

Working Notes

**TOWN OF ROCKY HILL  
RULES COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 11, 2012**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Phil Sylvestro called the January 11, 2012 Rules Committee special meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Rocky Hill Town Hall, 761 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill, CT.

Those in attendance: Councilor Larrye deBear and Councilor Cathy Vargas. Also present: Barbara Gilbert (Town Manager).

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chairman Phil Sylvestro said no one from the public was present this evening.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND WORKING NOTES**

**Councilor Larrye deBear made a motion to approve the Minutes and Working Notes of the December 14, 2011 Rules Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Cathy Vargas and adopted unanimously.**

**IV. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. COUNCIL RULES**

Chairman Phil Sylvestro told the members of this Committee that they had the latest and hopefully last draft of the Council Rules. This is a compilation of all of the things that they had discussed at their previous meeting of this Committee. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said she personally made these changes instead of having some of the secretarial staff doing this. She had taken the Working Notes and reviewed them. She attempted to discern what this Committee had wanted and she put this into place. She told the members of this Committee that she highlighted the changes so that it would be fairly easy for them to review. If this Committee approves this, then she will place this item on the Town Council agenda which is going out tomorrow for the full Town Council approval.

Chairman Phil Sylvestro looked to the highlighted and bold print first. He referred to Item III 9. (B) and Item III 9. (D) on Page 2 of this draft. He asked the Councilors if they were all set with these. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said Item 9. (D) was grown out of comments that had been made by Councilor Cathy Vargas when she had talked about how they have had a consistency of having items added to the agenda due to urgency.

Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said she put this in the language. This wasn't stated yes or no by this Committee but she said this seems to address the concern. Councilor Cathy Vargas said this defaults to Robert's Rules with regards to two-thirds (vote of the full body). Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said it does. Councilor Cathy Vargas said they have done this. Chairman Phil Sylvestro said this does default on the two-thirds piece but Robert's Rules also speak to the timeliness of notification. He told them that anybody can establish his language with regards to the "drop dead" date of submitting items for New Business but he told them that it is fine if this is what they want, which apparently is what the majority of this Committee wants. He said if a super majority is needed then this is fine. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said that by the wording of it this way, if only six members are present then there have to be six votes. Councilor Cathy Vargas told Town Manager Barbara Gilbert that she noticed that she put "full Council" in the wording. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said they have to have at least six full votes because this would be two-thirds of the full Council.

Chairman Phil Sylvestro said for his own edification that they should rely on the good senses of the current Council, as well as future ones, for them to be very cognizant of the issue of timely notification, which is relative to having anything added to the agenda. Councilor Cathy Vargas told Chairman Phil Sylvestro that she had reflected on his comments after the last meeting of this Committee with regards to the notification to the public and she told him that she agrees with him in this respect. Councilor Cathy Vargas said she just didn't want to "tie the Council's hands" in getting business done if they had to in an emergency. Chairman Phil Sylvestro said this was fine.

Chairman Phil Sylvestro told everyone that he guessed they were good with the changes on Page 2 of this draft. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert referred to Item 9. (B) and said this is for clarification. She said the Town Council meets on Monday typically and she doesn't need someone calling her on a Sunday in order to have an agenda amended. Chairman Phil Sylvestro told Councilor Larrye deBear that he recalled that he had wanted the wording of "on the last business day". Councilor Larrye deBear said yes.

Chairman Phil Sylvestro referred to Page 3 of this draft. He referred to Item V (4.) and he asked the members of this Committee if they were good with this. Councilor Cathy Vargas referred to where it stated "when deemed pertinent based on the business" and she asked who will deem it pertinent. She asked if it would be the Chair and Chairman Phil Sylvestro said yes. Councilor Cathy Vargas asked if this will be understood and Chairman Phil Sylvestro said yes. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said this will prevent the Council from running afoul and discussing something that may not be on the agenda for a special meeting because that would be illegal. Councilor Cathy Vargas said this is fine with her. She said they had been commenting previously about if the Council is going into an Executive Session that it doesn't matter if the public wants to talk about what the Council is going into an Executive Session for. Chairman Phil Sylvestro said the other limiting factor on this is the approximate two minute limit rule so that they can get into the Executive Session.

Chairman Phil Sylvestro believed that this will do it and he asked the Councilors if they were good with this. The Councilors said yes. Chairman Phil Sylvestro said a motion was needed to move the Council Rules to the Town Council for approval.

**Councilor Larrye deBear made a motion that the Rules Committee approve the Draft of the Council Rules of Procedure, Section 404, Town Charter, that was submitted to this Committee on January 11, 2012 and that these revised rules be forwarded to the Town Council for its next meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Cathy Vargas and adopted unanimously.**

Chairman Phil Sylvestro asked Town Manager Barbara Gilbert for these comments to be reflected in the Minutes with regards to how this Committee has asked Town Manager Barbara Gilbert to send a letter with regards to a complaint that was filed by a resident. Chairman Phil Sylvestro said the letter was very clear relative to a request seeking specific information with regards to the complainant's concerns. They have not received an answer to date from the complainant with regards to the information that is being requested from that individual. They have already received the initiation of the complaint. They will continue to wait until they receive the information that this Committee has requested. There will be no action on this item until then.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

**Councilor Cathy Vargas made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:13 p.m. The motion was seconded by Councilor Larrye deBear and adopted unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jo-Anne Booth  
Recording Secretary