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Lopez, Donna

From: Carolyn [mc.shipley@verizon.net]
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2014 11:06 AM
To: City Council; Lopez, Donna
Subject: Re: [ACN] Council rules

Dear Ms. Lopez: For the official record.

To the City Council: I second what Heather Hoffman has written below. Perhaps, these rules could be read aloud before each city council committee meeting.

Furthermore, I found yesterday evening's meeting extremely disrespectful of the Cambridge residents and VOTERS.

1. Discussions by the councillors were mostly off topic and often just pointless rambling, thus, wasting the public's time.
2. While there is no water fountain in that wing of the school building for the public, the councillors were regularly getting up and going into the back room for refreshments. Many of us may have not had time to eat dinner prior to attending the meeting.
3. The air conditioning is always off in that room after 5 p.m. it seems. I know these systems are sometimes on a clock, preprogrammed, but since council meetings are scheduled in advance, there is no excuse for not requesting that the A/C or any air circulation system be left on.
4. There is a possibility that a Cambridge resident/voter with health problems or disabilities would not be comfortable in that room owing to a lack of fresh air and a lack of access to water or other refreshments. Does the state of this room violate the ADA rules and keep voters with health concerns from letting their voice be heard?
5. The people in the room are voters. This disregard of these voters may affect how they vote in the next election.

Respectfully,
Carolyn Shipley
15 Laurel Street

On 08/27/14, Heather Hoffman<heather.m.hoffman.1957@gmail.com> wrote:

Tonight's Ordinance Committee hearing was just the latest example of a City Council that doesn't abide by its own rules. Rules 31A and 31B concern the conduct of committee hearings. Here is the text of those rules, copied from the City Council website:

HEARINGS

Rule 31A. Public hearings may be requested for matters of public interest or of legislative requirement. Public hearings shall not be held during regular business meetings of the City Council except in an emergency. The City Council shall refer such requests to a committee of the City Council. If the City Council deems it advisable, it may direct that the hearing be televised.

Rule 31B. The time devoted to public hearings shall not be more than two (2) hours at any one sitting. Any hearing not completed within the specified time may be continued to another meeting.

Any individual appearing before the City Council at a public hearing and claiming to represent another as agent or otherwise in the matter of being heard shall file with the City Council a written authorization signed by the individual, organization or corporation whose interests such individual represents.

There shall be a five (5) minute time limit for each speaker to express her or his views on the matter being heard by the City Council. Speakers will be required to address themselves solely to the issue, which is before the City Council for discussion and shall not engage in personal or rude remarks. In all hearings before the City Council, the case of the petitioner shall be submitted first, except in matters affecting acceptance of highways or taking by right of eminent domain.

The City Council has the right to change its rules, but it doesn't have the right not to follow them at a particular meeting without going through the proper procedure of suspending the rules. So, if you as a body want to change this rule to limit public comment to three minutes, you know how to do it.

Heather Hoffman

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