



Administrative Report

P.1., File # 25-1243

Meeting Date: 9/9/2025

To: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

From: JAMES A. LIGHT, MAYOR
LUKE SMUDE, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER

TITLE

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING CHANGES TO THE RULES OF CONDUCT AND DECORUM FOR CITY COUNCIL AND COMMISSION MEETINGS AND VARIOUS REDONDO BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE SECTIONS PERTAINING TO CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

REVIEW AND PROVIDE DIRECTION ON THE DRAFT RULES OF CONDUCT AND DECORUM FOR CITY COUNCIL AND COMMISSION MEETINGS, INCLUDING UPDATES TO MEETING AGENDAS AND SCRIPTS FOR MEETING CHAIRS TO ADDRESS DISRUPTIONS TO PUBLIC MEETINGS

REVIEW AND PROVIDE DIRECTION ON DRAFT ORDINANCES TO UPDATE THE REDONDO BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE PERTAINING TO THE UNIFORM REGULATIONS OF COMMISSIONS, PUBLIC WORKS AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION, HARBOR COMMISSION, PLANNING COMMISSION, BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMISSION, CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION, PUBLIC AMENITIES COMMISSION, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES PRESERVATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the April 1, 2025 City Council meeting, Mayor Light volunteered to draft an updated meeting code of conduct for review and consideration by the City Council. At the time, the Council was focused on potential changes related to the conduct of Commissioners and the specific role each Commission serves in the City. During discussion of the item, outgoing City Attorney Michael W. Webb provided a briefing that pointed out the City Council had not formally adopted procedural standards for the conduct of meetings. He recommended tailoring Rosenberg's Rules of Order as a potential solution. As the Mayor progressed in drafting the rules, additional source documents were identified that had conflicting information, were outdated, or had not been formally adopted.

The Mayor provided draft documents to the City Council for review at the September 2, 2025 meeting that if approved would help address policy concerns, the lack of comprehensive procedural rules, inconsistencies in related ordinances, and draft recommendations from staff that were never acted upon.

The item provided a number of documents for City Council consideration, including:

- New Draft Rules of Conduct and Decorum for City Council and Commission Meetings
 - A Model Agenda for City Council and Commission Meetings
 - 1 Scripts for Chairs to address disruptions to public meetings

- Draft Ordinances to amend, add, and delete Redondo Beach Municipal Code (RBMC) Sections pertaining to:
 - Uniform Regulation of Commissions
 - 1 Public Works, Traffic, Safety, And Sustainability Commission
 - 2 Harbor Commission
 - 3 Planning Commission
 - 4 Budget and Finance Commission
 - 5 Cultural Arts Commission
 - 6 Public Amenities Commission
 - 7 Historic Resources Preservation

After extensive discussion, the City Council approved a motion to allow Councilmembers Behrendt and Obagi to work with the Mayor to further review and redline the documents provided at the September 2nd meeting and present their edits to the City Council for consideration on September 9th. Additionally, the City Council decided not to pursue the formation of an on-call Police, Fire, and Homeless Services Commission.

At this time, staff recommends the City Council discuss the redlined documents and provide further input and direction.

BACKGROUND

The “Rules of Conduct for the City Council” were last updated in April 2022. Through the 2022 strategic planning process the Council added an objective to review the Code of Conduct for Commissioners and present recommendations to the City Council. No action was ultimately taken to change the Rules of Conduct.

At the March 2023 Strategic Planning meeting, the Council updated the objective to “update the Code of Conduct Policy for City Council and Commissioners...and present the revised policy to City Council for consideration and approval.” Subsequent to the establishment of this objective, the Council expressed concerns with three main items:

- City Council and Commissioner civility
- Definitively bounding the scope of commissions
- Establishing the means to control public disruptions

On April 1, 2025, the former City Attorney, Michael W. Webb, advised that the City Council never adopted comprehensive rules for the conduct of public meetings. Thus, when the Council asked for procedural guidance, the City Attorney could only opine on how the Council acted historically, or based on common procedural rules that were never formally adopted. The City Attorney closed with the recommendation to pursue the adoption of a tailored version of Rosenberg’s Rules of Order, with Mayor Light volunteering to lead the drafting effort.

