COMMITTEE STAFF SUMMARY
Governance Committee

Ordinance (Document 2026-056): Amend Council Organization and Procedure Code (amend Code Chapter 3.02)

Action Date: February 23, 2026

Committee Action: Referred to City Council as amended with the recommendation it be passed

Vote: 4-1-0

Ayes: Dunphy, Pirtle-Guiney, Ryan, Clark

Nays: Koyama Lane

Absent: N/A

Impact Statements: None

Prepared by: Dana Richardson, Council Operations Manager

Committee Meetings: February 9, 2026 (recording and transcript), February 23, 2026 (recording and transcript)

WHAT THE ORDINANCE DOES:

The ordinance (Document Number 2026-056) amends Portland City Code Chapter 3.02, Council Organization and Procedure. Exhibit A – as amended reflects the revised ordinance, including amendments adopted by the committee, and modifies appropriate Code subsections.

It permits any four Councilors to file a request in writing for a referral to the full Council only after an item has been assigned to a committee and placed on an agenda. Items that a committee votes not to refer to Council are deemed inactive and placed on file by the Council Clerk.

The ordinance specifies that amendments to non-emergency and emergency ordinances, franchise ordinances, resolutions, reports and quasi-judicial land use decisions for proposed Council consideration must be filed in writing with the Clerk at least 24 hours prior to the posted start time of the Council meeting during which it will be heard.

It amends Council Rules and Procedures (City Code 3.02.040, new Section E),to require Council to adopt rules and procedures in addition to those contained in Charter or Code within the first month of odd-numbered years, and specifies those rules and procedures will guide Council actions for the following two years and may be retained or amended for readoption every two years. Allows adoption of amendments to Council Rules and

Procedures by an affirmative vote of seven councilors when a new President is elected following a vacancy, or at any other time by an affirmative vote of nine councilors. Permits committees to adopt or amend committee rules and procedures by Resolution.

Adds new Section F to City Code 3.02.040 pertaining to Inactive Items. Specifies if the President places an item on a Council agenda and the Council takes no action or the item is removed from the agenda and not rescheduled within 180 days of its initial placement, the item is inactive and no further Council action can be taken unless the item is resubmitted. Inactive items will be placed on file by the Clerk.

For Council committees (City Code 3.02.050), the ordinance requires a committee chair to place an item referred to the committee on an agenda no later than 90 days following referral. Specifies that committees may recommend that items be passed or adopted, or passed or adopted as amended. Committees may also vote to refer items to another committee, vote not to refer, or take no action. If the latter two occur and the item is not subsequently rescheduled or pulled from committee to a full Council agenda as described above, the item is deemed inactive and cannot be acted upon unless resubmitted. An inactive item will be placed on file by the Clerk.

Makes other conforming changes such as allowing the Council President to make referrals to the Committee of the Whole; removing language requiring action at the first Council meeting of 2025; changing the filing deadline from noon the Tuesday before a Council meeting to 1 pm; and specifying committees must be composed of four to six Councilors to be less than a quorum of Council, other than a committee of the whole.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Whether legislation that is voted down in committee can be withdrawn to be considered by the Council
- Alignment with other legislation (Ordinance 2026-071) that provides for Committee of the Whole
- Deadline to file legislation with the Auditor
- Developing amendments on the dais in Council meetings to address Councilors' differing perspectives

AMENDMENTS:

The committee adopted three amendments prior to committee action on February 23, 2026 including:

- Allowing the formation of a committee of the whole and specifying committees must be composed of four to six Councilors to be less than a quorum of Council, other than a committee of the whole.
- Clarifies an item does not have to heard by a committee before it can be forwarded to Council in cases when it has not been scheduled by the committee chair or has

been indefinitely deferred; and that items a Committee votes not to refer an item to full Council are inactive and placed on file by the Clerk.

- Modifies the deadline for submitting items to a Council agenda from noon to1 pm on Tuesday the week prior to the Council meeting in which the item will be heard.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY IN COMMITTEE:
One individual provided verbal and written testimony prior to committee action. General themes included:

- When or if legislation becomes inactive

BACKGROUND:
City Council passed emergency ordinance 192021 on January 15, 2025 to establish Council Organization and Procedure that were later codified in City Code 3.02. Subsection C of that emergency ordinance directed the Council President to ensure that a proposal to replace or extend Chapter 3.02 be placed on the Council agenda no later than October 31, 2025. On October 29, 2025, Council adopted Resolution 37721 to operate under existing provisions of 3.02 until amendments could be formally considered.

On November 10, 2025, the Governance Committee heard a presentation on possible amendments to Chapter 3.02 in accordance with Section C of emergency ordinance No. 192021. Based on the response to the presentation, ordinance 2026-056 was submitted to the Governance Committee in December 2025 and considered on February 9 and February 23, 2026.