

The City Council for the City of Junction City, met in a work session at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 24, 2021, in the Council Chambers at the City Hall, 680 Greenwood Street, Junction City, and in a virtual meeting format via internet and phone.

PRESENT: Mayor, Beverly Ficek; Council President, Ken Wells; Councilors Sandie Thomas, Sidney Washburne, Andrea Ceniga, and Karen Leach; Absent Councilor Gambia; City Administrator, Jason Knope; City Attorney, Carrie Connelly; and City Recorder, Kitty Vodrup.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Ficek opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m., led the pledge of allegiance, and took roll call.

2. Council Polices and Rules

Administrator Knope stated that examples of Council rules from the cities of Creswell, Harrisburg, La Grande, Mt. Angel, and Port Orford had been included in the Council packet for Council review and feedback on what the Council would like to see in their rules.

Discussion followed and included:

- Attorney Connelly stated that the rules the Council developed would include relevant Charter and Code provisions. She added that Junction City's Charter included that the Council would have a set of rules to govern its meetings and proceedings and she had always advocated that the Council get those in place.
- Attorney Connelly noted that the Council did not have a comprehensive set of Council rules, but had a hodgepodge of items in the code on regular, special, and emergency meetings, some delegation to the City Administrator, pieces of contracts that applied, and different policies that addressed some things.
- The Agenda Process Guidelines provided guidance on getting items on an agenda, but those could be reinforced in the Council Rules.
- The Charter provided guidance on the Mayor voting to break a tie, and that language could only be changed by a vote of the citizens.
- Long Council Agendas/Meetings
 - Concerns were expressed on how long Council agendas had been and the importance of being able to prioritize items and have time to discuss important topics, without having to cram all regular session items onto one agenda.
 - Administrator Knope stated that the 2nd Council meeting of the month had in the past been used for some regular meeting items, a combination of regular/work session items, or just for work session items, depending on the Council. He continued that they could for planning purposes tentatively set a 2-hour block for each meeting and any regular session items that were not addressed at the 1st meeting could be placed on the 2nd meeting in a split regular/work session agenda; the Council could still meet longer than the 2-hour block if desired. He added that having the time estimates on the agenda was a helpful planning tool for staff but there was flexibility for length of Council discussion on any agenda item.
 - It was noted that going late into the night for Council meetings made for a long day for staff and Council, and proper adjudication occurred when Council minds were not as tired and more fresh.

CONSENSUS: The Council consensus was to set a 2-hour block for each Council agenda, as Administrator Knope had outlined above.

- Council members noted that they liked the City of Creswell rules and that they liked the formatting of Harrisburg's and Mt. Angel's rules.
- The Council could start with Creswell's rules as a base, have Attorney Connelly add in relevant Charter and Code language, and then each Councilor could pick one or two items they liked from other cities that they could come back next time to review.

- Per Charter, a Council member could be removed from the Council by absence from three consecutive meetings without the Council's consent and this could be better defined in the Council rules, so they all understood how that process worked.
- Council members expressed their desire to have absence language also included for the Committee meetings, so that if a Councilor missed three consecutive unexcused Committee meetings, they would be off that Committee.
- The importance of showing up on time and being ready to go at 6:30 p.m. was expressed, as it showed respect to everybody else on the Council. Also noted was the importance of paying attention and not doodling during meetings.
- Attorney Connelly noted that things like being on time and other things that Councilors might want to add to the rules could be addressed under Section 6 of the Creswell Rules example under Decorum and Order.
- It was noted that having discussion after a motion and second were made, was standard procedure per Robert's Rules of Order, per Attorney Connelly.

CONSENSUS: It was the Council consensus to have Attorney Connelly use the City of Creswell's rules, but put into a format like Harrisburg or Mt. Angel, and make changes to those rules to conform with Junction City's Charter and Code. Council members would each bring back a couple of items they would like to see, and all this would be brought back to the next Council Work Session for review.

3. City Administrator Evaluation Process

Attorney Connelly reviewed that Attorney Mark Wolf had pulled together two City Administrator evaluation examples. These examples, as well as Administrator Knope's contract, were included in the Council packet for the Council to discuss the process and form they would like to use for this evaluation.

Discussion followed and included:

- Administrator Knope's contract read that the evaluation would be done annually in February.
- Council members expressed their desire to do the evaluation in October or November, since Administrator Knope had not had an evaluation since becoming City Administrator (CA) and that was not fair to him.
- Attorney Connelly noted that it would be fine legally to do the evaluation earlier, as February was a minimum. Administrator Knope responded that he would be happy to sign something if necessary, to indicate that he was fine with an earlier evaluation.
- It was asked if employees would also be evaluating Administrator Knope. Attorney Connelly responded that was up to the Council. Administrator Knope added that he did not feel comfortable with all employees weighing in, as that had never been done before in Junction City, but he would be fine with Department Heads and the people he supervises.
- In response to who would see the employee evaluations, Administrator Knope stated that in the past, they had gone to the Mayor who would bring them to Council. Council concerns were expressed with employees feeling intimidated by this, and Administrator Knope said he would recommend using an electronic system, where the results were tabulated, but no specifics of how any one person responded would be provided.
- Administrator Knope noted that he would recommend adding an acknowledgment section with signature lines, like what was on the City's standard employee evaluation form. He continued that the current employee evaluation form had a section for employee goals, which he thought was valuable. He added that communication and discussion were more valuable to him than numbers.
- Council members talked about making a hybrid evaluation of using the numbers from the first form but with the written formatting of the second form.

