

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE  
RULES OF ORDER FOR THE EL PASO CITY COUNCIL  
REVISED, AS EFFECTIVE May 27, 2025.**

**SECTION 1. PURPOSE OF RESOLUTION**

This Resolution is adopted pursuant to Section 3.5.B of the Charter of the City of El Paso as a procedural guide for the benefit of the City Council and for the general information of the public. These rules shall apply to regular, special, and work session meetings at which action is to be taken, but shall not apply to meetings for committees of the City Council or to informational gatherings of the Council.

**SECTION 2. RULES OF ORDER**

Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern the procedures of Council unless they are in conflict with these rules.

**SECTION 3. EFFECT OF FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE RULES**

No action of the Council that is otherwise legal shall be invalidated merely by reason of the failure of the Council or City staff to follow these Rules of Order, unless the majority of the Council agrees that such action shall be invalidated.

**SECTION 4. STANDING**

No one other than a member of the City Council shall have standing to assert before the Council that any action taken by the Council is invalid by reason of the Council's failure to comply with these Rules of Order.

**SECTION 5. SUSPENSION OF RULES**

These rules may be suspended temporarily by a majority of the Council members present and voting, except as they pertain to a quorum, or to the majority required for any motion, or to other matters pre-empted by laws other than those Rules of Order.

**SECTION 6. PRESIDING OFFICER**

The Mayor shall preside at all meetings of the City Council, but if for any reason he is absent from the City, sick or unable to act, then the Mayor Pro Tempore shall preside at such meetings and at such times shall exercise all of the powers and discharge the duties of the Mayor, except that the Mayor Pro Tempore shall vote as a Representative. In the absence or inability of both the Mayor and the Mayor Pro Tempore, the Alternate Mayor Pro Tempore shall preside and shall vote as a Representative. Upon the arrival of the Mayor, the Mayor Pro Tempore or the Alternate Mayor Pro Tempore, the acting chairman shall immediately relinquish the chair upon the conclusion of the business immediately pending before the Council.

The presiding officer shall preserve strict order and decorum at all regular and special meetings of the Council, and shall state questions coming before the Council as necessary for clarity, and shall announce the decision of the Council on all subjects. The Presiding Officer shall disable the microphone at the podium when he or she determines that the speaker has violated council rules of order.

## **SECTION 7. QUESTIONS OF ORDER**

All questions of order shall be decided by the presiding officer with the right of appeal from his or her decision to the Council that is present, the majority of whom, present and voting, may override the decision.

## **SECTION 8. VOTING**

The electronic voting system shall be utilized for the casting of the roll call votes of the Council in Council Chambers except as otherwise provided herein. The City Clerk shall call for an electronic vote and each Representative shall, without undue delay, cast his or her vote on the electronic voting system. When all votes have been cast, the City Clerk will review, announce and display the results of the voting, and staff will capture the display on the digital recording of the meeting or fully read the results into the record. In the event of a tie vote, the City Clerk will announce the results and call for the Mayor's vote before displaying the results. Any error in voting or any discrepancy between the display of the votes and the City Clerk's announcement of the results shall be corrected prior to the time that the Council proceeds to consider the next agenda item.

The requirements under this section for the use of the electronic voting system shall be automatically suspended under the following circumstances and for the duration as announced by the City Clerk: (a) upon the announcement of the City Clerk that the electronic voting system is not working properly; (b) for votes on procedural matters including motions to recess and to take an agenda item out of order, and votes by acclamation; (c) when the Council is voting on more than one agenda item simultaneously; and (d) when more than one vote will be taken pertaining to an agenda item and in such instance, the City Clerk shall announce which vote shall be taken by use of the electronic voting system and which vote(s) shall be taken only by voice vote.

In the event that the use of the electronic voting system is suspended or the system is otherwise not available, the City Clerk shall call the roll beginning with the Representative seated furthest to the Mayor's right and continuing in that order. Each Representative shall audibly indicate his or her vote.

Records of all roll call votes shall be incorporated in the Minutes of the meeting.

## **SECTION 9. RECORDED DEBATE**

A Representative may request, through the presiding officer, to have an abstract of his or her statement on any subject under consideration by the Council entered in the Minutes or to attach any document referenced during a Council meeting to the Minutes. The recording secretary may be directed by the

presiding officer to enter in the Minutes a synopsis of the discussion on any question coming before the Council.

