

Subject: Draft Minutes for special Willamette Neighborhood Meeting, July 31, 2023, This, plus the WNA resolution plus the organizational chart will all be included in the minutes packet.

The one topic discussed was the proposed changes to the City Council rules for all city meetings in regard to public comment as discussed at the July 17, 2023, CC Work session.

President Kathie Halicki reviewed 10 rule changes that would affect our WNA members: Meeting notice would reduce from 10 days to 6, document deadline reduced, spoken comments would reduce from 5 to 3 minutes, Comments emailed would not be added to the agenda, written comments would no longer be read into the minutes, reduction from 10 to 5 minutes for NA presidents to speak, minutes of Citizen Advisory Boards will need to be written and also recorded. These are just a few of the changes in the proposal.

WNA members realize that public comments can take a substantial amount of time. In the name of transparency and citizen rights as citizens of West Linn and of the WNA, WNA voted to adopt and make additions to the SONA resolution, dated September 5, 2023.

Julia Simpson moved, and Mikail Gerba seconded a motion to adopt the SONA resolution. Yes 14, No 0, Abstain 0

A discussion followed about adding some recommendations. It was noted that "West Linn Community" sits at the top of the city organizational chart.

Kathie Selvaggio moved, and Rosie seconded that we add the recommendations to the SONA resolution Yes 14, No 0, abstain 0.

See the resolution concerning public comments in the following pages.

Respectfully submitted by

Julia Simpson

RESOLUTION

Willamette Neighborhood Association

July 31, 2023

WHEREAS the members of the Willamette Neighborhood Association (WNA) reviewed the West Linn City Council Agenda for the July 17, 2023, Special Meeting and Work Session and read the proposed Changes to Council Rules under item 9 (c) of the agenda; and

WHEREAS the members of WNA also reviewed the included Organizational Chart of the City of West Linn and found that the Citizens of West Linn are listed at the

top of that chart above both the Mayor and City Council and the staff of this city; and

WHEREAS the Mayor and City Council candidates that have now become the Mayor and City Councilors all campaigned on transparency and citizen input being important to the proper functioning of the City of West Linn; and

WHEREAS the City Council Home Page on the City's Website has as its opening statement: "Council is always open to hearing from citizens on topics and issues of importance to them."; and

WHEREAS the above-referenced proposed changes to Council Rules do not further transparency and citizen input but instead lessen them in the following areas:

- **Section C #3 Agenda** — Decreases from 10 days to only 6 days ahead of the City Council meetings for the staff "striving" to publish the agenda and packets for the next City Council Meeting and that items can be added after publishing the agenda, thus making it harder for citizens to know what will be heard at the City Council meetings and to get their testimony properly prepared.
- **Section C #19 General Public Comment** — Public comments will not be taken on specific agenda items. Consequently, all comments will be heard during General Comment time.
- **Section C #19 General Public Comment** — Decreases the number of minutes that members of the public can speak on an agenda item from 5 minutes down to 3 minutes thereby lessening the amount of public input.
- **Section C #21b Written Comments, Documents, and Testimony Forms** — Written comments submitted two business days before the meeting will no longer be placed on the agenda.
- **Section C #21b Written Comments, Documents, and Testimony Forms** — States that written testimony and documents must be submitted to the City Recorder by 4 pm two business days before the meeting. With the proposed 6-day instead of 10-day time frame for the publishing of the agenda discussed above, it means that the public will have only two days to submit a comment to be included in the agenda and packets. Most local

cities do not have a deadline. Forest Grove's is 3 pm on the day of the meeting.

- **Section C #21d Written Comments, Documents, and Testimony Forms** — Written comments will no longer be read into the record.
- **Section C #22 Neighborhood Association Advisory Group Comments** — Decreases the number of minutes designated representatives of the Neighborhood Associations can speak from ten minutes down to five minutes thereby lessening the amount of Neighborhood Association input.
- **Section H #4 Minutes of Community Advisory Group Meetings** — Proposes that written minutes of citizen community advisory group meeting will be the official permanent record of CAGs and will be taken by the staff liaison and if not available, the Chair or their designated substitute. However, citizen community advisory groups shall also provide an audio recording of their meetings and that will only be retained for 1 year after approval of the written minutes thereby decreasing the historical record easily available to the public.

NOW, THEREFORE, WILLAMETTE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION RESOLVES THAT:

Section 1. WNA is opposed to the eight specific sections of the proposed changes to the Council Rules that are listed above, and;

Section 2. WNA respectfully requests that the Mayor and City Council do not approve the eight sections described in detail above to not decrease the transparency and citizen participation afforded to the citizens of West Linn. The citizens have worked hard for decades with previous City Councils to demonstrate a high value for community involvement.

IN ADDITION, WNA INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Consider scheduling two business meetings per month as needed so that meetings do not go past 9:30pm.
2. Time for public comments should be available in person at the beginning of a meeting, during a hearing on a particular topic, and online.

3. Revisit City Council Rules restricting Councilors from engaging with people who make public comments. It would be helpful to at least acknowledge the effort people have made to write and speak during public testimony.
4. Read public comments sent in a letter or email form into the meeting minutes.
5. Do not reduce the deadline for people to write or email their comments before a meeting.
6. How will the City Council help people with disabilities? Some may need more time to express their thoughts.
7. We see the City Charter, Chapter VIII. Section 33 requires ordinances be available to the Council and the public 7 days prior to the meeting to approve an ordinance.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2023

AYE _____ NO _____ ABSTAIN _____

Kathie Halicki, President

Willamette Neighborhood Association

