an Executive Session closed to the general public for certain, limited, purposes. These limited purposes are summarized on Exhibit “A” to these Administrative Procedures, which is generally an extract from MRSC Report No. 39.
- (F) In event an Executive Session is necessary for any of the allowed purposes, the agenda, if possible, shall list the fact of the Executive Session and its purpose. Immediately prior to recessing to an Executive Session, the Mayor shall publicly announce the purpose of the Executive Session, generally in the following language, and shall state the estimated time of return of the Council to the open public meeting:
- To consider the selection of a site or acquisition of real estate.

- To consider the minimum price at which real estate will be offered for sale or lease.
  - To review negotiations on the performance of publicly bid contracts.
  - To evaluate complaints or charges against a public officer or employee.
  - To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment.
  - To review the performance of a public employee.
  - To evaluate the qualifications of a candidate or candidates for appointment to elective office.
  - To discuss with legal counsel matters relating to enforcement actions.
  - To discuss with legal counsel pending or potential litigation involving the City.
- (G) Typically, the City Manager and City Attorney will attend Executive Sessions to assist the Council. Otherwise, however, attendance shall be limited to staff members and others whose input is necessary to the purpose of the Executive Session.
- (H) No voting or other final action shall be taken during an Executive Session, except that consensus may be reached if confidentiality of such consensus is essential to the purpose of the Executive Session.
- (I) In event an Executive Session is not completed by the estimated time for return to the open public meeting, the Mayor, a Councilmember, or a staff member shall return to the open public meeting and shall announce that the Executive Session shall be extended to a stated time. Such an announcement shall not, however, be necessary if no members of the public remain in attendance at the open public meeting.
- (J) In event the Executive Session is concluded before the time that was stated for return to the open public meeting, the Council shall not reconvene in open session until the stated time. Such a waiting period shall not, however, be necessary if no members of the public remain in attendance at the open public meeting.

### **Section 13. Councilmember Travel Expenses and Reimbursement**

- (A) In matters of travel incident to attending conferences and meetings for City business and in incurring costs related thereto, Councilmembers shall comply with the current edition of the City of SeaTac Travel Policies, Regulations, and Procedures. In addition, Councilmembers shall also comply with the provisions of this Section 13 to the Council Administrative Procedures.
- (B) When determined to be in the best interests of the City of SeaTac, Councilmembers may attend conferences and workshops within the City Council's total adopted budget limit. Travel pre-approval and final approval of related expenses will come before the City Council for approval on the Consent Agenda as set forth in Section 5(6)(a).

- (C) The Finance Department shall provide a quarterly summary of actual Council expenditures reported by each Councilmember. This summary will be used to assist the Council in monitoring the status of actual expenditures in comparison to the budgeted expenditures.

## **EXHIBIT A**

### **TO THE SEATAC CITY COUNCIL ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

#### **What are the allowed purposes for holding an Executive Session?**

An Executive Session may be held only for one or more of the purposes identified in RCW 42.30.110(1). The purposes addressed below are those which have application to Cities and Counties. A governing body of a City or County may meet in Executive Session for the following reasons:

- **To consider matters affecting national security [RCW 42.30.110(1)(a)].**

As a result of the September 11, 2001 attack on America and passage of the Homeland Security Act, this purpose may now be utilized at the local level.

- **To consider the selection of a site or the acquisition of real estate by lease or purchase when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of increased price; [ RCW 42.30.110(1)(b)].**

This provision has two elements:

- the governing body must be considering either purchasing or leasing real property; and
- public knowledge of the governing body's consideration would likely cause an increase in the price of the real property.

The consideration of the purchase of real property under this provision can involve condemnation of the property, including the amount of compensation to be offered for the property. [Port of Seattle v. Rio, 16 Wn. App. 718 (1977)]

Since this provision recognizes that the process of purchasing or leasing real property or selecting real property to purchase or lease may justify an Executive Session, it implies that the governing body may need to reach some consensus in closed session as to the price to be offered or the particular property to be selected. The purpose of allowing this type of consideration in an Executive Session would be defeated by requiring a vote in open session to select the property or to decide how much to pay for the property, where public knowledge of these matters would likely increase its price.