While researching the item, multiple resources were provided to the Mayor that impacted the initial recommendations. These included:

- The existing Rules of Conduct for City Council Meetings
- The Commissioner Handbook

- The Municipal Code and Charter
- The Agenda Instructions
- Several documents previously generated by staff but never acted upon
- City of Gardena scripts related to dealing with unruly members of the public
- Rosenberg's Rules of Order

The Project Objectives are depicted in first column of Figure 1 and the Existing Documentation is depicted in the second column.

Figure 1: Tasking Overview

Mayor Light subsequently made efforts to address each project objective. During this process, the existing documentation was found to contain some conflicting, or outdated, information, and some of Council's Project Objectives were not addressed.

As a result, the task expanded to ensure that all of the policy documents were aligned and complimentary and that new policies were defined to address the stated objectives. The resulting Recommendations (Column 3 of Figure 1) and documentation includes:

- Updates to and expansion of the Rules of Conduct embodied in the draft "City Council Rules of Conduct and Decorum," which includes the conduct of Commissioners and members of the public
- A draft update to the standard Agenda that includes additional Rules of Conduct for members of the public
- Scripts to address situations with disruptive members of the public
- Recommended updates to the RBMC

As the project progressed, several recommendations required immediate action by the City Council to align with the commencement of the Commissioner appointment process in June of 2025. As a result, the Council has already enacted recommended changes to the Youth Commission and dissolve the Public Safety Commission. The expanded draft Rules for Public Participation have also been posted at each subsequent City Council meeting. The Mayor has also utilized draft scripts to introduce and define the steps that should be taken when members of the public are disruptive. These rules and scripts were reviewed by the Police Chief, the City Attorney, and the City Manager prior to public posting and can be amended by the City Council as part of this item, if desired.

As a result of the disbandment of the Public Safety Commission, the Mayor added the safety related tasks brought up by the Council to the scope of the amended ordinance for the Public Works and Sustainability Commission.

The documents were presented to Council following review by the City Attorney's Office and appropriate Commission liaisons. The documents were then reviewed by the City Council Subcommittee and are now being presented to the Council for review and direction. In addition to providing input on the draft documents, the Mayor also requested that the Council provide guidance on the following items:

- Start times for Closed Session and Open Session Meetings
- Appropriate metric for Commissioner attendance (4 absences over the preceding 12-month period is currently included)
- Council's desire to allow for continued electronic public participation

These issues were discussed by the City Council on September 2, 2025. This item provides an opportunity for the Council to consider the redlined changes to the documents proposed by Councilmembers Behrendt and Obagi, in consultation with the Mayor, and provide further direction on their final preparation and future consideration of adoption.

COORDINATION

The drafted documents were coordinated with Councilmembers Behrendt and Obagi, the Mayor, City Manager's Office, the City Attorney's Office, and the applicable Commission liaisons.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the proposed changes.

APPROVED BY:

Mike Witzansky, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

- Draft City Council Rules of Conduct and Decorum (Redlined)
 - Appendix A - Draft Agenda
 - 1 Appendix B - Draft Scripts for Disruptive Members of the Public
- RBMC - Existing Code Sections - Chapter 9, Article 1 - Uniform Regulations (Redlined)
- 1 RBMC - Existing Code Sections - Chapter 9, Article 4 - Public Works and Sustainability Commission (Redlined)
- 2 RBMC - Existing Code Sections - Chapter 9, Article 7 - Harbor Commission (Redlined)
- 3 RBMC - Existing Code Sections - Chapter 9, Article 10 - Planning Commission (Redlined)
- 4 RBMC - Existing Code Sections - Chapter 9, Article 13 - Budget and Finance Commission (Redlined)
- 5 RBMC - Existing Code Sections - Chapter 9, Article 14 - Public Art Commission (Redlined)
- 6 RBMC - Existing Code Sections - Chapter 9, Article 15 - Public Amenities Commission (Redlined)
- 7 RBMC - Existing Code Sections - Chapter 10, Articles 1-8 - Historic Resources Preservation (Redlined)
- 8 Administrative Report - City Council, September 2, 2025