



City Council Caucus
City Council Caucus Meeting

Monday, December 1, 2025, 7:15 PM
City Council Chamber, 1st Floor
562 Main Street, Melrose, MA 02176

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Pledge of Allegiance

- Jason Chen Councilor-Elect
- Cal Finocchiaro
- William Bradley Freeman Councilor-Elect
- Maya Jamaleddine
- Manjula Karamcheti
- Elizabeth Kowal Councilor-Elect
- John Obremski
- Christopher Park Councilor-Elect
- Devin Romanul
- Kimberly Vandiver
- Ryan Williams

Meeting was called to order by Chair Cifuni at 7:15 PM
Councilor Obremski was a remote attendee

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jason Chen Councilor-Elect	At-Large	Present	
Cal Finocchiaro	Ward 6	Present	
William Bradley Freeman Councilor-Elect	Ward 4	Present	
Maya Jamaleddine	At-Large	Present	
Manjula Karamcheti	Ward 1	Present	
Elizabeth Kowal Councilor-Elect	At-Large	Present	
John Obremski	Ward 2	Present Remotely	
Christopher Park Councilor-Elect	Ward 3	Present	
Devin Romanul	Ward 7	Present	
Kimberly Vandiver	Ward 5	Present	
Ryan Williams	At-Large	Present	

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

When: Dec 1, 2025 07:15 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Topic: City Council Caucus Meeting

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android:
<https://cityofmelrose-org.zoom.us/j/94132302691?pwd=f0H9GUcBb4kUbPjhjXQ6Pn0IsPIbLQ.1>
Passcode:167362
Webinar ID: 941 3230 2691

Motion to Open public comment with no objections by made by Chair Cifuni
All were in favor and public comment was opened
There were no comments on the floor or via Zoom
Motion to Close public comment made by Chair Cifuni
All were in favor and public comment was closed

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Notice of Caucus and Nomination of President

Motion to Open the floor for nominations made by Councilor Karamcheti
Seconded by Councilor Romanul
All were in favor and motion passed

- i. **(ID # 2025-779):** Nomination of a President for the Year 2026 Pursuant to Rule 57 of the City Council Rules of Order

Motion to Nominate Councilor-Elect Freeman made by Councilor Jamaledine
Seconded by Councilor-Elect Chen

Motion to Nominate Councilor Williams made by Councilor Romanul
Seconded by Councilor Vandiver

Without objections, nominations were closed by Chair Cifuni
All were in favor and nominations were closed

Roll call vote was taken for each Councilor's Nominee Choice.

Attendee Name	Title	Nominee
Jason Chen	Councilor-Elect	At-Large
Cal Finocchiaro		Ward 6
William Bradley Freeman		Ward 4
Councilor-Elect		
Maya Jamaledine		At-Large
Manjula Karamcheti		Ward 1
Elizabeth Kowal	Councilor-Elect	At-Large
John Obremski		Ward 2
Christopher Park	Councilor-Elect	Ward 3
Devin Romanul		Ward 7
Kimberly Vandiver		Ward 5
Ryan Williams		At-Large

Councilor-Elect Freeman received 6 votes
Councilor Williams received 5 votes

The Chair declared that upon the vote of the members present that Councilor-Elect Freeman has

been duly nominated by the members of this Caucus to be the newly elected president of the Melrose City Council for the year 2026.

According to the rules of the City Council, the term will become effective upon formal election at Council's organizational meeting on January 5th (afterward changed to 12th), 2026.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The City of Melrose does not discriminate based on disability and is committed to hosting accessible meetings and events. Individuals with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication, written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, in order to access the programs and activities of the City of Melrose or to attend meetings, should contact the City's ADA Coordinator, Polina Latta platta@cityofmelrose.org.

Motion to Adjourn made by Councilor Romanul at 7:25 PM

Seconded by Councilor Karamcheti

All were in favor and meeting was adjourned

MELROSE CITY COUNCIL RULES OF ORDER



Adopted January 6, 2025

Amended February 4, 2025

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OVERVIEW

In accordance with [Melrose City Charter §2](#), except as otherwise may be provided by law or the Melrose City Charter, the legislative powers of the Melrose City Council may be exercised in a manner determined by the City Council. The following are the Melrose City Council Rules of Order, which set forth a set of adopted rules regulating procedures of the Melrose City Council in how it conducts business. These Rules are superseded only by the Melrose City Charter, §2 which details how this legislative branch of government functions. In addition, the Council shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, in all questions of parliamentary procedure not provided for by the Council's Rules of Order.

