

RESOLUTION NO. 32800

A RESOLUTION TO REPEAL RESOLUTION NO. 31479,
ADOPTED ON FEBRUARY 21, 2023, AND ADOPTING NEW
RULES OF OPERATION FOR THE CHATTANOOGA CITY
COUNCIL.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHATTANOOGA,
TENNESSEE, that it is hereby repealing Resolution No. 31479, adopted on February 21, 2023,
and adopting new Rules of Operation for the Chattanooga City Council, in substantially the form
attached.

ADOPTED: February 17, 2026

/mem



CITY OF CHATTANOOGA

**CITY COUNCIL
RULES OF OPERATION**

APPROVED: FEBRUARY 17, 2026

CHATTANOOGA CITY COUNCIL RULES OF OPERATION

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Chattanooga City Council (“Council”) is to promote an ethical and inclusive environment that both enhances and sustains the well-being of all the people. The Council will accomplish this by encouraging citizen input and participation at all levels of City government.

It is with this mission in mind that the Council adopts the following Rules of Operation:

I. LEADERSHIP

The leadership positions of the Council shall include the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, who shall be elected annually at a time deemed appropriate by the Council for the orderly fulfillment of its legislative duties. Additionally, there shall be Chairpersons of the Standing Committees listed below.

Leadership positions and their respective duties are as follows:

A. Chairperson.

The Chairperson shall:

1. Preside at all meetings of the Council and/or provide for the election of a Chairperson Pro Tempore to preside at a particular meeting in the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson pursuant to Section 8.3 of the City Charter.
2. Have general direction of the Council Chamber and shall preserve order.
3. Have the authorization to set forth the rules and procedures for use of the City Council meeting space.
4. Be the director of the City Council office. As director, the Chairperson’s duties shall include, but not be limited to, addressing all routine personnel matters such as leave reimbursements, purchases, and general day-to-day operations.
5. Oversee the City Council budget.
6. Appoint all committee chairs.
7. Fix the order of business for any special meeting of the Council.
8. Have a vote on all matters.
9. Appoint Chairpersons of the Standing Committees on an annual basis.

Any Council member may appeal to the Council from any ruling of the Chairperson, and a majority vote of the Council Members present shall decide the appeal.

B. Vice-Chairperson.

The Vice-Chairperson shall:

1. Serve as Chairperson of the Council if the Chairperson of the Council becomes incapacitated or unavailable during any meeting or appointment for the City.
2. Serve as parliamentarian of the Council.
3. Serve in any other capacity deemed necessary by the Chairperson.

C. Standing Committee Chairperson.

On an annual basis, the Chairperson shall appoint Chairpersons of the Standing Committees listed below. It shall be the responsibility of those appointed Chairpersons to fulfill the purpose of the Standing Committees as provided below:

1. *Economic Development Committee* shall be considering economic development within the City and its relationship to Real Property, Brownfields, and Work Force Development.
2. *Public Safety Committee* shall be considering issues that emerge within the Fire and Police Departments and to make Chattanooga a safe community in which to live, work, and play.
3. *Parks and Public Works Committee* shall consider Parks Planning, Programing, and Maintenance, Greenways and Neighborhood Connectivity, Outdoor Chattanooga and Special Events, Outdoor Recreation, including golf courses, Public Works Administration cooperation with the City Engineer, Engineering Division, Wastewater Division, Citywide Services, Fleet, Transportation, and Land Development to provide for sufficient and well-maintained infrastructure.
4. *Community Development Committee* shall consider community issues, including Community Centers, Neighborhood Advisory Councils, Neighborhood Services and Assistants Programs, coordination with Work Force Development and development of diversity, equity, and inclusion for suppliers, multicultural affairs, community engagement and outreach, and coordination with the Office of New Americans.

5. *Education and Innovation Committee* shall assist with issues on Head Start/Early Head Start, Early Learning Partnerships, Family Childcare Navigators, Partnerships with Hamilton County Schools, Open Data and Office of Performance Management, Performance Improvement Special Projects, and coordination with 311 and city boards and commissions.
6. *Planning and Zoning Committee* shall assist with issues involving Regional Planning Agency, Transportation Planning, Strategic Capital Planning, Sustainability, and Smart Cities.
7. *Budget and Finance Committee* shall provide review of existing and future budget requests to develop financial oversight and budget organization as required by the City Charter.
8. *Legislative Committee* shall provide input and review of existing ordinances and future legislative needs which are considered appropriate by the Council or Administration.
9. *Affordable Housing Committee* shall facilitate and develop a shared, data-driven understanding of affordable housing issues in Chattanooga and will create a proactive affordable housing agenda aligning legislative initiatives to encourage and leverage investment in preservation and creation of affordable housing.

