



Meeting will begin at 3:00p.m.

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April 30, 2020 City Council Workshop

**SAVANNAH CITY GOVERNMENT**  
**SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES**  
**COUNCIL WORK SESSION & CITY MANAGER'S BRIEFING**  
**April 30, 2020 – 3:00 p.m.**

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the work session was held at 3:02 p.m., via Zoom video communications.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding  
 Alderwoman Kesha Gibson-Carter, At-Large, Post 1, Chairman  
 Alderwoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2  
 Alderwoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1  
 Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2  
 Alderwoman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3  
 Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4, Vice-Chairman  
 Alderwoman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz, District 5, Mayor Pro-Tem  
 Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

City Manager Pat Monahan  
 City Attorney Bates Lovett  
 Clerk of Council Mark Massey

Alderman Palumbo offered the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance recited in unison.

**Workshop Agenda Items**

[1. Rules of Council Discussion](#)

[Exhibit 1: Proposed Rules of Council.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Proposed Rules of Council \(with sources\).pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Fulton County Procedural Rules for Meetings.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Current Rules of Council and Order.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson welcomed everyone to the meeting. He briefly described to the public the next few workshops will be dedicated to the priority list developed by Council. He asked the City Manager to proceed with the Rules of Council discussion.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz asked for clarification on the priority of the items.

City Manager Monahan gave a brief description of how the priority items were developed and the documents the Council will be working with at today's Work Session.

Mayor Johnson recommended going through each Rule individually. He reiterated that The Rules of Council are different from The Procedures of Council.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely suggested the first Rule for change should be to change the current reading of "The meeting place" to "The style of the corporation shall be, The Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah".

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter suggested discussing only those items expressed as concerns by Aldermen in the past. She is basically concerned with getting items on the Agenda.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan suggested going through the Rules of Council line item by line item so as not to visit the Rules in the future.

Rule 1 - Meeting Place - No comments.

Rule 2 - Meeting Dates and Times - Change evening meeting times to 6:30 p.m.

Rule 3 - Work Session/Executive Sessions - No comments.

Rule 4 - Quorum - Change to "may wait fifteen minutes".

Rule 5 - Open Meetings - No comments.

Rule 6 - Council Officers - Check wording on Chair and Vice-Chair. Change wording to "head of City", not government. Charter, Section 2.201 - read into the record - Powers and Duties of the Mayor, the Mayor shall be recognized as the official head of the City.

Rule 7 - Procedure During Meetings - No comments.

Rule 8 - Voting - No comments.

Rule 9 - Abstention - No comments.

Rule 10 - The Agenda - Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and Alderwoman Miller Blakely stated for the record, they would like agenda items submitted to the City Manager and copied to the Mayor. Mayor Johnson recommends sending Council Agenda requests to his office and copy the City Manager and City Attorney.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter read into the records an excerpt from The History Highlights of the City Of Savannah Form of Government. She asked for direction/advisement from City Attorney Lovett for submission of information to the Attorney General if any movement/misstep in Rule 10 toward the direction against the City's Charter be completed.

10.1 Agenda Preparation - Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz questioned the Mayor's ability to pull items from the Agenda. She suggested the Agenda should be in the hands of City Council no later than the close of business the Friday before a meeting. City Manager will change, but allow staff to make any last minute needed changes on Monday prior to publishing.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz questioned the wording of "The City Manager prepares the agenda but with concurrence of the Mayor as the designated head of the City of Savannah and the policy-making responsibilities of City Council."

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter questioned the Mayor's authority to pull items from the Agenda without notification to the entire Council. The Mayor nor the City Manager should have the authority to remove items from the Agenda without the authoring Alderman and Council notification (it was the consensus of the Council that all Council will be notified of any changes to the Agenda). She asked for clarification on the administrative items the City Manager can remove; and suggested changing Mayor to future Mayors.

10.2 Consent Agenda - Alderwoman Miller Blakely questioned the "purchasing awards of \$100,000 or less; renewal of grants; contract amendments which do not increase costs;" and suggested a change or rewording since the prior Consent Agenda does not adhere to this Rule. She will go back and reread the prior Consent Agendas for confirmation.

