

Council Communication

December 15, 2014, Study Session

Council discussion of procedures for getting proclamations and endorsements on Council business meeting agendas

FROM:

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SUMMARY

At the Council's October 7 business meeting, Councilor Morris requested a study session discussion of procedures for getting endorsements on business meeting agendas. Councilor Rosenthal requested a study session discussion of procedures for getting proclamations on business meeting agendas.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Councilor Morris requested a study session discussion of procedures for getting endorsements on business meeting agendas during the October 7 Council meeting at which the Council voted to endorse the Rogue Valley Transit District levy request in this past November's election. The endorsement had been placed on the agenda by Councilor Voisin, who prepared the resolution and submitted it to the City Administrator by noon of the Wednesday prior to the Council meeting. Councilor Voisin thus exercised her ability to place an item on a business meeting agenda under AMC 2.04.030(B)(1), which states:

“Any Councilor may place an item on the Council's agenda provided that preparing the matter for Council consideration would not require more than two hours of staff time, including policy research and document drafting. The Councilor shall notify the City Administrator of such an addition to the agenda no later than noon of the Wednesday prior to the Council meeting. The City Administrator shall determine the order of business of the item. The City Administrator may request that the matter be deferred until a later meeting if the agenda of a particular meeting is already lengthy. Council members will endeavor to have subjects and any materials they wish considered submitted prior to finalization of the Council packet.”

Taken in the context of the code section that deals with agenda-setting, staff has interpreted this provision to mean that a Councilor can place an item on the agenda – including an endorsement of another agency's ballot measure -- that would otherwise require more than two hours of staff time for preparation.

Other methods by which a Council can get an item on an agenda are as follows:

1. Request that an item be placed on a study session agenda for discussion and direction to staff. As a rule, any Councilor can request that almost any item be added to a study session agenda. Usually, this will be for the purpose of discussing whether the Council wants to direct staff to spend time developing an item for Council consideration at a future meeting. (AMC 2.04.030(B)(2))



2. At any time during a business meeting, a Councilor can make a motion to add an item to the end of the agenda. Such additions, if approved by the full Council, can be for discussion and direction to staff only. At the end of any business meeting, under Other Council Business, a Councilor can make a motion to add an item to a future agenda. If approved, the City Administrator determines the agenda to which it will be added. (AMC 2.04.030(C))
3. A Councilor can ask the Mayor to add an item to an agenda, including action items. There are no limitations on this authority (e.g., amount of staff time involved). The Mayor and only the Mayor has the discretion to add whatever items he/she chooses to any agenda. The Mayor is not obligated to honor the Councilor's request. (AMC 2.04.030(A)(3))

Note that the above procedures do not differentiate endorsements from other types of items or actions that might be placed on a Council agenda. Therefore, discussion at this study session could potentially focus on whether such a differentiation should be put in place and, if so, what form it might take.

Also at the October 7 Council meeting, Councilor Rosenthal requested a study session discussion of procedures for getting proclamations on business meeting agendas. Currently, when an individual or organization requests that a proclamation be placed on the agenda, it is circulated among the Council for feedback to the Mayor. Based on that feedback, the Mayor decides whether to place the proclamation on an agenda. Should the Council, after discussion, wish to change this procedure, there are several options for doing so:

1. Informal agreement, recorded in the meeting minutes. This would be similar to the agreement regarding Councilor announcements at the end of meetings.
2. Provide sufficient direction for staff to draft a policy or resolution on this subject that could be adopted by the Council, thus memorializing the procedure in a formally adopted document.
3. Amend the codified Council rules to specify a procedure for placing proclamations on the agenda.
4. An individual Councilor could place a proclamation on an agenda using one of the existing Council rules procedures above.

COUNCIL GOALS SUPPORTED:

N/A

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUESTED ACTION:

N/A

SUGGESTED MOTION:

N/A. This item is scheduled for discussion only.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