RULES OF ORDER

Rule 1 As set forth in the Melrose City Charter, regular meetings of the City Council shall be held at a time and place fixed by Ordinance. Regular meetings of the City Council shall be held in accordance with [§48-6](#) of the Administrative Code for the City.

Rule 2 According to the City Charter, special meetings of the City Council shall be held at the call of the president or members of the City Council, as outlined by [§2-6, C \(ii\)](#) of the City Charter. Special meetings may also be called by the Mayor per the procedure outlined in [§3-6](#) of the City Charter.

Rule 3 A majority of the Council or any Committee thereof shall constitute a quorum. Per [§2-6](#) of the City Charter, a quorum for the City Council consists of six (6) members. A quorum of a Committee is three (3) voting members; the President may be counted as a member of the quorum.

PRESIDENT¹

Rule 4 The President of the City Council shall take the chair at the scheduled hour, call the members to order and, on the appearance of a quorum, proceed with business for a full Council meeting.

Rule 5 In the absence of the President, the President Pro Tempore of the Council, who shall be the senior member in length of service present at the meeting, shall preside and call the Council to order. When two or more members have the same seniority, if the President knows beforehand of their absence, the President has the option to nominate the President Pro Tempore before the meeting. If the President's absence is last minute, the names shall be drawn by the City Clerk at the start of the meeting to determine who is the President Pro Tempore for the duration of the meeting.

Rule 6 During the full Council meeting, the President shall preserve decorum and order, shall decide all questions of order, and shall be the determinant on all interpretations of these rules, subject to an appeal by the Council. They may also express an opinion on any subject under debate, or state facts, without leaving the chair, but in such case, they shall wait until all other councilors have expressed opinions. They may ask questions pertaining to any agenda item/order, but in such case, they shall leave the chair, and the President Pro Tempore will preside until the order has been voted.

¹ Additional information about the President's role is detailed in the City Charter, [§2-2](#).

CITY CLERK AND ASSISTANT CITY CLERK²

Rule 7 The City Clerk shall keep minutes of the proceedings of the full Council meetings, which shall be voted on by the Council. The City Clerk shall note upon legislative papers the action taken by the Council relating to said papers.

The City Clerk shall report to the President. The City Clerk shall perform such duties in connection with the transaction of business during the sessions of the Council, as the President deems necessary.

Within forty-eight (48) business hours after adjournment of a Council meeting, the City Clerk shall prepare a Post-Meeting Bulletin containing a statement of all items referred to committees, whether standing or special. All matters so referred shall be listed separately under the heading of the respective committees; and all matters laid upon the table or postponed to a further date, and any hearings ordered to be held at any subsequent meeting, shall be included in said Bulletin.

Whenever a petition is filed, as provided by Section 22 of Chapter 166 of the General Laws of Massachusetts, seeking a permit for an original location for wires, poles, piers, abutments or conduits to be used for the transmission of electricity, the City Clerk shall forthwith, upon receipt of such petition, send notice, in the manner required by said Section, of a public hearing to be held thereon at the next meeting of the Council occurring not less than seven (7) days following such receipt. The City Clerk shall also send notice of such hearing to the Inspector of Wires.

The City Clerk shall be responsible for preparing a Pre-Meeting Calendar for full Council meetings containing the following items: all matters of new business; all reports of committees to be presented at any regular or special meeting of the Council; a statement of any orders for which notice of a motion to reconsider has been filed; all orders which have been laid upon the table or postponed to a day certain; all hearings which may have been ordered; and all matters of unfinished business. Such Calendar shall be electronically transmitted to each member of the Council at least forty-eight (48) business hours prior to said meeting.

A full, accurate and up-to date account of the proceedings of the city council shall be kept, which shall include a record of each vote taken and which shall be made available with reasonable promptness following each meeting; provided, however, that the minutes of an executive session shall be made available as soon as their publication would not defeat the lawful purposes of the executive session.

Rule 8 The Assistant City Clerk, in the absence of the City Clerk, shall perform the duties of the City Clerk.

² Additional information about the City Clerk's role is detailed in the City Charter, [§1-302](#).

Rule 9 In the event of a vacancy in the position of the City Clerk, the President of the Council shall appoint a nominating committee of three (3) Councilors. The nominating committee will cause any such vacancy to be posted, will review applicant resumes, and conduct interviews. Thereafter, the nominating committee shall recommend up to three (3) candidates for consideration by the full Council.

CLERK OF COMMITTEES³

Rule 10 The Clerk of Committees shall report to the City Clerk, providing legislative assistance, support, and other professional services to all City Council members as needed.

