

Rules of the Board of Alders.

(Approved by the Board of Alders July 2, 2001)

Last amended March,2015 (Sec. 47)

SECTION 1. The President shall take the chair at the hour appointed for the meeting and call the members to order if a quorum* be present. The President shall then call for the approval of the Journal of the preceding meeting, the invocation of Divine Guidance, and proceed to business.

SECTION 2. The President shall preserve order and decorum, may speak to points of order in preference to other members, and shall decide all such questions, subject to an appeal to the Board by motion regularly seconded; and no other business shall be in order until the question on the appeal shall have been decided. The President shall also appoint all committees unless the Board shall otherwise direct.

SECTION 3. When a question is under debate, the President shall receive no motion, but to adjourn, to lay on the table, for the previous question, to postpone to a certain day, to commit, to amend or to postpone indefinitely, which several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are stated herein. The President shall declare all votes, but if a vote were doubted the President shall order a return of the number voting in the affirmative and in the negative without further debate.

SECTION 4. The President may call any member to the chair for a period of time not extending beyond an adjournment, and when out of the chair the President may participate in any debate, but shall not resume the chair while the same question is pending; and on going into a Committee of the Whole the President shall appoint a Chair.

SECTION 5. Questions shall be propounded in the order in which they are moved, unless the subsequent motion be previous in its nature; except that in naming sums and fixing times, the largest sum and the longest time shall be put first.

SECTION 6. After a motion is stated by President, it shall be disposed of by the vote of the Board, unless withdrawn by the mover, with the consent of the Board, before an amendment or decision.

SECTION 7. A motion to adjourn shall always be in order; provided that the presiding officer states, "unless there is any further business that may properly come before the Board, I shall entertain a motion to adjourn," and the motion to lay on the table, shall be decided without debate.

* "A majority of all the members of said Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business." (Charter, Sec. 39).

SECTION 8. The previous question shall be in this form: "I move the previous question." To succeed it must be seconded and receive an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present, and, until it is decided, shall preclude all amendments and debate of

the main question. After the adoption of the previous question, the sense of the Board shall **forthwith** be taken upon all pending amendments, and then upon the main question. Should the motion for the previous question be decided in the negative, the status of the main question shall be the same as before the previous question had been called for.

SECTION 9. Every motion except those relating to procedure shall be reduced to writing and submitted to each Board member before presentation.

SECTION 10. A motion to reconsider a vote shall be in order only at the same meeting or at the regularly scheduled meeting next succeeding that at which the vote was passed, and such motion shall not be entertained unless made and seconded by member voting with the majority of, in the case of an ordinance, the prevailing side. When a motion to reconsider a vote is made at the same meeting at which it was passed, its consideration shall be postponed until the next regularly scheduled meeting, provided one-fourth of the members voting shall so require, and provided further, that no action of the Board upon a motion to reconsider a vote upon an incidental or subsidiary question shall remove the main subject under consideration from before it. When a motion for reconsideration is decided, that decision shall not be reconsidered. The motion to “postpone until the next regularly scheduled meeting,” and the consideration of a motion to reconsider a vote, shall not be debated.

SECTION 11. Every amendment shall be germane to the main motion.

SECTION 12. All questions shall be divided when the sense will admit of it, by the President at **their** discretion, or if called for by any member of the Board.

SECTION 13. At each regular meeting of the Board the order of business shall be as follows:

1. Roll Call of Members
2. Divine Guidance – Moment of Meditation.
3. Approval of the Journal of the preceding Board meeting.
4. Nominations and Elections.
5. Unanimous Consent Items
6. Communications and Petitions
7. First Readings
8. Second Readings with Committee Reports
9. Such other business as may be necessary.
10. Suspension of Section 24-1-A, if necessary

SECTION 14: All points of order, or procedure, not to otherwise provided for, shall be determined by “Roberts’s Rules of Order, Revised.”

SECTION 15: In all votes expressing anything by way of command, the form shall be “ordered” (except in the case of ordinances); and in expressing opinions, principle, facts, or purposes, the forms shall be “resolved”.

SECTION 16. Whenever the Mayor shall, as required by law, submit any nomination for approval of the Board of Alders, the appropriate committee of the Board shall hold a hearing on such nomination for the purpose of ascertaining the qualifications of the nominee. No such nomination shall be acted upon until the nominee shall have appeared at a hearing of such committee.

