



# **City Council Meeting Study Session Minutes**

**Thursday, August 24, 2023**

**1:30 PM**

**Hybrid Meeting- City Hall Wing Rooms W118-W120 and Virtually.**

**Study Session - City Council Governance: Developing Norms and Procedures**

MATT MAHAN, MAYOR  
ROSEMARY KAMEI, DISTRICT 1  
SERGIO JIMENEZ, DISTRICT 2  
OMAR TORRES, DISTRICT 3  
DAVID COHEN, DISTRICT 4  
PETER ORTIZ, DISTRICT 5  
DEV DAVIS, DISTRICT 6  
BIEN DOAN, DISTRICT 7  
DOMINGO CANDELAS, DISTRICT 8  
PAM FOLEY, DISTRICT 9  
ARJUN BATRA, DISTRICT 10

## **MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

### **STUDY SESSION- CITY COUNCIL GOVERNANCE: DEVELOPING NORMS AND PROCEDURES**

**SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA**

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 24, 2023**

The Council meeting was held in a hybrid format, in the City Hall Wing Rooms W118- W120 and teleconferenced from remote locations. The meeting convened at 1:36 p.m.

Present: Council Members - Mahan, Kamei, Torres, Cohen, Ortiz,  
Davis, Doan, Candelas, Foley, Batra.

Absent: Council Members - Jimenez.

Staff: City Manager, Jennifer Maguire; Assistant City Manager, Lee Wilcox; City Attorney, Nora Frimann; City Clerk, Toni Taber; and City Clerk's Office, Yasmin Johnson.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Mayor Matt Mahan stated the purpose and outcome of today's Study Session.

**Purpose of study session:** To provide the City Council with an opportunity to discuss shared norms and procedures that can enhance the City Council's work.

**Outcome of study session:** That the City Council will establish a common understanding of norms and procedures that will help to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of its work going forward.

Councilmember Pam Foley and Councilmember Pam Foley offered opening comments.

#### **1. Introduction**

Assistant City Manager, Lee Wilcox offered the presentation.

#### **2. Local Government Context**

Assistant City Manager, Lee Wilcox offered the presentation.

### **3. Rosenberg Rules of Order**

City Attorney, Nora Frimann offered the presentation.

Council discussion followed.

### **4. Council Motion Exercise**

Assistant City Manager, Lee Wilcox walked the Councilmembers through an exercise.

### **5. Council Norms Discussion**

Assistant City Manager, Lee Wilcox instructed the Councilmembers through the following exercise (*the motions below were fictitious, for learning purpose only*) :

Council was asked to break into small groups to develop a list of norms that they could all agree on. Council would then reconvene, and each group was to report out on the list they developed.

Motion: Councilmember Arjun Batra moved approval for Council to stay in one group as opposed to breaking up into groups, so the Community has a chance to hear all of the discussions. Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei seconded the motion.

Substitute Motion: Councilmember David Cohen moved approval for Council to break out into 3 small groups composed of two groups of 3 and one group of 4; and report out. He noted the Brown Act only requires a meeting of a quorum of the Council to be held in public, and the smaller groups of less than a quorum can have a more active discussion. Councilmember Dev Davis seconded the motion.

Action: On a call for the question, the substitute motion passed for Council to break out into 3 small groups composed of two groups of 3 and one group of 4; and report out. (8-1-2. Absent: Jimenez. Noes: Kamei, Batra.)

Group 1: Councilmember Ortiz, Councilmember Candelas, and Councilmember Torres reported out the following: have respect for each other's time, differences, and statements, take notice of how we engage in dialogue with one another even when we're passionate, come prepared to a meeting with a game plan and meet with staff beforehand, and stop being redundant.

Group 2: Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Ortiz, Councilmember Batra, and Councilmember Foley reported out the following: refrain from personal attacks, don't throw your colleagues under the bus, build relationships with colleagues, stay on topic to the specific item subject matter, assume good intent, debate issues and not motives, be a good listener, be respectful of staff, don't ask questions for things that were already covered, and respect diverse questions.

Group 3: Councilmember Cohen, Councilmember Doan, and Vice Mayor Kamei reported out the following: treat all of your colleagues with respect, assume good intent, be informed, focus on the issues and not the person, be respectful of each other's time, build relationships, and don't be redundant.

Staff is to compile the results of the exercise and follow-up with an info memo that includes the list of norms that Council identified. If there is interest from the Council, staff can also agendaize an item at a future Council meeting and bring a memo compiling the results of the exercise back for Council consideration.

## **6. Council and Staff Communication and Relationship**

Assistant City Manager, Lee Wilcox and City Manager, Jennifer Maguire offered the presentation.

## **7. Next Steps and Closing**

Mayor Matt Mahan closed the floor for Council discussion and opened the floor for public comment.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Paul Soto spoke to the tone of the meeting, the structure of democracies, and racism.
2. Martha O'Connell spoke on behalf of disabled people, addressed an email she sent to Council requesting that Council not break up into small groups, and expressed her disappointments regarding the disadvantages disabled members of the public have by not being able to attend the study session in person to hear the small group discussions.
3. Glenna H. spoke to her experiences being a disabled veteran and expressed her disappointments with today's study session and the tone of the meeting.
4. A speaker (*name not provided*), expressed their hopes with Council getting on the same page and spoke to biases.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Matt Mahan adjourned the Study Session at 3:32 p.m.

Minutes Recorded, Prepared and Respectfully Submitted by,

***DRAFT***

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Yasmin Johnson  
Deputy City Clerk, City of San José

Approved at Council on:

# of Actions: 0

Attest By:

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Toni J. Taber, CMC  
City Clerk, City of San José