The Clerk of Committees shall keep minutes of the proceedings of the Committees, which shall be voted on by the Committee. The Clerk of Committees is also responsible for maintaining all related documentation for all orders.

The Clerk of Committees shall, following the final action of the Committee on Appropriations & Oversight and the making of its report on the annual budget, or any supplementary budget, prepare a statement with respect to the appropriations recommended for each department, when such appropriations include any sums for increase in salaries for employees of such departments, stating in detail the amount of such increases allowed in such appropriations and the period of the budget year allowed by said appropriations.

Rule 10B In the absence of the Clerk of Committees, the City Clerk shall perform the duties of the Clerk of Committees, or may delegate such tasks to the Assistant City Clerk. If the City Clerk is unable to perform the duties of the Clerk of Committees, the Assistant City Clerk will fulfill this role in the interim.

Rule 11 In the event of a vacancy in the position of the Clerk of Committees, the President of the Council shall work with the Human Resources Director to post the position. A special committee of three (3) councilors (inclusive of the President) shall review applicant resumes (following the standard screening process of the Human Resources Department) and conduct interviews. Thereafter, the special committee shall recommend up to three (3) candidates for consideration by the full Council.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Rule 12 When a member speaks, they shall address the Presiding Officer and shall confine their remarks to the question under consideration. While speaking, members shall avoid personalities, and no member shall directly or indirectly impugn another member or conduct themselves in a manner unworthy or unbecoming of a City Councilor. No member shall speak or vote out of their place without leave of the Presiding Officer.

Rule 12A The proper attire for all city council meetings and committee meetings shall be

³ Additional information about the Clerk of Committees' role is detailed in the Administrative Code, §[48-3](#).

professional attire to avoid overly casual dress.

Rule 13 No member shall be interrupted while speaking except by their consent or by a point of order or point of information; nor shall there be any conversation among the members while a question is being stated, while a member is speaking, or a paper is being read.

Rule 14 No member shall stand up, to the inconvenience of others, while a member is speaking; pass unnecessarily between the Presiding Officer and the member speaking; stand in the area in front of the chair; or stand at the City Clerk's desk while a roll call is in progress.

Rule 15 If a member repeatedly violates any of the rules of the Council or disrupts the orderly procedure of the Council, the Presiding Officer, after warning the member of such violations, shall call the member to order, and a member so called to order shall lose the right to speak on the pending subject matter but shall not be prevented from voting. A member so called to order shall remain silent until the Presiding Officer returns to the member their rights to the floor.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Rule 16 The President shall annually appoint voting members to each Standing Committee, one of whom shall serve as Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson. The President shall, at the first meeting in January, announce the Chairpersons and voting members appointed to all Standing Committees for that calendar year. The President shall serve as a member ex-officio of all committees and, when required, may be counted in the making of a quorum. The President shall be entitled to vote as an ex-officio member of all standing committees.

Rule 16A Committee Chairpersons serve at the pleasure of the President, who may at any time remove a Chair and designate a new Chair. Neither the removal nor the appointment or re-appointment of a Chairperson shall be subject to the approval of the Council.

Rule 16B Committee Chairpersons shall preserve decorum and order, shall decide all questions of order, and shall be the determinant on all interpretations of these rules, subject to an appeal by the Committee. They may speak to points of order in preference to other members and shall declare all votes and may vote in all cases. The Chairperson may express an opinion on any subject under debate, ask questions, or state facts, without leaving the chair, but in such case, they shall wait until all other voting members have expressed opinions.

Rule 17 Whenever one (1) or more committee meetings are scheduled to commence the same evening as the full Council or other committee meeting(s), each meeting shall commence within fifteen (15) minutes of the meeting's respective scheduled meeting time. Where the earlier opened meeting(s) has not adjourned prior to the time by which another meeting must commence, the earlier committee(s) may recess so as to allow the other scheduled committee meeting(s) to open for the purpose of public comment. After public comment the members

may vote to recess and reconvene the preceding meeting.

Rule 18 A non-voting member of a committee may only speak on a pending matter after all voting members have been given the opportunity to deliberate; and non-voting members shall only speak once unless granted leave by the Chairperson. This provision of the rule, however, shall not apply to non-voting members who have sponsored or co-sponsored a matter appearing before a committee. The sponsor(s) shall always be recognized first by the Chairperson for the purposes of introducing an order.