SECTION 17. When a member is about to speak in debate, the member shall seek recognition and respectfully address the presiding officer; and upon being recognized the member shall stand and shall confine comment to the question under debate and avoid personalities or imputing to any member improper motives. When two or more members seek recognition at the same time, the President shall name the member who is to speak first.

SECTION 18. No member shall be mentioned in debate by name but may be referred to by such designation as will be intelligible and respectful.

SECTION 19. No member speaking shall be interrupted by another, but by a point of order. If any member, in speaking or otherwise, transgress the rules of the Board, the Chair shall, or any member may, call to order, in which case the member so called to order shall sit down, unless permitted to explain. Where there is an appeal to the Board, and decision in favor of the member called to order, that member shall be at liberty to proceed; if otherwise, that member shall not be permitted to proceed without leave of the President.

SECTION 20. No person shall speak more than once on a question to the prevention of any other whom has not spoken, not more than twice without the consent of the President; and all questions relating to priority of business shall be taken without debate.

SECTION 21. On all questions and motions whatsoever, the President shall take the sense of the Board by roll call, provided one-fifth of the members present should so require.

SECTION 22. Every member, who shall be present when a question is put, vote, unless the President of the Board, for special reason excuses such member, or unless the member's private interest is involved therein.

SECTION 23. Upon the passage of any order or resolution or granting of any petition whereby the Charter of said City, the unanimous consent of the Board is necessary, an entry of the fact the unanimous consent was obtained shall be made upon such order, resolution, or petition.

SECTION 24. The following procedures shall be followed from the submission until the final disposition of all matters which come before the New Haven Board of Alders, provided, however, that nothing herein shall be construed to conflict with the provisions of the Charter of the City of New Haven.

1) All items to be submitted to the Board of Alders must:

- (a) Be submitted in complete documentary form to Office of the City Clerk no later than 12 noon of the fourth business day before the next regular meeting or in the case of special Board meetings, in accordance with Freedom of Information (FOI) requirements, except as allowed in Subsection (d) below; and
 - (b) Be accompanied by a standard form which indicates that the sponsoring City agency has informed the member representing said ward(s) of the item prior to its formal consideration by any City agency if the item relates to real estate development, tax abatements, appointments to city boards and commissions, public property, city services, city infrastructure or tax-exempt property; and
 - (c) Be listed by title in the section titled “Communications,” of the printed agenda of said meeting; be distributed to each member with the agenda on which it is a Communication item; and be read out or noted in summary form publicly at said regular or special meeting.
 - (d) When suspension of Rule 24-1-a is sought, a written statement on a form provided by the Office of Legislative Services justifying the need shall accompany said item(s). All items submitted for Unanimous Consent (U.C) for immediate consideration for the suspension agenda shall be reviewed by the Board of Alders leadership, and on the unanimous decision of the President (or President Pro Tempore), Majority Leader (or Deputy Majority Leader), and Minority Leader (or Deputy Minority Leader), that an item is not of true emergency nature, it may be withheld from the U.C section of the Suspension Agenda. Any such U.C items not determined to be of bona fide emergency nature will be listed in the “Communications” section of the suspension agenda unless the President places the item or items on the agenda as a first reading, pursuant to authority granted under Section 24(2) . Items to be submitted by suspension of Rule 24-1-a shall be entered on a “Suspension Agenda,” and both the Suspension and Regular Agendas shall be made available at said meeting. (NOTE: The waiver may be in the form “I move the Suspension of Rule 24-1-a”)
- 2) Upon submission of an item, the President of the Board of Alders may refer said item to the appropriate Aldermanic Committee for public hearing and committee deliberation. Upon completion of its deliberations, the committee shall report the matter back to the full Board with any committee recommendations. The President of the Board may waive the committee referral and deem the submission of an item as its first reading.
 - 3) The full Board shall not debate and vote on any item until the item has received a first and second reading subsequent to the committee hearing, except in the case of an item given first reading status by the President without committee referral, unless, in accordance with Section 41 of the New Haven Charter, the Mayor certifies the matter as an emergency.
 - 4) An Agenda with Unanimous Consent items, communications, first readings and second reading notices, must be mailed out by [electronic mail](#) to each individual alder no later

than 5 p.m on the second day prior to the regular meeting or in the case of special meetings in accordance with State FOI requirements.

