

**CITY OF CHARLOTTE**

**COUNCIL POLICY**

SUBJECT	POLICY NO.	APP. DATE	PAGE
<b>MEETING PROCEDURES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC</b>	<b>2020-02</b>	<b>07/13/2020</b>	<b>1 of 2</b>

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to temporarily modify provisions of Council Policies 2016-02 Citizen Comments and 2016-04 Order of Business at City Council Meetings in order to conduct meetings as efficiently as possible during the COVID-19 epidemic while also complying with the provisions of the City Charter and state statute relevant to the conduct of City business.

**2. AUTHORITY**

This policy is adopted pursuant to the provisions of section 15.264(5) of Public Act 267 of 1976 as amended (Open Meetings Act) and section 4.71(I) of the City Charter.

**3. BACKGROUND**

On March 10, 2020 and on subsequent dates, Governor Gretchen Witmer declared a state of emergency to maximize efforts to slow the spread of cases of COVID-19 in the state. Subsequent executive orders have established limits on the size of public gatherings. The limits have necessitated changes in the manner in which public meetings are conducted.

Governor Witmer has issued executive orders suspending portions of the Open Meetings Act applicable to local government boards and commissions. These executive orders have permitted conducting City Council meetings as electronic meetings.

Council recognizes the challenges of ensuring public participation in meetings when that participation by the public is accomplished through the use of various types of information technology. It is deemed prudent, therefore, to conduct meetings in a more efficient manner so as to focus the time and energy of Council and the public on the most important agenda items while quickly acting on those that are routine or non-controversial and for which there is unanimous consent of the Council.

**4. TEMPORARY POLICY CHANGES**

Provisions of Council Policies 2016-02 and 2016-04 to the contrary notwithstanding, the following rules and procedures shall be applicable to all regular and special Council meetings that occur until the rescission of Governor Witmer's emergency declaration or until this policy is rescinded, whichever occurs first:

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4.1 The action “Approval of the Agenda” shall be replaced with a “Motion for Unanimous Consent” to all business items except for those on which one or more members of the Council desire debate, discussion or additional information. Prior to asking for a motion for unanimous consent, the Mayor shall inquire of Council members if there are any items of business on the agenda on which a member wishes to have debate, discussion or additional information. Items so identified will be noted. The Mayor shall then ask for a motion to approve the remainder of the agenda by unanimous consent. Voting on such motion shall be by roll call.

4.2 The “Communications and Committee Reports” section of the agenda shall be limited to reports on important matters that were not previously provided to Council in writing.

**5. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This policy shall become effective with the Council meeting that occurs next following its adoption.