Rule 19 Reports on all matters from committees shall be made as early as practicable, but no later than forty-eight (48) business hours before the next full Council meeting. Reports shall be appropriately designated by the action taken in committee and presented as such on all future meeting agendas until that time the Council disposes of a matter. Reports shall be designated in one of three (3) ways:

- Favorable Report (“ought to pass”)
- Adverse Report (“ought not to pass”)
- Undeclared Report (“without recommendation”)

Rule 20 The President shall form special committees of the Council as needed and shall appoint its members. Special committees shall consist of three members, unless otherwise ordered.

Rule 21 All committees of the Council shall be notified of their meetings by the Clerk of Committees. No two committee meetings may occur at the same time.

Rule 22 The following Standing Committees are hereby established:

1. **Appropriations & Oversight:** Eleven (11) voting members for approval of annual and supplementary budgets, federal or state grants, zoning, and all general oversight matters. Approval of mayoral appointments for city department heads (i.e. CFO, City Solicitor, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, Director of Public Works, Director of Planning & Community Development, Chief Assessor, Building Inspector, Treasurer/Collector, etc.)
2. **Finance:** Five (5) voting members for approval of surety bonds, election matters, print and supplies, and City Council purchases. Approval of mayoral appointments for Board of Assessors and Registrars of Voters.
3. **Legal & Legislative:** Five (5) voting members for approval of legislative matters, ordinances, and claims.
4. **Protection & License:** Five (5) voting members for approval of matters related to the Police and Fire Departments, Emergency Management, and licenses. Approval of mayoral appointments for Animal Control Officer and Constable.

5. **Public Works:** Five (5) voting members for approval of matters related to the Department of Public Works, public transportation, all municipal parking areas, and lighting of streets and municipal parking areas, and electric, cable and telephone wires. Approval of mayoral appointments to the Cemetery Committee, Historic District Commission, and Traffic Commission.
6. **Boards & Commissions:** Five (5) voting members for approval of mayoral appointments to all city commissions and boards (i.e. Beebe Estate Trustees, Conservation Commission, Council on Aging, Disability Commission, Board of Health, Historical Commission, Housing Authority, Human Rights Commission, Library Trustees, Park Commission, Memorial Hall Trustees, Veteran's Advisory Board, and Women's Commission).

MEETING AGENDAS

Rule 23 Agendas and corresponding agenda packets for all full Council and committee meetings shall be publicly posted no later than forty-eight (48) business hours before a meeting is called to order, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. All Orders, Ordinances, Petitions, Resolutions, and Remonstrances appearing on meeting agendas shall include the name(s) of the corresponding sponsor(s). The City Clerk or the Clerk of Committees shall post meeting agendas to the city website.

Rule 23A Notice of emergency meetings must be posted as soon as reasonably possible prior to a meeting and in a manner accessible to persons with disabilities to the extent required by federal and state law.

MEETING PROCEDURES

Rule 24 A Councilor or any combination of Councilors who file legislation shall be given up to five (5) minutes in total to introduce the matter.

Rule 25 On general matters of discussion, members of the Council shall occupy no more than five (5) minutes when speaking on a particular subject and/or debating the matter. No member shall speak more than once if any other member, who has not previously spoken, desires to speak.

Rule 26 When a matter is being debated, no member may occupy more than five (5) minutes for each point under debate, nor shall they speak twice to the same question without leave of the Council, nor more than once if any other member, who has not previously spoken, desires to speak.

Rule 27 When a city official or other person appears before the Council or committee thereof, an individual Councilor shall not occupy more than ten (10) minutes of dialogue with the party. If a Councilor, however, requires additional time for questions, they may seek leave from the

Presiding Officer. In determining whether to grant the Councilor additional time, the Presiding Officer shall consider but is not limited to the following factors:

- The number of remaining questions the Councilor intends to ask.
- The number of questions the Councilor has already asked.
- The relevancy of the questions.
- The amount of time that has been occupied by the attendee in answering questions.
- The responsiveness of the attendee.
- The nature of the matter before the Council or committee.
- Public interest considerations.
- The hour of day.
- Remaining business before the Council or committee.

The Presiding Officer, at their discretion, may designate the City Clerk or Clerk of Committees to monitor the time provisions of this rule.

Rule 28 When a question is put forward, every member present shall vote yes, no, or present. Members who are abstaining (i.e. voting “present”) shall be included in the quorum; members who are recusing themselves are not included in the quorum. A member that is recusing themselves from voting shall announce that they are recusing themselves prior to any discussion or deliberation of the matter and shall state the reason for recusal (a conflict of interest or to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest). A member that has recused themselves shall not participate in the discussion while the matter is being deliberated and shall leave the Council Chamber or, if participating remotely, shall turn off their microphone and video during discussion on the matter.