With respect to these Standing Committees, the Council shall act as a committee of the whole.

II. PERSONNEL

The Council shall have the responsibility for recruiting, hiring, and managing the personnel necessary to carry out the orderly and effective legislative business of the City.

- A. Clerk of the Council: The Clerk of the Council (“Clerk”) shall report to the Chairperson. S[he] shall supervise the City Council office staff. Such supervision shall include, but not be limited to, scheduling work assignments, assuming the responsibility of office routine, assisting with the employment and dismissal process of Council staff, and all other duties required by law.
- B. Council Staff: Under the supervision of the Clerk, the staff shall perform all supportive administrative duties as defined by the Clerk.

Members of the Council shall not request administrative work of staff members not strictly related to Council business. Council business shall include Council district related assignments.

III. COUNCIL MEETINGS

- A. Meetings: The Council shall have regular meetings every Tuesday, unless otherwise determined by five (5) votes of the Council. Regular meetings, which are announced and open to the public, shall include the following:
1. *Strategic Planning Meeting*: The Council shall meet in strategic planning session the First and Third Tuesday of each month in the City Council Conference Room, in which agenda items for the official session will be discussed openly.
 2. *Agenda Session*: The Council shall meet each Tuesday in the City Council Chambers in which agenda items will be discussed openly.
 3. *Business Meeting*: The Council shall meet in official business session each Tuesday in the Council Chamber.
 4. *Standing Committee / Additional Meetings*: From time to time, the Standing Committees of the Council will meet to discuss those items falling within the scope of the committee. Additionally, the Council may meet for information, education, and attorney-client purposes.

Special meetings can be called by a majority vote of the Council and shall meet all public notice requirements as provided by law and common practice.

B. Organization of Council Business Meeting Agenda:

1. The agenda for official sessions of the Council shall be prepared by the Office of the City Attorney in consultation with the Clerk.
 - a. All proposed ordinances and resolutions must be submitted to the Office of the City Attorney no later than 11:30 a.m. on the Tuesday a full two (2) weeks prior to the City Council meeting. It will then appear on the two-week agenda.
 - b. Legislation will be added to the two-week agenda so long as it has appeared on the future considerations document for upcoming legislation.
 - c. The Chairperson can waive these requirements and add items to the agenda. Additionally, two members of the Council can waive these requirements and place an item on the agenda under certain circumstances (*e.g., emergency, unavailability of Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson, etc.*).
2. Members of the Council seeking to have legislation in the form of an ordinance added to the Council meeting agenda for a Council vote shall either submit or recommend the proposed legislation to the Council Chair for the appropriate committee assignment. The committee may hold public hearings thereon. In such hearings, those who speak in support of the proposal and those who are in

opposition shall both be limited to five (5) minutes. Members of the Council seeking to have legislation in the form of a resolution added to the agenda shall make the request in an open meeting and without objection from the Council have that resolution placed on the agenda following within a 2-week period.

3. Any matter which has appeared on the agenda and has been acted upon by either a majority vote for approval or rejection may be brought before the Council for reconsideration upon proper motion of a Council Member who was on the prevailing side of the final vote decision and seconding motion by another Council Member meeting that same criteria. Such reconsiderations shall not apply to any previous approval upon which the City has financially or contractually relied upon.
4. In the case of public hearings not subject paragraph 2 of this section, the Chairperson shall set time limitations in advance of the hearings; provided, however, that equal time shall be afforded for those who support the proposal and the opposition. The Chairperson may limit the number of spokespersons.