- **To consider the minimum price at which real estate will be offered for sale or lease when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of decreased price. However, final action selling or leasing public property shall be taken in a meeting open to the public; [RCW 42.30.110(1)(c)].**

This subsection, the reverse of the previous one, also has two elements:

- the governing body must be considering the minimum price at which real property belonging to the City or County will be offered for sale or lease; and
- public knowledge of the governing body's consideration will likely cause a decrease in the price of the property.

The requirement here of taking final action selling or leasing the property in open session may seem unnecessary, since all final actions must be taken in a meeting open to the public. However, its probable purpose is to indicate that, although the decision to sell or lease the property must be made in open session, the governing body may decide in Executive Session the minimum price at which it will do so. A contrary interpretation would defeat the purpose of this subsection.

If there would be no likelihood of a change in price if these real property matters are considered in open session, then a governing body should not meet in Executive Session to consider them.

- **To review negotiations on the performance of publicly bid contracts when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of increased costs; [RCW 42.30.110(1)(d)].**

This subsection indicates that when a City or County and a contractor performing a publicly bid contract are negotiating over contract performance, the governing body may "review" those negotiations in Executive Session if public knowledge of the review would likely cause an increase in contract costs. MRSC is not aware of an Executive Session being held under this provision. It is not clear what circumstances would result in a City or County governing body meeting in Executive Session under this provision.

However, this exception could well be used to consider potential change orders, requests for equitable adjustment, or delay damages.

- **To receive and evaluate complaints or charges brought against a public officer or employee. However, upon the request of such officer or employee, a public hearing or a meeting open to the public shall be conducted upon such complaint or charge; [RCW 42.30.110(1)(f)].**

For purposes of meeting in Executive Session under this provision, a "charge" or "complaint" must have been brought against a City or County officer or employee. The complaint or charge could come from within the City or County or from the public, and it need not be a formal charge or complaint. The bringing of the complaint or charge triggers the opportunity of the officer or employee to request that the discussion be held in open session.

As a general rule, City governing bodies that are subject to the Act do not deal with individual personnel matters. [The Civil Service Commission is an obvious exception. It,

however, addresses personnel actions taken against a covered officer or employee, and it does so in the context of a formal hearing]. For example, the City Council should not be involved in individual personnel decisions, as these are within the purview of the administrative branch under the authority of the Mayor or City Manager. [An exception is where the Council, in a Council-Manager City, may be considering a complaint or charge against the City Manager]. This provision for holding an Executive Session should not be used as a justification for becoming involved in personnel matters which a governing body may have no authority to address.

- **To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee. However, subject to RCW 42.30.140(4), discussion by a governing body of salaries, wages, and other conditions of employment to be generally applied within the agency shall occur in a meeting open to the public, and when a governing body elects to take final action hiring, setting the salary of an individual employee or class of employees, or discharging or disciplining an employee, that action shall be taken in a meeting open to the public; [RCW 42.30.110(1)(g)].**

There are two different purposes under this provision for which a governing body may meet in Executive Session. For both purposes, the references to "public employment" and to "public employee" include within their scope public offices and public officials. This means that a governing body may evaluate, in Executive Sessions, persons who apply for appointive office positions, such as City Manager, as well as those who apply for employee positions. [The courts have, for various purposes, distinguished between a public "office" and a public "employment." See, e.g., *Oceanographic Comm'n v. O'Brien*, 74 Wn.2d 904, 910-12 (1968); *State ex rel. Hamblen v. Yelle*, 29 Wn.2d 68, 79- 80 (1947); *State ex rel. Brown v. Blew*, 20 Wn.2d 47, 50-52 (1944). A test used to distinguish between the two is set out in *Blew*, 20 Wn.2d at 51].