Rule 29 No member shall leave a meeting without permission of the Presiding Officer if their presence is necessary to make a quorum.

Rule 30 When a committee fails to issue a report on an item within forty-five (45) days after the matter is referred to committee, the Clerk of Committees shall notify the City Clerk of such, and the City Clerk shall place said item on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Council meeting under Reports from Committee with the following notation: “No Action Taken.”

Rule 31 Whenever any Order or Ordinance adopted by the Council at any meeting has not been returned by the Mayor within ten (10) days and is thereby enacted pursuant to §3.7 of the City Charter, the agenda for the next meeting of the Council shall include a statement that such Order or Ordinance has taken effect by operation of law.

Rule 32 In order to promote fair and open discussion, once a public hearing is called to order, the Presiding Officer shall recognize members of the public who may speak in the order of recognition. Public hearings shall not be divided into time periods for proponents and opponents to speak.

Rule 33 All sessions of the City Council and of every committee thereof shall be open to the public unless another provision has been made by law. Each meeting of the Council or any standing committee thereof shall allow up to five (5) minutes per person for Public Comment, as noted on the agenda. There will be an option to speak in public comment via remote participation whenever practicable, to be managed by the City Clerk and/or the Clerk of Committees. This rule shall only be suspended by unanimous consent of the members.

Rule 33A To ensure the ability of the Council to discuss its business and hold its meetings in an orderly and peaceable manner, while also providing the opportunity for public input on the business before it, the following procedures are hereby adopted:

1. Speakers during Public Comment will begin their remarks by stating their first and last name, and town of residency for the record. All remarks will be addressed through the Presiding Officer.
2. Public comment is dedicated to topics identified on the Council's meeting notice for that particular meeting. Comments expressing any viewpoint on other matters are also welcome.
3. Large groups addressing the same topic are encouraged to consolidate their remarks and/or select a spokesperson to speak during Public Comment.
4. All speakers are encouraged to present their remarks in a respectful manner.
5. Public Comment is not a discussion, debate, or dialogue between individuals and the Council or Committee. Comments made during Public Comment do not reflect the views or opinions of the Council.
6. Members of the audience shall not interrupt or speak over recognized speakers or the discussion of the body.
7. Physically disruptive or physically threatening conduct is forbidden.
8. The Presiding Officer will not interrupt speakers during Public Comment who have been recognized to speak, except that the Presiding Officer reserves the right to terminate speech which is not Constitutionally protected because it constitutes true threats and incitement to imminent lawless conduct.
9. Verbal comments will also be curtailed by the Presiding Officer once they exceed the time limits outlined in Rule 33, and to the extent they address topics not listed on the agenda as required under Section 2 above.

Rule 33B The City Clerk shall redact the e-mail address and phone number of any member of the public who submits correspondence to the Council before any such correspondence is attached to the order.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Rule 34 At every meeting of the Council the order of business shall be as follows:

- I. Call to Order
- II. Reading of the Minutes
- III. Public Comment
- IV. Public Hearings – *if necessary*
- V. Communications from the Honorable Mayor & Other City Officials
- VI. New Business
 - a. Filings by the Honorable Mayor
 - b. Filings by Members of the City Council
- VII. Unfinished Business
- VIII. Reports from Committees
- IX. Expiries
- X. Rule 37 Reports
- XI. Adjournment

Rule 35 The above order may be changed, at any meeting, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and, upon motion to change the order of business, no debate shall be allowed.

Rule 36 Whenever the President, or a member of the Council appointed by the President or Mayor to serve on a special committee, commission, council, board or other working group, attends a meeting of such committee, commission, council, board or other working group, that member shall report back at the next regular meeting of the Council as to the actions taken on all matters on the agenda of said body.

LEGISLATIVE PROCEEDINGS

Rule 37 All pending matters before the Council shall be presented by the President; and shall be

read by the President, City Clerk, Clerk of Committees, or such other person as the President may request. They shall be acted upon in the order in which they are presented unless the Council shall otherwise direct.

Rule 38 All nominations/appointments made by the Mayor, subject to the confirmation of the Council, shall, when received by the Council, be referred without debate to the proper standing committee and said committee shall report its recommendations thereon within forty-five (45) days or at the next regular meeting.

Rule 38A All appointments (new appointments and reappointments) made by the Mayor and subject to the confirmation of the Council shall include a written statement of interest for appointments and written statement of accomplishments for reappointments while on the board or commission.

Rule 38B All new appointees of the Mayor subject to the confirmation of the Council, shall appear before the proper standing committee to inform the committees recommendation.