C. Organization of Council Business Meetings:

1. *Seating:* Council Members, except the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, shall have assigned seating by District No., from left to right.
2. *Governance:* All meetings shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order*, which are hereby adopted, except as to matters otherwise governed by Charter, state law, or ordinance.
3. *Voting:* It shall take five (5) "yes" or five (5) "no" votes to adopt or defeat any action. A roll call vote shall be taken by the Chairperson on all ordinances and on all resolutions involving the annual budget, the issuance of bonds, or upon demand of any Councilperson, even immediately after the vote. All ordinances shall be passed on two (2) readings held on at least two (2) different days. On final reading, an ordinance may be postponed by a vote of the Council to be heard on a day or week certain. Resolutions may be passed on one (1) reading.
4. *Order of Business:* The Council shall follow the order of the agenda, except when the order of business is amended by a majority vote of the Council members present.
5. *Conduct:* In case of any disturbance or disorderly conduct in the Council Chamber, the Chairperson shall have the power to order the same to be cleared, adjourn the meeting to maintain order and to have persons removed. No person shall be allowed to Disrupt any City Council meeting by physical action or verbal utterance as prohibited under Tennessee law.
6. *Zoning Ordinances:* In the case of initial readings, the following procedures shall be followed:

- (a) The case shall be presented by a member of the staff of the Regional Planning Agency.
- (b) The applicant shall be granted seven (7) minutes for oral presentation, plus two (2) minutes for rebuttal, for a total of nine (9) minutes.
- (c) Spokespersons for the opposition shall be granted equal time of nine (9) minutes.
- (d) Discussion between Council Members shall not be interrupted by either the applicants or the opponents, or by any other member of the public present in the Council Chamber.
- (e) The Chairperson shall strictly enforce these rules.
- (f) An applicant for rezoning may request to withdraw an application from appearing on the Council agenda after action has been taken at the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission **only** before the Regional Planning Agency has sent the request to the Office of the City Attorney. All zoning cases having been publicly noticed by the Office of the City Attorney and placed on the Council Agenda shall have Council action taken in a public meeting, including requests for withdrawal made to the Council Office after placement on the Council agenda.

7. *Public Comment:* At the end of each Council business meeting the Chairperson will recognize members of the public who wish to address the Council. The following procedural rules will apply:

- (a) Each speaker wishing to address the Council shall be recognized only at the microphone provided for that purpose.
- (b) No person shall have more than three (3) minutes to speak.
- (c) The speaker may address the Council only upon matters within the legislative and quasi-judicial authority of the Council. The speaker may not address the Council on matters which are not under the authority of the Council and which are regulated by other governmental bodies or agencies.
- (d) The speaker shall not be permitted to use any vulgar or obscene language, nor use the floor to personally attack or personally denigrate others. The speaker should address the Council as a whole and not make comments directed towards individual Council members.
- (e) The Chair shall not permit Disorderly Conduct or Disrupting a Public Meeting which is prohibited by Tennessee law. A person commits an offense if the person substantially obstructs or interferes with the meeting

by physical action or verbal utterance with the intent to prevent or disrupt a lawful meeting or gathering.

IV. COUNCILPERSON BEHAVIOR

- A. Conduct Rule: Members of the Council are expected to be prompt in their attendance of official meetings, including those held in joint session with the Hamilton County Commission. Such meetings shall be conducted in an orderly manner and according to the Rules of Procedure as adopted by this Council.

Conduct of individual Members during meetings of the Council is expected to reflect a total sense of respect for the office held by those assembled to conduct business. Members shall be courteous to one another, to any member of the administrative staff, as well as persons who may address the Council.

- B. Limit Rule: A Member may not speak until recognized by the Chairperson and shall not be recognized the second time on the same subject until all Members who wish to speak have had an opportunity to do so. Any disorderly conduct shall be noted by the Chair, and the offending Member shall forfeit the privilege of the floor for the remainder of the meeting, except for the purpose of casting his vote.

V. COUNCIL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT OR ADVANCE PAYMENT

Members of Council may request reimbursement for reasonable, necessary, and actual expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties, up to a maximum of \$10,000.00 per City Council District per fiscal year which are incurred in the performance of their official duties, and in accordance with the City of Chattanooga's travel regulations attached to these Rules of Operation.

Eligible expenses shall include, but are not limited to:

- Travel (local and out of town)
- Office supplies and administration
- Technology
- District operations/meetings

Members shall request approval of advanced payment or reimbursement from the Chairperson of the Council who will approve or disapprove said request after expeditious review. In the event the Chairperson disapproves a Member's request, said Member may appeal the Chairperson's decision to the Council's Budget and Finance Committee which may, by majority vote, recommend to the full Council to uphold the Chairperson's decision or approve the expense reimbursement requested. The Chairperson may also approve the transfer of a member's annual reimbursement request to another member for reallocation of surplus funds subject to the approval of all members affected within the fiscal year Council fund budget appropriation.

VI. CHANGES TO THE RULES

These rules may be amended at any time by a majority vote of the Council.