

Hastings, Minnesota
City Council Workshop
March 20, 2023

The City Council of the City of Hastings, Minnesota met in a workshop on Monday, March 20, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in the Volunteer Room at the Hastings City Hall, 101 East 4th Street, Hastings, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Fasbender, Councilmembers, Haus, Fox, Leifeld, Lund, Pemble
Members Absent: Councilmembers Folch
Staff Present: City Administrator Dan Wietcha
Assistant City Administrator Kelly Murtaugh
Community Development Director John Hinzman

Mayor Fasbender called the workshop to order at 5:30 p.m., welcoming Councilmembers and staff to discuss the Rules of Decorum that were originally adopted in 2018. Wietcha provided an overview of the previously adopted rules. Council discussion on adding clarity around committee attendance and sending committee materials. The rules contribute to improved communication for councilmembers. Council discussion on awareness of the time set aside for meetings, respecting the scheduled time and not going over. Council agreed that the chair should manage the time keeping of meetings and have City Administrator connect with the Chair in advance of the meeting to review and manage the agenda.

Council discussion about meeting day calls working better than texting and the follow-up email is helpful in keeping information consistent for all councilmembers. Council discussion about the “Three on Thursday” being very helpful to stay on top of the upcoming happenings.

Council recognition of two important components of the Rules: Continue to trust staff as professionals and subject matter experts. Being respectful of each other’s time—by being prepared, bringing up important questions, have an efficient but thorough meeting.

Discussion about respect for staff time with requests, research, and projects. Use of “parking lot”—items were kept fresh through the use of the tracking list. Items were moved from the “parking lot” appropriately.

Appreciation of Robert’s Rules—respectful and professional. The efficiency of Robert’s Rules of Order is everyone’s responsibility and will require some effort. It is a good foundation for Council’s work together.

Include Mayor in correspondence to City Admin or staff was discussed.

Council discussion that items/issues may be brought up in a less appropriate forum or timeframe—recommend sending a message to Mayor and/or City Administrator to determine best format and timing.

Once Council has made a decision, important to follow the decision. Even if individual Council members do not agree, once the vote is taken, following the decision is the best course of action. However, if a decision needs to change based on new information, then certainly Council can review.

Wietecha indicated that the Public Comment email was put in place in response to the pandemic. There has been no public use of the email in over a year. Council indicated that they are comfortable letting go of the email inbox, as there are several other options for reaching out to Council or City staff.

Wietecha inquired about the continued use of Zoom for access to Council meetings. This was set up by many cities during the pandemic and some are no longer offering. There is minimal public participation via Zoom. Council discussion on retaining the tool for those who are not able to participate in person for some reason, as it is more inclusive and demonstrates that the City is transparent with its meetings.

Updated Rules will be provided for Council to vote on at an upcoming meeting.

The workshop adjourned at 6:43 pm.

Mary D. Fasbender, Mayor

Kelly Murtaugh, City Clerk