All reappoints of the Mayor subject to the confirmation of the Council, shall appear before the proper standing committee at the request of any of the Committee members and with the approval of the Chair, to inform the committees recommendations.

Rule 39 All filings (legislative or otherwise), communications from the Mayor or other city officials, and reports from committees that may require action by the Council, must be in the hands of the City Clerk no later than close of business on the Wednesday prior to each regular full Council meeting, in order to comply with the Massachusetts Open Meeting requirement for all agendas to be posted 48 hours prior to the meeting. All filings from the Mayor or other city officials must include a written statement or memorandum detailing the intent of the filing and any impacts to the City's finances, if applicable. The City Clerk shall confirm the receipt of all filings by notifying the sponsor(s) via e-mail at the time of receipt.

Any subsequent written document independently submitted by the administration and/or department heads following the initial posting of the agenda shall be transmitted electronically to the Council or committee thereof at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting at which the matter is scheduled to be heard.

Rule 40 Whenever any filing by a member of the Council, the name of such member shall be designated thereon and be reflected on all agendas and reports related to the matter. The filer of any matter shall be listed first on all agendas followed by the names of any co-sponsors in the order that they appear in the original filing.

Rule 41 All correspondence from members of the public submitted in writing to the Council in connection with any scheduled agenda item or Order before the full Council or committee thereof shall be publicly available; such correspondence shall be automatically attached to the order in question by the City Clerk or Clerk of Committees

Rule 42 Ordinances of the city (and associated amendments) and appropriations shall be established by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all the members of the full Council (i.e. eight members), to be taken by a roll call vote. In the case of all other legislative matters, except as otherwise provided in the General Laws, or in the Revised Charter and Ordinances of the City of Melrose, the affirmative vote of a majority of all members of the full Council shall be necessary for passage at each debatable legislative stage.

Rule 43 Subject to the provisions of [§2-9\(b\)](#) of the City Charter, every legislative matter shall be read once when it is introduced and shall then be referred to its appropriate committee, unless, where appropriate, immediate consideration is requested. In the case of a request for immediate consideration, the legislative matter shall be at once considered, provided no councilor objects; and no motion shall be applied to any such matter when originally introduced until immediate consideration has been granted. It shall be the duty of the President to ask if there is objection before immediate consideration is given any matter, and upon objection the matter will be referred to the appropriate committee.

Rule 43A All matters involving the appropriation of moneys in the treasury not otherwise appropriated, the intra- and inter-departmental transfer of moneys from one account of the city to another, or otherwise affecting municipal finances, shall be referred to the Finance Committee. Intra-departmental transfers may occur at any point in the year and inter-departmental transfers may only occur in the last two (2) months of the fiscal year, until July 15. The provisions of this section shall not apply in the case of matters referred to the Appropriations & Oversight Committee.

Rule 44 Upon the report of a committee recommending the passage of any filing, the item shall be read a second time and be in order for a final action at the next full Council meeting. When a filing appears before the full Council with a recommendation from a committee that same day, it shall be placed on the following full Council meeting agenda, unless a Councilor makes a motion to immediately pull from committee. If that motion is seconded and approved by a simple majority of the Council, the order will be ready for final action at the meeting. If that motion fails, the order will be placed on the next full Council meeting agenda. Appropriations or appointments of city officials are not included in connection with the aforesaid.

Rule 44A When a matter is introduced to the full Council with a recommendation for passage from any standing or special committee, a period of discussion shall be in order before a Motion for Passage is entertained by the President.

Rule 45 All matters pertaining to amendments to the Rules of Order of the City Council, ordinances, and legal affairs shall be referred to the committee on Legal and Legislative Matters.

Rule 46 When amendments are recommended to the Council, the Clerk of Committees shall forward copies of any proposed changes to all members, and no amendment shall be in order for final passage until each member shall have received such copy.

Rule 47 When any matter has been rejected by the full Council, no measure embodying substantially the same subject shall be introduced by any committee or member within six (6) months of its previous rejection.

Rule 47A Any matter not acted upon by the Council or the appropriate committee within one (1) year of said matter being filed, shall be considered null and void and shall be removed from the calendar of the Clerk of Committees. Any matter considered null and void by operation of this rule shall not be subject to any refiling restriction of Rule 48.

Rule 48 Unless otherwise ordered, votes shall be taken orally. A roll call vote shall be taken upon request of five (5) or more councilors.

