

## **Blue Ridge City Council Meeting Rules of Procedure**

---

The purpose of having City Council Meeting Rules of Procedure is to ensure that the elected governing body of the City of Blue Ridge can effectively and efficiently conduct official city business in a productive, professional and timely manner.

### **City Council Meetings**

---

This City Council Meeting Rules of Procedure policy shall apply to all meetings held by the Blue Ridge Mayor and City Council, including but not limited to, workshops, regular scheduled meetings, special called meetings or public meetings. The following meeting procedure rules shall be followed:

### **The Agenda**

---

Meeting Rules of Procedure for Agenda Items are listed as follows:

- a. Agenda items referenced to in the following rules, include all items listed on the agenda including Mayor and Council Reports. Public Comment rules and requirements are listed under Public Comments.
  
- b. The Mayor and Council shall make every attempt to have agenda items on the agenda within (7) calendar days of the meeting. However, if the Mayor or a Council Member deems it necessary to add to the agenda within (7) calendar days of the meeting they may do so at their discretion. The City Clerk may suggest that an item be added and such item shall be added with the concurrence of either the Mayor or a Council Member.
  
- c. The agenda shall be posted (7) calendar days in advance of the meeting at the City Hall and in the event the agenda changes, the new agenda will be revised and posted at the earliest convenience of the City Clerk.
  
- d. Agenda items shall be listed in the appropriate category and listed in the following order, however if deemed necessary may be adjusted at the discretion of the Mayor.
  1. Call Meeting to Order
  2. Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance
  3. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting (if minutes are completed and available)
  4. Action Agenda Items (Items requiring the approval of the Council)
  5. Purchasing Approvals
  6. Discussion Agenda Items (Items for discussion only)
  7. Public Comments
  8. Executive Session (if needed)
  9. Adjournment
  
- e. The Mayor, or a Council Member may add an item to the agenda, but must specify to the City Clerk if the item is an action item, discussion item or purchasing approval item. **Any addition to the agenda by the Mayor or a Council Member must be specific enough so that the other elected officials are aware of what will be acted upon, discussed or approved.** Requested additions to the agenda by the Mayor or a Council Member shall not be allowed on the agenda without the specificity outlined above. All agenda items shall be introduced by the Mayor. For agenda items requiring a vote, once the agenda item has been introduced, a motion shall be called by a Council Member, if another Council Member does not call for a second, the Mayor shall ask for a second. After any applicable public comment, the Mayor or a Council Member may call for a vote on the motion after discussion or any time during the discussion period.

**f.** Any person who has an interest in City business or general issues within the City of Blue Ridge, can request to be placed on the agenda by submitting their name and the topic to the City Clerk at least (5) calendar days prior to the meeting.

**g.** If the Mayor or a Council Member believes that the City Council Meeting Rules of Procedure have been violated, at the time of the violation, the Mayor or Council Member shall call for a “point of order”. Once a point of order is called, the Member calling the point of order must state the point of order. The decision to accept the point of order must be by the majority vote of the Council. If the majority vote of the Council determines that there has been a violation of the rules raised by the point of order, a correction shall immediately be made.

### **Public Comments**

---

The following Meeting Rules of Procedure listed shall be followed for all public comments allowed at Blue Ridge City Council meetings including workshops, regular scheduled meetings, and public meetings. Any time limits set forth herein shall be kept and enforced by the City Attorney and/or the City Clerk or their designee:

\* Public comments are not always included on special called meeting agendas, see City Charter Section 3.13(b) and are only permitted by the approval of the Mayor and City Council.

**a.** All members of the public requesting to schedule a public comment shall be required to submit their name and the specific topic to the City Clerk at least (5) calendar days prior to the meeting. All requests shall be made by 4:30 p.m. on the 5th [Thursday] calendar day prior to the meeting. Members of the public must make their request to the City clerk either in person, email or in writing, requests received by voicemail will not be accepted. If the individual speaking wishes to present any type of document to the Mayor and Council during this time, it must be submitted to the City Clerk (5) calendar days in advance of the meeting. This deadline ensures that the material is included in the meeting packet and allows additional time for review prior to the meeting. Individuals will be permitted a maximum of (3) minutes to make their comments; all comments shall be limited to the specific topic listed on the agenda. Such time allotment shall not be transferred to other individuals. Scheduling a public comment in advance shall be available to the first 5 people who tender such request on a first come first serve basis.

**b.** Public comments shall be permitted at the end of the meeting for those persons who did not previously sign up and are not listed on the agenda, but request to speak about an item on the current agenda. A maximum of (2) minutes per individual shall be allowed and shall be allowed to the first five people who sign up to speak on a first come first serve basis. An overall maximum time limit of (10) minutes will be allowed for this portion of public comments.

**c.** Public comments made by those persons who signed up to speak on the day of the meeting are only permitted at the end of the meeting just prior to adjournment, and only by individuals that are listed on the agenda.

**d.** Public comments are not for the purpose of asking questions and answers of the Mayor and City Council or other City representatives. The Mayor or Council Members shall not engage in responding to comments or questions brought forth by individuals under the Public Comments section of the agenda. If the Mayor or a Council Member does reply to a public comment, he or she shall be doing so in their individual capacity as an elected official and nothing said shall bind the City of Blue Ridge as a whole.

**e.** Only one spokesperson per topic shall be allowed during Public Comments.

f. After a topic, listed under action item, purchasing approval or discussion item, receives a motion and a second from the Council, timely scheduled public comment by that person listed on the agenda is permitted about the topic of discussion subject to the three (3) minute per person time limit set forth in Subsection (a) above. The individual is only permitted to speak once per agenda topic. After the conclusion of the public comment on that particular topic, the City Council shall, if applicable, vote on the matter.

### **Decorum in Council Meetings**

---

Members of the public must comply with the following rules of decorum:

- a. Once a meeting has been called to order there shall be no comments allowed from any member of the public including inappropriate, offensive, impertinent, profanity or insulting comments to the Mayor, City Council or other City Representative or between individuals. There shall be no clapping, cheering, opposition gestures or disruptive actions allowed during the meeting.

### **Enforcement of the City Council Meeting Rules of Procedure**

If the Mayor or a Council Member believes that any individual has violated the City Council Meeting Rules of Procedure, the individual shall be subject to removal from the meeting by the direction of the majority vote of the City Council. If the majority vote of the council determines that a violation of the meeting rules has been made by an individual, upon request by the mayor or council, the person shall leave the meeting.

### **Meeting Materials**

The Mayor and City Council will be presented meeting materials prior to or at the meeting. Members of the public and the media are permitted access to these documents following the scheduled meeting, by accessing the City's website at [www.cityofblueridgega.gov](http://www.cityofblueridgega.gov).

### **WAIVER OF THESE RULES**

**Upon proper Motion by a City Council Member, a proper second and a unanimous approval by the City Council, these rules may be suspended for any purpose deemed necessary and appropriate. The suspension may be for one specific item or for numerous items. However, the suspension shall last no longer than the meeting in which these Rules were suspended. In the event of a suspension, Roberts Rules of Order shall be the procedure followed.**