## **SECTION 10. ORDER OF PRECEDENCE OF MOTIONS**

The order of procedure of motions is set forth in Exhibit “A” attached hereto and fully incorporated by reference.

## **SECTION 11. MOTION TO RECONSIDER**

A motion to reconsider any action taken by the Council may be made at any time prior to adjournment of the same meeting at which such action was taken. The motion can only be made by a member who voted with the prevailing side and can be seconded by any member.

## **SECTION 12. OBTAINING THE FLOOR**

Every person desiring to speak shall address the presiding officer, and when recognized by the presiding officer, shall address only the item under consideration. Members of Council shall refrain from side conversations during discussion of items under consideration.

For Regular City Council and Work Session Meetings, in the debate, each member of Council has the right to speak twice on the same main motion, but cannot make a second speech on the same main motion as long as any member who has not spoken on that question desires the floor. Each member of Council has the right to speak once on any other motion that can be debated. No member can speak longer than ten minutes at a time without the permission of a majority of Council. The City Clerk will keep time and will notify the Mayor if a Representative reaches the allotted time. The Rules of Debate shall also apply in Executive Session.

During Special Meetings there will not be a time limit to the time allowed for each Representative to have the floor, and the Presiding Officer has discretion to end discussion on an item, or to give the floor to another representative.

## **SECTION 13. RIGHT OF CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

The City Council of the City of El Paso receives public comment on all agenda items at 10:00 a.m. followed by call to the public. Public comment on Public Hearings is heard individually as the item is listed on the City Council Agenda.

### **Public Comment on Agenda Items:**

The City will conduct public comment on all agenda items at the scheduled time pursuant to Exhibit “B.”. Members of the public will usually be granted three (3) minutes to present their position on the consent or regular agenda items. If a member of the public addresses City Council through a translator into English, he or she will be granted six (6) minutes to present. Time will be kept by the City Clerk. The presiding officer may grant a speaker additional time at his or her discretion.

At the start of public comment on agenda items, the City Clerk shall advise the Mayor whether persons in the audience have signed up to ask a question regarding an item posted on the consent or regular agenda. The Mayor shall have the floor and may ask the City Clerk to call those individuals up to the podium to hear their questions. At that time, the City Clerk will announce the agenda item number and call the person to the podium. The Mayor may request the City Manager to respond to the questions raised by the members of the public. In his or her discretion, the Mayor may move the consent agenda item to the regular agenda for continued discussion and action by the City Council.

### **Call to the Public (non-agenda items):**

Call to the public for comment on City related items not already posted on the agenda will take place immediately following public comment on consent and regular agenda items. A maximum of sixty (60) minutes will be allotted for Call to the Public of each regular City Council meeting.

To facilitate the receiving of comment from as many citizens as possible who are interested in bringing City related topics forward to the City Council for comment, a person may sign up to obtain one-time slot to speak or otherwise make a presentation on one or more specified topics during the Call to the Public of a City Council meeting. This provision does not restrict any member of the public from signing up to speak on items posted on the regular agenda or to ask questions regarding items posted on the consent agenda.

The time allotted for the call to the public portion of the agenda shall be uniformly divided among those who have signed up to obtain a time slot and participate and except as provided below, no speaker will have more than three (3) minutes to speak or otherwise make a presentation, regardless of the number of topics a speaker wishes to address within his or her time slot. If a member of the public addresses City Council through a translator into English, he or she will be granted six (6) minutes to present. Time will be kept by the City Clerk. The presiding officer may grant a speaker additional time at his or her discretion. At the beginning of the call to the public portion of the agenda, the City Clerk will make one announcement as to the amount of time that each person has to provide comment. The City Clerk will call each person signed up to make comment to the podium in the order that they signed up to speak and will keep time. Each topic brought forward will be for comment from the speaker and may not be deliberated by the members of Council nor rebutted or debated by members of the public. Any member of the City Council may propose that the topic commented on be posted by staff on a future Council meeting agenda for the Council's discussion and action.