10.3 Additional Items - No comments.

10.4 Council Items - Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz questioned the proclamation and presentation procedure as written. The term Resolution as it appears should be changed.

Alderwoman Lanier suggested rewording Rule 10.4 and break the paragraph into two separate paragraphs showing how to add proclamations and presentations as separate from how Council Members desire to place an item on the agenda. After in depth study of other municipalities, Alderwoman Lanier reported the consensus was to send Agenda requests to the City Manager/Administrator office with a copy to the Mayor.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely suggested Council Members go through the City Manager for any item they would like on the Agenda and the City Manager makes the Mayor aware of those items.

Following discussions with several Council Members, Attorney Lovett suggested leaving the wording in Item 10.4 but separating the paragraphs to detail how Council can get an item on the Agenda, but none of the procedures are in conflict with the Charter.

Mayor Pro-Tem Shabazz reinforced for Council Members that the City of Savannah operates on a strong City Manager and weak Mayor form of government, giving the Mayor one vote, the same as Council Members. She read into the record from the Charter, Section 2.02.01 - Section 2.03, Mayor.

Mayor Pro-Tem Shabazz and Alderwoman Miller Blakely went on record with the suggestion to submit Council Agenda items to the City Manager with a copy to Mayor Johnson.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter directly addressed City Manager Monahan and City Attorney Lovett as to her prior attempts to get items placed on the Agenda.

10.5 Public Comment - Speaker Cards are not longer used, per Mayor Johnson.

Rule 11 - Decorum During Meetings - No comments.

Rule 12 - Public Hearing and Participation - Rule for Conducting Public Hearings

12.1 - Addressing Council - Mayor as presider, can open the hearing without a vote.

12.2 - Speaker Cards - Omit this section - no speaker cards. The Mayor will identify speakers.

12.3 - Speaker Decorum - No comments.

12.4 - Time - The petitioner shall be allowed ten minutes for the presentation which should be strictly enforced.

12.5 - Voting - No comments.

12.6 - Public Addressing Council on Other Matters - No comments.

Rule 13 - Ordinances - No comments.

Rule 14 - Special Meetings and Rescheduled Meetings - Mayor asked the City Manager to include the word "him or her".

Rule 15 - Executive Sessions - Mayor Johnson asked the City Manager to work with the City Attorney to add a sentence pertaining to privileged information and confidentiality of Executive Sessions.

Rule 16 - Suspending The Rules Of Order - Clerk of Council Mark Massey suggested adding two-thirds (2/3rd) majority vote for approval.

Rule 17 - Amendments To These Rules - No comments.

Rule 18 - Parliamentarian - No comments.

Rule 19 - Officers - Delete the word "elected". The Mayor should not supervise anyone. Change/delete the word "supervision". Change to "The City's appointed officers are the City Manager, City Attorney and Clerk of Council".

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz believes the wording presented is in direct conflict with the City Charter. She suggests using the wording pertaining to officers as outlined in the City Charter.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter opposed the new wording and stated Section 3.108, Powers and Duties of the City Manager showing the wording is in direct conflict with the City Charter.

City Attorney Lovett will review the language and will prepare a response at the time of Council vote.

19.1 - Officers - Change to "Must be knowledgeable of their duties."

19.2 - Attendance - Change to "They must attend all meeting".

19.3 - Complaints - No changes.

19.4 - Add "the Mayor shall assume responsibility for the approval of leave request for the City's appointed officers".

Rule 20 - Anonymous Communication - Not read.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely moved to recess the work session and conduct a closed executive session to discuss personnel, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed 6-3-0. Mayor Johnson, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz, Alderwoman Gibson-Carter, Alderwoman Miller Blakely, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderman Purter voting yea. Alderman Leggett, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Palumbo voted no.

The Executive Session began at 5:37 p.m.

The Executive Session ended at 6:01 p.m.

Hearing no further business, Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

The audio recording of the Council Meeting can be found by copying and inserting the below link in your url:

<https://savannahgovtv.viebit.com/player.php?hash=DNCaG2zn3JDa>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_