

# **City of Cedar Springs**

## **Standard Operating Procedure**

### **Policy Number 12 (The Ronny Merlington Policy)**

#### **Council Action on Agenda Items**

##### **12.01 Purposes**

To establish as regular operating procedure that before action is taken on certain identified agenda items, the City Council will engage in at least two substantive discussions in at least two regular City Council meetings. Secondly, to provide more detail about the policy's implementation and thirdly, to give supplemental information about council action on agenda items.

##### **12.02 Policy and Rationale**

Identified agenda items will require consideration (substantive discussion) in at least two regular City Council meetings before action is taken.

Some business of the Council is more sensitive to public opinion and should be given time to be more thoroughly processed. Two regular meetings allow citizens opportunity to consider issues and comment if desired. Councilmembers will have time to think through discussion from the meeting in which the item is first presented and bring comments and questions to the second. The secondary title 'The Ronny Merlington Policy' was chosen because a similar line of procedure was favored by Ronny and other Councilmembers during his years as a member.

##### **12.03 Definitions for Agenda Items and Categories**

Informational Item- An item that does not require action or substantive discussion.

Discussion Item- An item for substantive discussion but requires no action.

Action Item- An item for substantive discussion with the intent of imminent action.

First Consideration- Substantive discussion of an item with the intent of delayed action until a subsequent regular meeting.

Second Consideration- Substantive discussion of an item for a second time during a second meeting with the intent of imminent action.

Urgent Item- An item requiring the Council to take immediate action due to the emergency nature of the item.

Agenda Categories- Typical Council business items organized into groups of similar content. At this time (3/2015) seventeen categories have been identified.

#### **12.04 Placement of Agenda Items**

Informational Item- Generally appears under 'Correspondence.'

Discussion Item- May appear as 'New Business,' 'Old Business' or 'Public Hearing.'

Action Item- May appear as 'New Business,' 'Old Business' or 'Consent Agenda.'

First Consideration Items- Generally appear under 'New Business.'

Second Consideration Items- Generally appear under 'Old Business.'

#### **12.05 Expanded Description of Agenda Categories**

The methodology for creating agenda categories relied on the agenda items from 11 months of the 2014 regular Council meetings. Seventeen categories have been identified. Currently, five of these categories are considered by the present Council (2014-2015) to contain items requiring substantive discussion in more than one meeting before action is taken. Recognizing that situations will arise necessitating more immediate action, the two meeting standard can be waived by 2/3 of members present. If all

seven members are present five votes would be needed for an over-ride. If six members are present four votes would be needed. If four or five members are present three votes would be needed. Since this is an innovative policy, changes in everything except the basic purpose and policy are expected.

## **12.06 Agenda Categories with Items Requiring Two Considerations**

### 1) Agreements and Contracts

- Licenses
  - Infrastructure Alternatives like the water treatment plant
  - Wolverine Skyhawks
- Service
  - Legal, city attorney firm
  - Public sewer utility, water treatment plant operations
  - 3-W Development
  - Refuse/Recyclables
  - ATT Franchise
  - Auditing Firm

### 2) Budget- Adoption, Amendments, Grants

- Additions
- Line Item Transfer
- Deletions
- Grants
  - Competitive Grant Assistance Program
  - Kent County Community Block Grant Allocation
  - Trout Unlimited

### 3) City Office Operation

- Changes to Personnel and Employee Handbook (vacation times)
- Establish Fee Schedule
- Leadership Policy
- Sprinkling Meter Policy
- Late Fee Waiving
- Sewer Fee Waiving

### 4) City Property

- Real Estate Options 2, (CS Brewing)
- Purchase Agreement (95 N. Main)
- Drainage Field Farming
- Speedway Lease
- Cedar Creek Improvements (Trout Unlimited)

### 5) Government Organization/Operation

- Council Finance and Personnel and Compensation Committee Disolution
- Open Meetings Act Issues

## **12.07 Declarations about City Council Actions on Agenda Items in General and Declarations about City Council Actions on Two-Consideration Agenda Items Specifically**

- 1) Any action of the Council shall be by ordinance, resolution, proclamation or motion and shall be conducted only in open public meetings unless otherwise provided by law. Any such action shall be deemed approved by an affirmative vote of a majority of those councilmembers who are present and vote (ie. do not abstain.)
  
- 2) The passage of any ordinance, resolution or motion that grants or revokes a license or franchise or involves payment of money requires the affirmative vote of at least a majority of the whole membership of the Council (four members.)
  