### **Public Hearings:**

Any member of the public shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at all public hearings of the City Council in regard to any and all matters to be considered at such hearings that are germane and relative to any subject matter of City affairs or business which is within the scope of the authority and legislative functions of the City Council. Provided, however, that the time allowed for each citizen's appearance before City Council will be limited to a fixed number of minutes at the discretion of the presiding officer. Members of the public will usually be granted three (3) minutes to present their position on public hearing issues. If a member of the public addresses City Council through a translator into English, he or she will be granted six (6) minutes to present. Time will be

kept by the City Clerk. The presiding officer may grant a speaker additional time at his or her discretion.

**Information Relevant to all three comment types:**

The City Clerk shall make available the sign-in sheet for the public outside of Council Chambers on the day of the Council meeting. The online sign-in sheet will be available until 9:00 a.m. Any person signing up to provide comment must provide their name, address, phone number, and item number or topic. Persons may sign up to address multiple items, however this does not mean it is permissible to “mark all” or to sign up for every item. Groups of ten (10) or more members of the public will be asked to select a spokesperson to speak on the group’s position on the item. The representative speaker will be allotted six (6) minutes to speak per item.

A document camera and projection system (“Overhead Projector”) is available for use for public comment. Members of the public shall submit any document they wish to present on the Overhead Projector to the City Clerk no later than close of business on the previous City business day before the meeting date. Any document that contains insulting, profane, threatening or abusive language, nudity, or campaign material will be rejected. City Staff will assist members of the public in using the Overhead Projector during the meeting. In order to ensure cyber security, members of the public are prohibited from sending or utilizing presentations in any electronic format, including but not limited to email, and from using a Universal Serial Bus (USB) compact disk (CD) or digital versatile disk (DVD). A member of the public who wishes to make an electronic presentation may bring printed documents to the City Clerk’s office no later than close of business on the previous City business day before the meeting date to be scanned for presentation during the meeting.

If the speaker is a lobbyist, he or she must indicate that fact on the audience participation sheet and prior to commencing his/her comments in compliance with the City’s Lobbying Ordinance. Members of the public may not grant their time to another nor may they purport to speak for another who is not present at the meeting. If someone would like a document or letter to become a part of the record, they may do so by providing the City Clerk with copies of the document or letter no later than 9:00 a.m. on the morning of the meeting, which will be distributed to the Council. It shall not be necessary to read the letter into the record. Interpretation services are only to be provided by the certified interpreter provided by the City.

The presiding officer at his or her discretion may grant a speaker one (1) additional minute to wrap up his or her comments. This shall apply in Call to the Public regardless of whether the allotted sixty (60) minutes will otherwise be taken up by the others making comment.

Members of the public who do not desire to speak but want to register support or opposition to an item on the agenda may do so by indicating their position on the audience participation form. The City Clerk will notify the Council of the number of position statements received and the tally when the agenda item is announced.

Members of Council may move to overrule the determinations by the Mayor under this section by a simple majority vote of the Council members present and voting.

No person may speak a second time except by permission of the presiding officer, and further, no person shall be heard a second time until all persons desiring to speak once have been given the opportunity to do so.

Personal attacks are not permitted. Members of the public should address their questions to the Council, not to the staff. Council may in turn ask staff to provide input.

Members of the public may be asked to leave or be removed from Council Chambers if it is determined that they are disruptive to the meeting and have violated the City of El Paso Public Comment Conduct Policy (Exhibit "C"). Such determination will be made by the presiding officer. Members of Council may move to overrule such determination by the presiding officer subject to a simple majority vote of Council, present and voting.

#### **SECTION 14. CALLING AND ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS**

The order of agenda items will take place as specified on the Attached **Exhibit "B"**.

Notwithstanding the meeting order, the City Manager shall direct the placement of all matters relating to the City Council's adoption of the annual City budget and associated matters relating to the start of each new fiscal year and the adoption of the tax levy on one or more agendas so as to meet all required statutory and charter deadlines.

At the time that each agenda item is to be considered by the City Council, the City Clerk will announce all agenda items by number and a brief statement as to the nature of the item when appropriate. In the case of a revision, the City Clerk or staff shall read the item into the record, as appropriate.

#### **SECTION 15. PARLIAMENTARIAN**

The City Clerk and the Assistant City Clerk are confirmed to serve as Parliamentarian and Alternate Parliamentarian, respectively.

#### **SECTION 16. USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Electronic devices within Council chambers shall be used in accordance with all established City practices and procedures and as directed by Information Technology Department staff providing support services during a meeting. City staff, other than the dignitary protection officers, and members of the public shall turn off the signals of all pagers, cellular telephones and other devices capable of making an audible signal and shall not make or take any telephone calls while in Council chambers once a Council meeting has been called to order.