Rule 49 The Presiding Officer shall consider a motion to adjourn as always in order, except on immediate repetition. When a question before the Council or a Committee is under debate, the Presiding Officer shall entertain no motion except:

- To adjourn
- To lay on table
- For the previous question
- To postpone to a day certain
- To refer to a committee
- To amend
- To postpone indefinitely
- To recess

These motions shall be decided by a majority vote of those present and shall take precedence in the order in which they are arranged, and the first two shall be decided without debate.

Rule 50 On the following motions, the debate shall be limited to the time specified in each case:

- Roll call: no debate
- To adjourn: no debate
- To lay on table: no debate
- The previous question; to close debate; postpone to a day certain; to amend; to postpone indefinitely; to suspend the rules; to reconsider: three (3) minutes

of debate per councilor, but no longer than ten (10) minutes total.

Whenever, at any meeting, a question is laid on the table, it shall remain there until the close of the next regular meeting, if not taken up earlier; but, if it is not taken from the table at such next meeting, or earlier, the Clerk shall place the same in the files of the Council and shall make a record thereof in the minutes of such meeting and upon any paper relating to such question.

Rule 51 A question containing two or more propositions capable of division shall be divided whenever any member so requests and is confirmed by majority vote.

Rule 52 No motion or proposition of a subject different from that under consideration shall be admitted under the color of any amendment.

Rule 53 No vote on any of the following motions shall be reconsidered:

- To Adjourn
- To Lay on the Table
- To Take from the Table
- To the Previous Question
- To Reconsider

Rule 54 The final disposition of all filings for a given fiscal year shall be posted to the City Council section of the City's webpage by the City Clerk. The public posting of dispositions, hereinafter known as the Legislative Disposition List, shall include the following information for all disposed matters: 1) the title of the filing; 2) the filing number; 3) the name of the Councilor who sponsored the filing; 4) the names of any co-sponsors; 5) how each Councilor voted on the matter; 6) the outcome of the vote; and 7) the date of disposition. The Legislative Disposition List shall be maintained in the order that matters are disposed.

APPEAL

Rule 55 No appeal from any decision of the Presiding Officer shall be entertained unless it is duly seconded, and no other business shall be in order until the question on the appeal has been decided by a majority vote of the Council.

USE OF COUNCIL CHAMBER

Rule 56 The City Council shall have priority use of the Council Chamber, and the Council Committee Room. Any request to book either room in the evening shall be sent to the Clerk of Committees to confirm that there is no meeting taking place in that space.

CAUCUS & ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

Rule 57 The City Council shall, on the first Monday in December of each year, nominate a President for the ensuing year. Notice of the holding of the caucus shall be sent to each member qualified to vote therein not less than four (4) days before the date thereof.

Such Caucus shall be held in the Council Chamber; shall be called to order by the City Clerk and shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of the Council pertaining to the conduct of regular meetings. Notice of the Caucus shall be posted, and the Caucus shall be held in public session. Nominations, as aforesaid, shall be followed by a roll call vote, each member present answering to their name when called by the City Clerk, stating the name of the person for whom they vote, or that they decline to vote. The vote of the majority of all the members of the full Council shall be necessary to nominate a President.

The nomination of a President shall be a non-binding vote. The formal election of the President shall take place at the first meeting in January next following. Before a final vote commences, all nominees shall be required to make a public statement regarding their candidacy, at the first meeting in January, which shall not exceed five (5) minutes in length. The conduct of the election shall follow the process of the Caucus.

SUSPENSION OR AMENDMENT OF RULES

Rule 58 A rule may be suspended by an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Council present. When a motion to suspend a rule is made, the specific rule for which suspension is sought must be cited in the motion and the reason stated on the record. This does not apply to any rules related to items in the City's Charter, Administrative Code, and/or that are governed by Massachusetts General Law. Rules on Conduct and Decorum may also not be suspended.

Rule 58A Any rule may be amended or repealed by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Council, but the motion for such purpose shall not be made and acted upon at the same meeting. All motions for amendments to these rules shall be in writing and copies thereof shall be sent to each member by the City Clerk before final action thereon.

VACANCIES ON THE CITY COUNCIL

Rule 59 In the event the Council has a vacancy, for either a Councilor-at-Large or a Ward seat, they shall act in accordance with §2-11(a) and (b) of the City Charter.

If no such candidate exists for either position (in the manner provided in subsections (a) and (b) in §2-11) and/or is willing to serve, the procedure for filling such vacancy shall be as follows, and pursuant to §2-11(c):

1. Notice shall be given by immediate publication once in a newspaper of local circulation and for not less than two (2) weeks on the City's website homepage that the vacancy exists and that a placement is being sought.