- Council members noted that it would be beneficial to hear Administrator Knope share what he thought his strengths and weaknesses were in his performance.
- Attorney Connelly reviewed that the process she was hearing from the Council was to develop the form and review at the next Work Session. After the form was finalized, a date would be set in October or November for the evaluation to be done in Executive Session, unless Administrator Knope wanted it done in open session. Each Councilor would fill out a form and then those would be compiled and reviewed with Administrator Knope in a discussion type format.
- It was noted that doing any evaluation was hard work and took a lot of time, but it was very important.

CONSENSUS: The Council consensus was to have Attorney Connelly or Attorney Wolf create an evaluation form, using the second form with the numbering from the first form; include a self-evaluation for Administrator Knope to write down his strengths and weaknesses, add an acknowledge section, and bring back to the next Council Work Session.

4. Review of Committee Bylaws

Administrator Knope reviewed that Councilor Washburne had submitted a Council Agenda Request to review this item, and the most current Committee bylaws approved by Resolution No. 1168 were included in the packet.

Attorney Connelly stated that the Council had earlier discussed under the Council Rules discussion on wanting to make changes to Committee member attendance or other things relevant to the Committees. She noted that those changes would be made in the Committee bylaws and not in the Council rules.

Discussion followed and included:

- Council members expressed that it was very important that Committee members attend Committee meetings, because they were doing a disservice to others on the Committee, to the community, and staff when they were not present.
- Also noted was the importance of Committee members being on time.
- It was stated that Council members were elected to serve and serving on and attending Committee meetings was part of that duty.
- Council members noted that if a Committee member missed three meetings that were unexcused, they should come off the Committee and then the Mayor would reappoint.
- Committee Meetings – Public Comments
 - Council members shared that there should be public comment allowed at all Committee meetings.
 - Administrator Knope stated that reflecting this would be in the Agenda Process Guidelines, where the Committee Agenda Template would be updated.
 - The Council discussed if they wanted public comment on each item and/or comments on items not listed on the agenda. The Committee consensus was to have an agenda item entitled “Public Comment” towards the end of the agenda, so the public could comment on any item, including agenda items or new things they wanted to bring up. Administrator Knope noted that they could place Public Comment before the Agenda Forecaster review, so if a pertinent item came up under Public Comment it could be added to the forecaster.

CONSENSUS: The Council consensus was to update the Committee Agenda Template to include Public Comment and place it right before Agenda Forecaster Review. Administrator Knope would update the Agenda Process Guidelines and bring back for Council review.

- Council Quorum and a Councilor Speaking at a Committee Meeting
 - Administrator Knope noted that many of the Council Committee agendas included that a possible quorum of the Council might be present.

- It was asked if a Council member attending a Committee meeting in the audience could speak as a citizen and what were the regulations around a quorum of the Council being present in one location.
- Attorney Connelly responded that when an elected official was speaking publicly, it was really hard for a private citizen to see that elected official as anything other than speaking in their Councilor capacity. She continued that as Administrator Knope had outlined, what they had done to protect the City was that the Committee agendas included that there could be a potential quorum of the Council; that gave the legally required notice if there was a quorum of the Council present at a Committee meeting. If a quorum of the Council were present and a Councilor in the audience began speaking and entering into discussion, at that point that meeting would then become a Council meeting. She continued that the practical implication was that the other Councilors that were not at that meeting missed out on some significant discussion and members of the public who did not know it would become a meeting of the Council might have also missed out on that discussion. She stated that she always cautioned individual Councilors that if they did attend Planning Commission meetings or standing Committee meetings in the audience that it was always better not to participate, but just to listen and learn and then share their thoughts or ask questions on Committee topics at a Council meeting. She concluded that there was no legal prohibition, but it was her best practices advice.
- It was asked if Committee meeting dates should be put in the bylaws. Administrator Knope responded that Article 3, Section 1 for the Committee bylaws read, “the standing Committees shall meet at a frequency designated by the chair, but not less than quarterly.” He added that he would not recommend putting the actual dates in the bylaws that the Committees met, to allow flexibility for the Committee to make changes to the standing meeting dates/times.
- It was asked who a Councilor should contact if they were going to be absent from a Committee meeting. Administrator Knope responded that it might be best for them to contact himself and Recorder Vodrup, who would then let the chair know.

CONSENSUS: The Council consensus was to update the Committee bylaws to mirror the language of Council absences and to add that Committee members needed to be on time. Administrator Knope noted that he would put in options for who a Councilor would contact if they were going to be absent from a Committee meeting, so the Council could select what they would prefer.

5. Adjournment

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Kitty Vodrup, City Recorder

Beverly A. Ficek, Mayor