- 5) No matter may be voted upon unless it is printed in the Aldermanic journal available to the alders prior to the commencement of said meeting.
- 6) A request for immediate consideration of an item shall be construed to be a request for a waiver of Subsections One through Five of this Section and shall be granted only by unanimous consent of the members of the Board of Alders present at the meeting, provided that such request shall be accompanied by the presentation to each individual alder of the matter to be considered along with a statement justifying for circumventing the normal legislative process. Such items may be added to the Suspension Agenda at the discretion of the President. In accordance with Freedom of Information requirements on such Special Meetings, no Unanimous Consent items may be considered unless they appear on the posted agenda of said special meetings.

SECTION 25. The usual manner for the denial of unanimous consent for immediate consideration shall be for any member in opposition to the motion to stand.

SECTION 26. The vote on every ordinance shall be taken by roll call.

SECTION 27. At the commencement of the municipal year, the following Standing Committees shall be appointed:

- (1) Aldermanic Affairs - to consider matters relating to the functioning of the Board, its structure, and procedures, and it shall have jurisdiction to investigate, make findings of fact and recommendation with respect to alleged conflict of interest in the government of the City of New Haven. To review and recommend to the Board, after proper hearing, mayoral nominations to boards and commissions as may be required.
- (2) Community Development - to consider matters relating to housing, building, and community development.
- (3) Education Committee - to consider matters relating to educational programs and facilities and associated services.
- (4) Finance Committee - to consider the financial matters of the city, including the capital projects budget, special revenue funds, general fund appropriations, revenues, taxes, transfers and all other related items. This committee shall consist of seven to eleven members.
- (5) Health and Human Services Committee - to consider matters relating to health, manpower, welfare, and other human service programs.
- (6) Legislation Committee - to consider matters relating to the introduction, revision, and/or repeal of provisions of the City Charter, the Code of General Ordinances and any matters relating to zoning and general law.

(7) City Services and Environmental Policy Committee - to consider all of the matters of municipal services provided by the City not specifically assigned to another Standing Committee.

(8) Public Safety Committee – to consider matters relating to public safety, police and fire issues in New Haven including drug-related violence and ways to stem substance abuse.

(9) Tax Abatement – to consider matters relating to the abatement or deferral of taxes.

(10) Youth Services Committee – to consider legislation and matters related to provision of services related to youth.

Each standing Committee shall consist of five to seven members except as noted as above. The composition of standing committees shall reflect insofar as possible the composition of the Board of Alders as a whole with regard to political party affiliation.

In the event that there is less than a quorum of committee present, the Chair of the Committee may designate such other member or members of the Board of Alders to fill the quorum. Said appointees shall be members of the committee and shall participate in that particular hearing before the committee. Any member who is designated by the Chair, shall be allowed to vote during the committee meeting. If regular members of the standing committee arrive in such number so as to surpass the full complement of the committee roster, a waiver of Section 27, 2nd paragraph, of these rules shall become effective for that meeting.

Members of the Board of Alders who are not members of the committee shall be allowed to sit with the committee during the public portion of the meeting and at the discretion of the Chair, to ask questions of the testifiers. Once these non-members are allowed to sit they cannot be removed by the Chair before the end of the public portion of the meeting.

Regular members of the committee shall be allowed to deliberate and vote on any matter before the committee regardless of whether said committee member was absent from the hearings or previous deliberation on said matters.

SECTION 28. No Committee shall sit during a meeting of the Board without special permission. No more than one committee or joint committee may meet on the same day unless approval for multiple committee or joint committee meetings on that day is granted in advance by a majority of the President, President Pro Tempore, and Majority Leader.

SECTION 29: The rules and procedure of the Board shall be observed in the Committee of the Whole as far as they may be applicable, except the rule limiting the number of times speaking.

SECTION 30: When a Committee is appointed by the President, the first person named shall be the chair. The second person named shall be the vice chair. The other members shall act as chair in the order named.

SECTION 31: It shall be the duty of every committee on the Board, to whom any subject be referred, to report thereon within one month, or ask further time.

SECTION 32: No Committee shall act by separate consultation, and no reports except minority reports shall be received, unless they shall have been agreed to in Committees actually assembled.

SECTION 33: All Committees shall submit their reports in writing, accompanied by a form of such order or resolution as they may recommend for the action of the Board. Upon the reading of report, if no motion is made, the question shall always be upon the order or resolution, if any, reported by the Committees and when that question is disposed of, upon the acceptance of the report. Resolutions or orders reported by a Committee may be recommitted, together with the report, at any time, before executive action.

