



CITY OF HOUSTON – CITY COUNCIL

Meeting Date: 5/27/25

Item Creation Date: 4/28/25

Proposition A Council Member Item: Evening Public Session

Summary: ORDINANCE to allow evening and optional offsite Public Session hearings once a month.

Background: Currently, for the public to give input to their local government, they must come to City Council chambers on Tuesday afternoons. To improve access for residents who are unable to attend daytime Public Session hearings, these sessions need to be held in the evening. Evening Public Session meetings may have a District Council Member, on a rotating basis, opting to host an off-site public session at a community-based facility within their district.

Specific Explanation: This Ordinance is to allow the Public Session to occur in the evening at city council chambers the final scheduled hearing of each month at 6 pm instead of 2 pm. A District Council Member may choose to hold this meeting in a location in one of the council districts instead of city council chambers. The district council member would incur all costs of holding this offsite meeting. This offsite Public Session hearing would take place at a City of Houston or comparable facility that is community-based such as a multi-service center, library, or community center, and rotate each month by council district, starting with District A and proceeding alphabetically to K.

Proposal: Section 2-2

Rule 1 (a) shall be replaced with the following:

The city council shall conduct its regular weekly meeting in two daily sessions commencing at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday and at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, respectively, of each calendar week. Each session shall be conducted in the city council chamber unless another place in the City Hall is designated by the city council. The final Tuesday session of each month shall take place at 5:30 p.m. On a rotating basis, alphabetically from district A to K, a district council member may choose a location in one of the council member districts and shall rotate in alphabetical order from district A to K. A district council member may choose to hold the final Tuesday session at a location in their respective districts. If the council member assigned to hold the final Tuesday session elects not to do so offsite, the session will be held in city council chambers. Meetings shall recess at the times provided in Rule 7 and shall be subject to recess at other times as provided in subsection c, below. No notice shall be required to be given to any member of any recessed meeting. In the event that Tuesday or Wednesday, or both, of any calendar week falls on a holiday observed by the closure of city offices, then the regular weekly meeting sessions shall be rescheduled or consolidated as determined by the city council. The city council may consolidate daily sessions or reschedule any weekly meeting or daily session thereof to other days and times in the same calendar week and may for valid reasons postpone any regular weekly meeting or daily session to another week.

Rule 8 (a) shall be replaced with the following:

Any citizen of the city shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at all regular and special meetings of the city council in regard to any and all matters to be considered at such meetings that are germane and relevant to any subject matter of city affairs or business that is within the scope of the authority and legislative functions of the city council. Such appearances by members of the public shall be scheduled to begin at 2:00 p.m. at the Tuesday session of the regular meetings of city council. The last Tuesday session of each month shall be scheduled for 6:00 p.m. The mayor, mayor pro tem, or other presiding officer shall at all times be responsible for conducting the meeting and maintaining proper order and decorum. Any council member shall have the privilege of raising a point of order as to whether the subject matter to be heard and considered as presented by a citizen is germane and relevant to any subject matter of city affairs or business that is to be considered by city council.

Requests to appear shall be made to the office of the city secretary, and may be made in person or by mail, email, fax, or telephone, provided that the request is received before the scheduled time of commencement of the city council meeting session at which public appearances will be heard. Each speaker shall provide his or her name, street address, mailing address (if different), telephone number, and a brief description (not to exceed ten words) of the intended subject matter of the citizen's remarks. The speaker's street address, mailing address (if different), and telephone number is for internal, administrative use only by city council, the city secretary's office, and city departments, and shall not be disclosed publicly, except as required by law. Speakers who have not appeared at any of the four preceding regular city council meetings shall also state whether they wish to limit their remarks to one, two or three minutes.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mario Castillo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mario Castillo
District H Council Member
Houston City Council