Members of the City Council shall not use any electronic devices other than the desktop computers provided by the City of El Paso located at their seats during any City Council meeting or City Council work sessions. The use of communication devices of any kind, including but not limited to: hand-held portable communication devices, cellphones, computers, tablets, laptops, watches, etc. is

expressly prohibited during City Council meetings and shall not be allowed in the room during closed sessions unless they are being used to aid in executive session presentations.

If the City Council member needs to take a telephone call, respond to a text message, etc. during a meeting, he or she must excuse themselves from the dais or room where the closed session is taking place to engage in that communication.

The use of the desktop computers during City Council shall be limited to voting, viewing presentations, research to aid the council member and communication via email to staff. During meetings, City Council members shall not text, tweet, blog, post on Facebook, Instagram or use any other social media platform.

## **SECTION 17. TIME AND LOCATION OF MEETINGS AND VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE**

The Mayor and Council may by action of Council approved by a majority of Council, reschedule the time and place of any City Council meeting in accordance with the requirements of the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Members of Council may attend City Council meetings by video conference in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act 551.127, as may be amended. Such requires that a quorum of City Council be present at the physical meeting location posted on the agenda.

Members of Council may request virtual attendance no earlier than three months in advance. Any member wishing to attend by video conference must notify the City Clerk no later than noon on the Wednesday prior to the relevant meeting, and the City Clerk shall post notice of which member(s) will appear by video conference on the City Council Agenda. In the case of personal emergency, a member of Council may request to appear virtually after the Wednesday deadline by notifying the City Clerk no later than 5 p.m. on the business day prior to the meeting, and in this instance the videoconference attendance will be included on the revisions to the agenda. Videoconference attendance is granted on a first-come first-serve basis. At no time shall more than two members of Council appear by videoconference. Members of Council shall not request to attend by videoconference more than one regular meeting week in a row without prior approval of Council.

Each participant's face in the videoconference call, while speaking, must be clearly visible and audible to each other participant and, during the open portion of the meeting, to the members of the public in attendance at the location where a quorum is present, and at any other location of the meeting that is open to the public. Any council member appearing by videoconference call will be considered absent during any portion of the meeting the audio or video is lost or disconnected in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 551.127. However, City Council members may not participate in executive sessions by videoconferencing.

(Signatures on the following page)

**ADOPTED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

**CITY OF EL PASO:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Renard U. Johnson  
Mayor

**ATTEST:**

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Laura D. Prine  
City Clerk

*Russell Abeln*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Russell T. Abeln  
Senior Assistant City Attorney



# EXHIBIT “A”

## ROBERTS RULES CHEAT SHEET

To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Adjourn	"I move that we adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Recess	"I move that we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Complain about noise, room temp., etc.	"Point of privilege"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Decides
Suspend further consideration of something	"I move that we table it"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
End debate	"I move the previous question"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Postpone consideration of something	"I move we postpone this matter until..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion	"I move that this motion be amended by..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Introduce business (a primary motion)	"I move that..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

The above listed motions and points are listed in established order of precedence. When any one of them is pending, you may not introduce another that is listed below, but you may introduce another that is listed above it.

To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Object to procedure or personal affront	"Point of order"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair decides
Request information	"Point of information"	Yes	No	No	No	None
Ask for vote by actual count to verify voice vote	"I call for a division of the house"	Must be done before new motion	No	No	No	None unless someone objects
Object to considering some undiplomatic or improper matter	"I object to consideration of this question"	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Take up matter previously tabled	"I move we take from the table..."	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority
Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move we now (or later) reconsider our action relative to..."	Yes	Yes	Only if original motion was debatable	No	Majority
Consider something out of its scheduled order	"I move we suspend the rules and consider..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Vote on a ruling by the Chair	"I appeal the Chair's decision"	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

The motions, points and proposals listed above have no established order of preference; any of them may be introduced at any time except when meeting is considering one of the top three matters listed from the first chart (Motion to Adjourn, Recess or Point of Privilege).