- 3) Emergency ordinances that take effect immediately must be passed by a majority of the whole membership.
  
- 4) A budget resolution or motion, or finance resolution or motion requires consideration during at least two regular meetings before final action is taken. This guideline may be suspended by a 2/3 vote of councilmembers present.
  
- 5) Resolutions and motions dealing with renewal, amendment, or modification of current (existing) agreements, contracts or licenses may receive final action in the same meeting they are introduced.

6) Resolutions and motions dealing with agreements or licenses involving additions of or changes in companies, firms, organizations or individuals require consideration during at least two regular meetings before final action is taken. This guideline may be suspended by a 2/3 vote of councilmembers present.

7) Resolutions and motions dealing with changes to the Personnel and Employee Handbook and changes or additions to operational policies require consideration during at least two regular meetings before final action is taken. This guideline may be suspended by a 2/3 vote of councilmembers present.

8) Resolutions and motions dealing with city planning issues such as Downtown Development, Brownfield Plans, Industrial Development Districts, Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificates, council goals for the City, the five year City Plan and Tax Increment Financing will not require two considerations since these issues require recommendations from other boards, multiple meetings for discussion and /or public hearings. The City Council can of course exercise postponement to another meeting which will delay action.

9) Resolutions and motions dealing with the development, sale, lease or use of City property requires consideration during at least two regular meetings before final action is taken. This guideline may be suspended by a 2/3 vote of councilmembers present.

10) Resolutions and motions dealing with City government and its operations such as committees, Open Meeting Act alignment and logo/motto additions and/or changes require consideration during at least two regular meetings before final action is taken. This guideline may be suspended by a 2/3 vote of councilmembers present.

## **12.08 All Agenda Categories**

### 1) Agreements and Contracts

- Licenses
  - Infrastructure Alternatives like the water treatment plant
  - Wolverine Skyhawks
- Service
  - Legal, city attorney firm
  - Public sewer utility, water treatment plant operations
  - 3-W Development
  - Refuse/Recyclables
  - ATT Franchise
  - Auditing Firm

### 2) Appointment Approvals

- City Manager to West Michigan Regional Planning Committee

### 3) Budget- Adoption, Amendments, Grants

- Additions
- Line Item Transfer
- Deletions
- Grants
  - Competitive Grant Assistance Program
  - Kent County Community Block Grant Allocation
  - Trout Unlimited

### 4) City Office Operation

- Changes to Personnel and Employee Handbook (vacation times)
- Establish Fee Schedule
- Leadership Policy
- Sprinkling Meter Policy
- Late Fee Waiving
- Sewer Fee Waiving

### 5) Consent Agenda

- Minutes Approval
- Paid Invoices
- Regular Meeting Schedule



## 6) City Planning

- Brownfield Plan Redevelopment Project (CS Brewing)
- Establishing Industrial Development District
- Approving an Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate (CS Manufacturing)

## 7) City Property

- Real Estate Options 2, (CS Brewing)
- Purchase Agreement (95 N. Main)
- Drainage Field Farming
- Speedway Lease
- Cedar Creek Improvements (Trout Unlimited)

## 8) Disbursements to Community Organizations

- Parks and Rec
- Evelyn Cassin to Ministerial Association

## 9) Election Related

- Inspectors Approval
- MML Liability and Property Pool Board of Directors Ballot
- Support for Issues on State Ballot

## 10) Existing Service Expansion

- Kent County Sheriff's Dept.

## 11) Financing

- Bonds
- Refinancing Bonds
- USDA Application

## 12) Government Organization/Operation

- Council Finance and Personnel and Compensation Committee Disolutiion
- Open Meetings Act Issues

## 13) Miscellaneous

- Investigation Continuation Previously Approved
- Public Hearing Items
- Ordinances, Readings One and Two

## 14) Non-profits Actions (street use, fee waiving, gaming license, community event , policy waiving)

- Chamber
  - Kris Kringle
  - Founders
  - Halloween
  - Renaissance
- Red Flannel
- CS Athletic Boosters
- Friends of Skinner Field
- En Gedi

15) Property Tax Collection

- GRCC
- Kent Intermediate School District
- Cedar Springs Public Schools, summer/winter
- Delinquent Water/Sewer Accounts Added to Summer Tax Roll
- Unpaid Invoices Added to Summer Tax Roll
- Setting Yearly Millage for Property Tax

16) Purchases (Budgeted)

- DPW
- Office Equipment
- Fire Dept.

17) Streets

- Bridge, MDOT Local Agency Program Priority List
- Bridge Inspection