

To: **Mayor and City Council**
From: **Nate Burkett, City Manager**
Date: **September 27, 2021**

OCWS Meeting Protocols

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On August 9, 2021 staff presented options to Council to change the setting of OCWS. As a result of that discussion it was clear that the majority of the Council was in favor of continuing to broadcast OCWS through cable television. The options that were presented to move OCWS to the conference room and continue to broadcast are not the best use of funds at this time.

It was the general agreement of the Council that there was an interest in improving and expanding the dialogue that happens at OCWS. Staff has considered options to assist in facilitating productive, collegial dialogue and has made the following adjustments to the OCWS format to assist the Council in advancing toward that goal.

The following are the format changes that staff has implemented and advice to the Mayor and Council:

1. Call to order – the Mayor remains as the chair of the meeting and will call the meeting to order at the prescribed time.
2. Robert’s Rules – Per the Permanent Rules of the City Council there is no need for motions, seconds or votes on any item on the OCWS agenda with two very narrow exceptions. OCWS is a work session of the Council, as such there are no formal decisions made. Motions and seconds are required/allowed when (a) the City Council chooses to vote on appointments to task forces and commissions and/or (b) when the City Council holds a closed session during OCWS.
3. Roll call – there will be no roll call taken. Instead, the Mayor may say at the beginning of the meeting “all members are present” or “council member (name) is absent”.
4. Review of the consent agenda – Any council member may ask questions or make comments about consent agenda items at this time. No action will be taken. If a council member wishes to remove an item from the consent agenda, that happens during the regular Council meeting.
5. Minutes of OCWS – There will be no minutes of OCWS meetings. By law, minutes are only required when decisions of the Council are formally being made, since no decisions are to be made at OCWS no minutes are required or necessary. Topics discussed at OCWS will be noted in the regular minutes of the Council meeting. Video of OCWS meetings will still be available on television live, and on the website within a day or two after the meeting.
6. General order - Council has expressed desire to have a more open dialogue. While the Mayor is still the chair of the meeting, all members should feel free to speak. While the Mayor may choose to coordinate the order of discussion, Council is encouraged to freely engage in conversational dialogue in a way that allows everyone to express their thoughts or opinions. Simply put, there is no requirement that any member be recognized prior to speaking. Staff has been given the same directive.

7. Procedures to add future OCWS topics – Staff asks that with the exception of extenuating circumstances, Council refrain from adding items to the current OCWS agenda. To facilitate orderly process and make sure staff has time to prepare, an item will be added to every OCWS agenda at the end for the Mayor or any Council member to suggest future OCWS items. Staff will maintain a list of all proposed OCWS items along with projected dates (when possible) and a future listing that will be posted with every OCWS agenda.

In summary, OCWS is designed to be an open space for the Mayor and Council to have open discussions about topics. The norms of behavior that the group chooses (either explicitly or implicitly), and individual comfort levels are going to have the greatest impact on the dialogue. Staff will strive to frame issues with specific questions for the Council to consider related to each topic but collegial debate, dialogue and alternatives should always be encouraged and accepted.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Fund	Department	Account	Amount
NA			

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Discussion.

Option for consideration – Direct revisions to the Permanent Rules of the City Council to address OCWS procedures.