## **EXHIBIT “B”**

**The El Paso City Council Agenda items will be posted in the following order for all meetings of the El Paso City Council at which items of the listed categories will be discussed. If there are no items regarding a listed category, that category will be skipped.**

1. 9:00 a.m. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Ceremonial Items: Proclamations and Recognitions
3. 10:00 a.m. Roll Call and Invocation
4. Public Comment on Consent Agenda and Regular Agenda Items
5. Call to the Public (City related non-agenda items)
6. Consent Agenda
7. First Reading Ordinance
8. Public Hearings
9. Items moved to the forefront of the agenda
10. Council Member Requested Items
11. Operational Focus Updates
12. Regular Agenda
13. Executive Session

### **Lunch Break**

- The City Council will recess from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. for a scheduled lunch break.

### **Call to the Public/Public Comment/Non-Agenda Items:**

- **Call to the Public** is for items not posted on the agenda for the City Council meeting.

**Public Comment/Agenda Items is allowed on any posted item at any meeting of the El Paso City Council in accordance with Section 13 of these Rules of Order.**

- \* Ceremonial items will consist of the reading of a proclamation, an introduction to the Mayor and Council and a photograph. Members of the public and individuals and organizations receiving proclamations and recognitions are not expected to address council, however if they wish to comment, their group will have up to 6 minutes collectively.

**Exhibit “C”**  
**City of El Paso**  
**Public Comment Conduct Policy**

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**I. Purpose**

City Council Meetings and public comment at City Council Meetings are conducted for the official business of the City Council. Members of the public attending City Council Meetings shall observe the same rules of civility, decorum and respectful conduct applicable to members of the City Council. To ensure meetings are conducted in a professional and courteous manner which enables the order conduct of business, all persons in attendance or who participate in such meetings shall conduct themselves in a manner that does not interfere with the ability of others to observe and, when allowed, to participate without disruption or fear of intimidation, threats or hostility. The public has the right to criticize policies, procedure, programs or services of the City or of the actions or omission of the City Council or City staff. However, a member of the public addressing the City Council shall not defame another person or engage in any disorderly conduct which disrupts the orderly conduct of any City Council Meeting or City Council Public Comment meeting.

**II. Conduct Violations**

The Presiding Officer may rule a public speaker out of order and in violation of the Council Rules if:

- (a.) the speaker is speaking beyond the allocated time limit and refuses to yield the floor.
- (b.) the speaker’s remarks are not relevant to the agenda item under consideration at a City Council Meeting or City business or affairs at a City Council Public Comment meeting.
- (c.) the speaker repeatedly interrupts a Council Member.
- (d.) the speaker’s remarks or displays are disruptive so as to disturb the peace and good order of the meeting, through use of, without limitation, defamatory, loud, threatening, hostile, abusive, vulgar or obscene language, or any other actions that disturb or are calculated to disturb the meeting. Displays include but are not limited to signs and clothing.
- (e.) the speaker engages in any conduct with the intent to break up the meeting of the City Council or urges other to commit acts or engage in conduct to break up the meeting, including unreasonably loud and prolonged yelling, screaming, clapping or noise-creating acts, obstructing views of any person, which render it impossible or difficult for the City Council to conduct or continue with the meeting.
- (f.) the speaker willfully refuses or fails to comply with any Council Rule of Procedure or with any reasonable order of the Chair. Demonstrations, or other activities which disturb the peace and good order of the meeting shall not be permitted in the Council Chambers.

### III. Procedure

1. The Presiding Officer shall have the authority to preserve order at all City Council Meetings and City Council Public Comment meetings and enforce the Council Rules of Order, including:
  - (a.) the authority to revoke the permission granted to any individual to speak if such individual is disruptive or does not adhere to this policy.
  - (b.) to remove or cause the removal of any person from any meeting of the City Council for disorderly conduct, and to exclude a person from returning to that same meeting from which the individual was removed.
  - (c.) If the Presiding Officer determines that this policy of are not being followed, one warning will be given to the individual(s).
  - (d.) If this policy continues to be violated after one warning, the Presiding Officer may revoke the individual's speaking privileges and may remove, or cause to be removed by security personnel, the individual from the Council Chamber.
  - (e.) Any individual ordered to be removed from a meeting shall be excluded from returning to that meeting from which the individual was removed and shall be barred from further audience before the City Council during that session of the City Council.
2. Members of City Council may move to overrule the Presiding Officer's determination subject to a simple majority vote of City Council, present and voting.