



City Council Rules Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2025
City Council Chambers
37 Green Street
3:30 PM

1. Call to Order

Chair Kretovic called the meeting to order at 3:32 PM.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chair Jennifer Kretovic, Councilor Amanda Grady Sexton, Councilor Karen McNamara, Councilor Brent Todd

Excused: Councilor Paula McLaughlin

Also Present: Acting City Solicitor John Conforti.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Councilor Todd moved approval of the February 3, 2025, Meeting Minutes. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor McNamara, and passed with no dissenting votes.

4. Meeting Overview

Chair Kretovic reviewed the items for discussion which included the proposed financial disclosure form, and the items for consideration regarding language in the rules.

Chair Kretovic removed item #7 from the agenda as the City Council had already approved the measure.

5. Review of Proposed Financial Disclosure Form

Chair Kretovic reviewed the Financial Disclosure Form, indicating that Acting Solicitor Conforti had recommended one change in the first paragraph, by

changing the language to “disclosures may be limited to employers, businesses and organizations that might reasonably in the future enter into a relationship or a transaction with the City.”

Acting City Solicitor Conforti indicated that the term “*reasonably*” was used because unforeseen circumstances can arise. The original language required disclosure of anyone in your family or business relationships, but there are cases where certain individuals or entities would never realistically enter into an agreement with Concord. Using “*reasonably foreseeable*” is intended to cover those situations without being overly broad. However, we could consider changing the language to “*potentially*” if that provides better clarity.

Councilor Todd asked if there is any guidance on the obligation, especially if a member had already filled out the disclosure form.

Acting City Solicitor Conforti noted that there is currently no formal guidance and reminded the Committee that participation is voluntary. The goal is to promote transparency around reasonably foreseeable conflicts. Members can provide updates to Council as needed, since conflict of interest rules still apply. The language aims to acknowledge that some conflicts may not be immediately apparent but can be disclosed if they arise later.

After a brief discussion around the language, Acting City Solicitor Conforti suggested he could add language to convey that they are asking individuals to put in their best effort.

Councilor Grady Sexton inquired if they should change the title to Voluntary Financial Interest Disclosure Form.

Chair Kretovic agreed and emphasized that the form does not preclude a member from making a verbal disclosure of a conflict of interest during a meeting, when appropriate. Chair Kretovic asked whether the phrase “in the interest of transparency” could be softened.

There was consensus to have Acting City Solicitor Conforti add the recommended language as discussed and then move the draft along to City Council.

- 6. Further discussion regarding Board of Ethics report accepted by City Council October on October 15, 2024; together with Board of Ethics September 16, 2024 Meeting Minutes.**

The Committee discussed the report and the recommended changes in the language from “innocent” to “no finding.” The discussion then focused on streamlining the ethics complaint process by providing guidance to individuals submitting complaints. It was suggested that a standardized form, including specific details such as the date, time, location, and nature of the allegation, would help ensure that the reviewing committee has sufficient information to engage in a robust and informed discussion on whether the matter could be considered a potential violation.

The Committee had a lengthy discussion around allegations, including ones that may involve confidential or highly sensitive matters, such as harassment, or may ultimately be deemed non-relevant, such as cases not brought in good faith. There was consensus emphasizing the importance of having a process in place to appropriately review and address potentially unwarranted claims.

Acting City Solicitor Conforti indicated that establishing a staging process to vet complaints would require an ordinance change.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding how complaints are reviewed, the criteria for determining their validity, and what types of allegations warrant Ethics Board review. The Committee considered whether a subcommittee should be established to vet complaints prior to them becoming public, in order to protect both the accused and the accuser. Members also discussed whether the existing 45-day deadline to hold a meeting after a complaint is filed would allow sufficient time for such a pre-review, noting that achieving a quorum can already be challenging within the current timeline.

Acting City Solicitor Conforti suggested the rules could potentially be amended to allow for a longer review period, which would include time for a preliminary review of the complaint.

The Committee then briefly discussed whether there should be statutes of limitations on allegations, in order to balance transparency versus protecting people from unwarranted targeting or baseless claims.

Acting City Solicitor Conforti indicated that he would draft a conceptual vetting process, noting that while it would not set the highest threshold, it would aim to filter out complaints that do not articulate a valid claim. He also stated that the draft would address confidentiality considerations and include a possible statute of

limitations. In addition, he will prepare a draft of potential ordinance language to support the proposed process.

7. **Discussions about potential changes to the Board of Ethics Ordinance.**
 - **Potential expansion of the Committee to add two alternative positions. One to be appointed by the City Manager and one to be appointed by the Mayor.**

Previously approved by City Council.

8. **Items to be Considered Regarding the Amendment of Council Rules/Ethics Ordinance.**

Chair Kretovic then reviewed the proposed language changes to the Rules of the City Council Ordinance:

- Section 5 – All comments shall be limited to the public hearing agenda item pending before the City Council.

The Committee reviewed the Mayor's role in managing public comments by directing speakers to address the specific agenda item, while also discussing the balance between freedom of speech and relevancy to the City. There was consensus on adding the proposed language.

- Section 6B – Adding “or the full extent of the conflict as may be permissible in the event said interest is of confidential nature,” and “whether the councilor has a conflict of interest which prohibits him or her from voting on the issue under consideration. When a conflict of interest is determined to exist, the member having a conflict of interest shall be prohibited from participating in the discussion and vote on the issue.”

The Committee discussed that there may be instances where a councilor may state that they have a conflict, but they may not want to expound on what that conflict is for privacy reasons. The Committee also considered situations where a member of the Council requests that a councilor recuses themselves due to a perceived conflict of interest. They also discussed adding clarifying language to outline the process, with the Mayor making an initial ruling, followed by a majority vote to determine whether recusal is warranted.

- Section 15 – “The Council may act upon an item if it was not filed in advance by suspending the Council Rules in accordance with Section 19.”

The Committee discussed that this amendment is to address items pulled from the Consent Agenda. When a councilor wants to then make a motion to reconsider an item that had not been filed, with nothing noticed, that the item would need to put on Suspense first.

- Section 21 – “The Mayor shall be authorized to establish ad-hoc and standing City Council committees for the purpose of advising and making recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on various topics. Appointments to these committees shall be the duty and responsibility of the Mayor.”

The Committee held a discussion on the creation of ad-hoc committees, noting that the purpose of this language was to make improvements by possibly adding a formal approval process. The Committee agreed to carry the item to the next meeting for further discussion, and to ask the Mayor for his perspective on the subject.

Councilor Todd moved to accept the amendments to Council Rules and Ethics Rules. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor McNamara.

9. Scheduling of Next Meeting, if necessary.

The Committee agreed to schedule a follow up meeting. Chair Kretovic will work with the Clerk’s Office to schedule the next meeting. Possibly Tuesday, December 2nd at 2:30 pm.

10. Adjournment.

At 4:50 PM, there being no additional business to discuss, Councilor Grady Sexton moved to adjourn. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor Todd, and passed with no dissenting votes.

A true copy; I attest:

*Deborah Tuite
Deputy City Clerk*