2. Individuals interested in filling the vacancy (hereinafter “Applicants”) shall be requested to contact the Clerk of Committees. By the close of business two (2) weeks following publication in a newspaper of local circulation, Applicants shall submit a letter of intent and resume to the Clerk of Committees.
3. Applicants who have complied with Rule 61, Section 2 above shall be invited to a meeting of the full Council, at which time all applicants will be given an opportunity to address the Council. At that time, Applicants will be afforded up to ten (10) minutes to make a statement; and Councilors will have the opportunity to ask questions of the Applicants.
4. After all applicants have been given an opportunity to address the Council, an election shall be conducted.
5. To be eligible for election, an Applicant must have their name placed in nomination and must receive a second.
6. The voting shall be public with each member of the Council stating the name of the Applicant for whom they are voting.
7. The first Applicant to receive six (6) votes shall be elected pursuant to §2-11(c) of the City Charter.
8. If there is more than one Applicant and no Applicant receives six (6) votes on the first ballot, the two (2) individuals who receive the most votes shall move to a second ballot. The other Applicants shall be eliminated. In the event that there is a tie for either of the top two spots, any individual in such a tie shall move on to a second ballot.
9. If no Applicant receives six (6) votes after at least five (5) ballots, the Council may place the order on the table and continue with the process at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the full Council.

VIRTUAL MEETINGS & REMOTE PARTICIPATION

Rule 60 Pursuant to the supplemental budget bill signed into law by the Governor on March 29, 2023, temporary allowances pertaining to the Open Meeting Law have been extended through March 31, 2025. The two primary provisions allow for any or all members of a public body to participate in a meeting remotely (suspending the requirement a quorum of the body and chair be physically present at the meeting location), and public bodies may provide alternative means of public access to the public meeting rather than in a location physically accessible to the public. While these temporary provisions are still legally applicable to the Melrose City Council, members may request remote participation, or virtual meetings may be held subject to the procedures outlined below.

Rule 61 If a Councilor wishes to participate remotely in a Council or committee meeting, they shall notify the Presiding Officer of the body and the City Clerk or Clerk of Committees in writing four (4) hours prior to the meeting.

Rule 61A Remote participation by a Councilor is permitted if physical attendance would be unreasonably difficult. Examples of such difficulties may include, but are not limited to, personal or family illness/emergency, military service, business travel, or religious observances. Remote participation must be done from a quiet, private location that allows for clear video and audio feed.

Rule 61B Councilors cannot preside over a meeting remotely, unless the entire meeting is virtual.

Rule 61C Per Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, if any member of the public body is participating remotely, all votes of the body are required to be by roll call and the results of the roll must be recorded in the minutes.

Rule 62 With at least 48 business hours' notice, fully virtual meetings will be permitted at the discretion of the Presiding Officer of the body and pending a determination that a federal, state or city emergency would prohibit the safety of the council, administration and/or public to attend a meeting in person.

Rule 63 Members participating remotely, and all people present at the meeting location shall be clearly audible to each other at all times and have their cameras on. Councilors must utilize a video feed when participating in a virtual meeting. If a Councilor loses audio feed during a meeting, no vote shall occur on any matter until after such time that a recess has occurred to troubleshoot the problem. If the Councilor's audio feed has not been reestablished within fifteen (15) minutes of recessing, a simple majority of the members shall decide whether to proceed with a vote.

Rule 63A If the meeting is fully remote, and the City Clerk or Clerk of Committees loses audio feed during a meeting the committee, the President or the Presiding Officer shall call the roll and record all votes.

Rule 63B Members of the administration or other participants participating remotely shall be clearly audible to each other at all times. These remote participants must utilize a video feed. No member of the administration or other participant shall be admitted without the approval of the Presiding Officer. If a participant loses audio feed during a meeting, a recess shall be called to troubleshoot the problem. If the participant's audio feed has not been reestablished within fifteen (15) minutes of recessing, a simple majority of the members shall decide whether to proceed with the discussion and vote.

Rule 64 All public hearings shall be held during full city council meetings. Public hearings shall be set at a prior full city council meeting, where the matter will be voted on via immediate consideration for the purposes of setting a date and time for the hearing. Hearings shall provide for a presentation of the matter, councilor questions (if necessary), and public

comment. Written comments and materials may be submitted to the City Clerk by any interested individual concerning a public hearing matter for consideration, which shall become a part of the record for such item. Once the hearing is closed, no further submittals or information can be accepted and councilors can only deliberate amongst themselves and get limited clarifying information from staff. Should there be outstanding questions, or additional information is needed by Council that cannot be provided, the public hearing should be continued to a later date and time certain.