The first purpose involves evaluating the qualifications of applicants for public employment. This could include personal interviews with an applicant, discussions concerning an applicant's qualifications for a position, and discussions concerning salaries, wages, and other conditions of employment personal to the applicant. As with the previous Executive Session provision, this purpose is not one that generally will have application to a governing body in a City, because City governing bodies do not, as a general rule, have any hiring authority. [One obvious exception is the City Council in a Council-Manager City, who hires the City Manager. RCW 35A.13.010; RCW 35.18.010].

This authority to "evaluate" applicants in closed session allows a governing body to discuss the qualifications of applicants, not to choose which one to hire (to the extent the governing body has any hiring authority). However, since this subsection expressly mandates that "final action hiring" an applicant for employment be taken in open session, the implication is that a governing body may take something less than final action in Executive Session to eliminate applicants or to choose applicants for further consideration.

The second part of this provision concerns reviewing the performance of a public employee. Typically this is done where the governing body is considering a promotion or a salary or wage increase for an individual employee or where it may be considering disciplinary action. [As with hiring, a City Council has little or no authority regarding discipline of public officers or employees. Again, an exception would be a City Manager over which the Council has removal authority. RCW 35A.13.130; 35.18.120].

The result of a governing body's closed session review of the performance of an employee may be that the body will take some action either beneficial or adverse to the officer or employee. That action, whether raising a salary of or disciplining an officer or employee, must be made in open session.

Any discussion involving salaries, wages, or conditions of employment to be "generally applied" in the City or County must take place in open session. However, discussions that involve collective bargaining negotiations or strategies are not subject to the Open Public Meetings Act and may be held in closed session without being subject to the procedural requirements for an Executive Session. [See RCW 42.30.140(4)].

- **To evaluate the qualifications of a candidate for appointment to elective office. However, any interview of such candidate and final action appointing a candidate to elective office shall be in a meeting open to the public; [ RCW 42.30.110(1)(h)] .**

This provision applies to a City or County legislative body only when it is filling a vacant elective position. Under this provision, the legislative body may meet in Executive Session to evaluate the qualifications of applicants for the vacant position. However, any interviews with the candidates must be held in open session. As with all other appointments, the vote to fill the position must also be in open session.

- **To discuss with legal counsel representing the agency matters relating to agency enforcement actions, or to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency, the governing body, or a member acting in an official capacity is, or is likely to become, a party, when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency. [RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)].**

Three basic requirements must be met before this provision can be used by a governing body to meet in closed session: [This provision for holding an Executive Session is based on the legislative recognition that the attorney-client privilege between a public agency governing body and its legal counsel can co-exist with the Open Public Meetings Act. However, that privilege is not necessarily as broad as it may be between a private party and legal counsel].

- The City or prosecuting attorney or special legal counsel representing the City or County governing body must attend the Executive Session to discuss the enforcement action or the litigation or potential litigation (presence of an attorney without such discussion is not sufficient);

- The discussion with legal counsel must concern either an enforcement action or litigation or potential litigation to which the City or County, a governing body, or one of its members is or is likely to become a party;
  - The potential litigation must be specifically threatened, or be reasonably believed to be likely; or
  - The potential litigation, or legal risk, is applicable to a proposed action or current practice; and
- Public knowledge of the discussion would likely result in adverse legal or financial consequence to the City or County.

The probability of adverse consequence to the City or County. It is probable that public knowledge of most governing body discussions of existing litigation would result in adverse legal or financial consequence to the City or County. Knowledge by one party of the communications between the opposing party and its attorney concerning a lawsuit will almost certainly give the former an advantage over the latter. The same probably can be said of most discussions that qualify as involving potential litigation.

Again, no final action in Executive Session. The purpose of this Executive Session provision is to allow the governing body to discuss litigation or enforcement matters with legal counsel; the governing body is not authorized to take final action regarding such matters in an Executive Session. Nevertheless, a governing body will likely need to make certain strategic decisions in Executive Session to advance the litigation or enforcement action, while protecting the secrecy of such decisions. For example, a County Council can probably take an informal vote or reach a consensus in Executive Session to authorize the County Prosecuting Attorney to settle a case for no higher than a certain amount. However, it is clear that the Council's vote to give final approval to a settlement agreement must occur in an open meeting.