SECTION 34: The Clerk of the Board shall keep, in books provided by the City for that purpose, records of all the proceedings of all Committees.

SECTION 35: In the absence of the Clerk of the Board or the inability of the Clerk to act, the presiding officer shall designate some member of the Board to act as clerk Pro Tempore.

SECTION 36. The Clerk of the Board shall, upon the passage of any ordinance, order, or resolution, note thereon the day when such ordinance, order, or resolution passed.

SECTION 37. The Clerk shall, within two days after the appointment of any special Committee, give written notice by mail or otherwise, to each member of the Committee.

SECTION 38. The clerk shall notify all the members of the Board of all public hearings held by the various committees of the Board.

SECTION 39. No rule or standing order of the Board shall be suspended unless two-thirds of the members present consent thereto; or shall any rule, or standing order be repealed or amended, unless notice of the proposed repeal or amendment was given at the preceding meeting, nor unless a majority of the whole Board concur therein.

SECTION 40. On February 1st of every year, each member of the Board of Alders shall file with the City clerk for publication of the Aldermanic Journal and with the Board of Ethics of the City of New Haven, a disclosure of financial interests listing all direct and indirect financial interests which the alder or the alder's spouse,

children, parents, brothers or sisters have in any firm or organization (excluding publicly held corporations) transacting business with the City of New Haven during the alder's term of office.

SECTION 41. Before every regular Board of Alders meeting, and at the discretion of the President and Majority Leader before special meeting, there shall be an informational meeting starting no earlier than one hour before the regular or special meeting, which shall have the following agenda and shall be chaired by the Majority Leader: (1) review of the meeting's outline; (2) explanation of the Unanimous Consent items as needed; (3) testimony from non-aldermen only by request of individual aldermen and permission of the Chair and the committee chair of jurisdiction; and (4) reports from Aldermanic representatives to various boards and commissions. Said meetings shall comply with all Freedom of Information regulations.

SECTION 42. The Board shall use a consent calendar as follows:

- (1) For inclusion on the regular agenda for each regular Board of Alders Meeting, the Majority Leader, Minority Leader and President shall publicly identify those matters to be considered by the Board, which, in their judgement, do not require discussion on the floor of the Board. Such items shall include, but need not be limited to, ceremonial and congratulatory resolutions and committee reports of non-controversial nature. Suspension of Rule 24 items may be added to the consent calendar prior to the beginning of the meeting.
- (2) Upon the stated objections of any member, any item on the consent Calendar shall be excluded from the coverage of this rule and will be acted upon in the usual fashion at the same meeting.
- (3) Any item on the consent calendar shall not be debated or discussed on the Floor of the Board. Any member desiring to make remarks relative to any such item shall submit such remarks, in writing, to the City Clerk prior to the conclusion of the meeting. Such remarks shall be printed in the journal, in full, as if they had been made on the floor of the Board.
- (4) If any item on the consent calendar pursuant to this rule requires the unanimous consent of the Board or Suspension of Rule 24, such consent or suspension shall be obtained prior to the motion discussed in paragraph 5.
- (5) The Majority Leader shall make a motion in the following (or a substantially similar) form: "I move the passage of all Rule 42 items. " Such motion shall not be debatable. If such motion is duly seconded and passed by a majority of the aldermen present and voting, the effect, shall be to approve each item which has been so identified and for which unanimous consent or suspension of Rule 24, if necessary, has been obtained.

- (6) This Rule 42 shall not apply to any ordinance.
- (7) It is the intent of the foregoing to expedite the passage of ceremonial and congratulatory resolutions and other non-controversial items without debate or discussion on the floor of the Board. This rule shall be construed and applied in accordance with such intent.

SECTION 43. Alders may sponsor ceremonial and memorial citations by written request to the President of the Board who shall cause appropriate standard citations to be issued. In addition, alders may choose to submit their own ceremonial resolutions in final form to the President for issuance without full Board approval. The President may reject citation requests when he deems full Board approval is required and shall forward such resolutions to the Board of Alders for action. A list of all citations shall be printed in the Aldermanic journal.

SECTION 44. No committee meeting shall be held without the notice and agenda of said meeting being filed in the Office Legislative Services by 5 p.m. six (6) business days prior to the meeting. A summary notice and agenda shall be published at least at least four (4) business days prior to the meeting on the city's website and when practicable or required in a local newspaper of general circulation inclusive of online newspapers. The above two requirements may be waived in the event that the President of the Board declares in writing that an emergency exists, or if the meeting is a workshop. All meetings shall conform to the requirements of law with regard to notice of public meetings.

SECTION 45. Except for emergency meetings, hearings or workshops declared in writing by the President of the Board: (a) all committee meetings of the Board of Alders shall begin no earlier than 5:30 p.m. and no additional agenda items shall be considered after 12 midnight of the same day; and (b) no public hearing or meeting or workshop shall be held on City holidays or between sundown Friday and sundown Saturday or before 4:00 p.m. on Sunday.

The space selected for public hearings and meetings shall be adequate to accommodate all participants.

SECTION 46. A workshop is a Board or committee meeting called for discussion purposes. Testimony may be taken at a workshop at the discretion of the chair. Matters referred to a committee may not be voted or referred to the Board in a workshop. Workshops are open to the public, however testimony by persons other than Board members may only be heard at the request of the committee. Any committee meeting may begin as a workshop if fewer members than constitute a quorum are present.

SECTION 47. A) No person may hold the position of chair of a particular committee of the Board of Alders for more than three consecutive terms at a time. No member appointed by the President may serve as the aldermanic representative or member on a city board or commission for more that six consecutive years at a

time. The provision may be waived if necessary to comply with minority party representation requirements.

B) Pursuant to Article IV Sec. 2. A. of the Charter, in the absence of minority party representation on the Board of Alders, the Board shall elect a third officer to perform the functions of the Minority Leader; and select an officer to serve in lieu of a representative of a minority party on any board or commission which requires said appointment; however, said appointment shall not circumvent the provisions of the General Statutes or the Charter pertaining to minority party representation. “

Section 48. Guidelines for Aldermanic Conduct

The following guidelines shall apply in regulating the conduct of members toward each other, particularly at Board of Alders meetings and Committee meetings. It is recognized that every effort should be made to resolve such instances of alleged disorderly behavior by an Alder through quiet and informal means. However, gross failures to conduct oneself within these guidelines may be cited as grounds for holding a member in contempt of the Board of Alders for interfering with a specific colleague or the entire body's ability to discharge its legislative duties.

A member of the Board shall:

- (A) refrain from speaking or acting, by oneself or in concert with others, in a manner which disturbs, obstructs or interferes in any way with the performance of another member's sworn legislative duties;
- (B) fully cooperate in both word, action, and spirit with the will of the Board and the Committee in making all efforts to see that the meeting is conducted in a civil, decent, and respectful way that brings honor to the body and allows it to conduct its business in a courteous, efficient, parliamentary manner;
- (C) only speak when recognized by the presiding officer, shall be germane and confine remarks strictly to the matter under debate, shall follow the rules of discourse as stated in the existing Rules of the Board, and shall promptly cease any and all debate of a matter when such debate has been concluded and the matter has been disposed of by the body;
- (D) acknowledge and obey all directives and minor reprimands made or upheld by the President or Committee Chair as a “point of order,” and shall abide without further discussion or complaint after losing an appeal to the full Board or Committee;
- (E) accept any punishment for grievous disorderly behavior, including reprimand, the demand of an apology, expulsion from a meeting, suspension or expulsion from the Board or Committee, as acted upon and approved by the full body;

- (F) show the utmost courtesy and respect to other colleagues and staff, as well as to all witnesses and members of the public in attendance, neither insulting witnesses nor mistreating them in any way;
- (G) not act in such a way as to inflict or in any way cause physical harm or to threaten bodily harm or any type of retribution or intimidation through use of menacing language or action;
- (H) not engage in violent, tumultuous, threatening, or deceitful or fraudulent language or behavior;
- (I) not cast personal insults, racial or religious epithets or any other derogatory remark, slur, or falsehood which in any way attempts to impugn the character, personality, or motives of a colleague;
- (J) not speak in abusive, improper, or obscene language or make any obscene or improper gesture; and
- (K) not make unreasonable noise or by intention distract or harass another.

In accordance with Section 2 of the Rules of the Board which authorizes the President to preserve order and decorum, speak to “points of order” regarding other members, and decide all such questions, a colleague who alleges a gross violation of the above specified Aldermanic conduct guidelines shall transmit this matter to the President; once this allegation is received, the President is empowered to take all appropriate steps to ensure that such transgression is properly handled by the legislative body, which may invoke sanctions such as reprimand, suspension or expulsion.