MEMO

ELANA PIRTLE-GUINEY
PORTLAND CITY COUNCILOR
DISTRICT 2

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To: Governance Committee Members — Chair Koyama Lane, Vice Chair Ryan, Councilor Dunphy, Councilor Clark

Cc: Chiefs of Staff, Council Operations Assistant Ashley Hernandez, Mayor's Council Liaison Krishna Anand

From: Office of Councilor Elana Pirtle-Guiney

Date: February 4, 2026

Subject: Amend Council Organization and Procedure Code (amend Code Chapter 3.02)

Background

On January 5, 2025, the Portland City Council unanimously passed Emergency Ordinance No. 192021 (as amended), which updated City Code provisions governing the Council Agenda, Council Rules, and Council Committees. Section C of the ordinance directs the Council President to ensure that a proposal to replace or extend Chapter 3.02 of the City Code is placed on the Council agenda no later than October 31, 2025.

Over the course of Council's first year, numerous proposals related to Council governance were considered through resolutions and ordinances. In addition, I consulted regularly with colleagues on governance matters, participated as a member of the Governance Committee, and worked closely with professional staff, including the Clerk's Office and Council Operations to understand governance gaps in Portland's new form of government.

By October 2025, I had identified key revisions to Chapter 3.02 and intended to introduce them per the requirement that applied to me as then-Council President. Due to federal overreach, a policy backlog, and extended review times for code updates, the full amendments package was not ready for the agenda. On October 29, 2025, I presented Resolution 37721 to Council, requesting authorization to continue operating under the

existing Chapter 3.02 rules until the amendments package could be formally considered. Council adopted the resolution at that meeting.

Subsequently, I brought a discussion draft to the Governance Committee on November 10 to begin consideration of the amendments. I incorporated feedback from my colleagues and formally filed the item with the Council Clerk shortly thereafter.

The item posted as Item # on the February 9, 2026, Governance Committee agenda represents the culmination of this work. The following section provides a summary of each key provision included in the proposed code amendments.

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1. Committee Timelines and Actions

This amendment updates Section 3.02.050(D) (Council Committee Rules) to clarify committee responsibilities and define available committee actions.

Summary of Changes:

- Requires Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs to schedule items that meet administrative requirements within three months, aligning committee timelines with the existing standard applied to the Council President for items referred to full Council.
- Provides a clear set of actions a committee may take on an item, including forwarding it to full Council with a “do pass” recommendation, referring it to another committee (with or without a recommendation) for additional review, or voting not to advance an item and holding it over in committee.

Legislative Intent:

- Ensure committees do not function as an unintended bottleneck by holding committee leadership to the same scheduling expectations as the Council President.
- Strengthen committees’ role in shaping policy and signaling outcomes to the full Council by requiring clear, affirmative committee actions.

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2. Inactive Items

This amendment adds a new subsection to Section 3.02.040 (Council Rules) to establish an inactivity standard that applies to full Council. An additional amendment to Section 3.02.050.D (Council Committee Rules) applies the same inactivity standard to Council Committees.

Summary of Changes:

- Establishes a 180-day inactivity standard, after which an item that has not been advanced by a committee or the full Council is deemed inactive and removed from the legislative process unless formally resubmitted.

Legislative Intent:

- Improves transparency by clarifying item status for Councilors and the public.
- Establish a clear legislative lifecycle for items that reach the full Council but do not advance.
- Prevents items from lingering indefinitely and reduces backlog in E-Council.

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3. Council Handbook

This amendment adds a new subsection to Section 3.02.040 (Council Rules) to establish the Council Handbook as a formal tool of City Council.

Summary of Changes:

- Requires the Council, within the first month of a new Council (in odd-years, i.e., following election years), to adopt a Council Handbook with operating rules and procedures for a two-year term.
- Sets the standard for adoption of new or revised operating rules and procedures by each new Council, allowing ongoing revision and refinement.
- Allows changes to be made to the handbook through a simple majority vote after a new Council President is elected, or through a supermajority vote of nine Councilors at any other time.

Legislative Intent:

- Provide a consistent reference for Council procedures not covered by Charter or Code.
- Ensure continuity and transparency in Council operating procedures and norms for each term.

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4. Code Amendments Deadline

This amendment adds a new subsection to Section 3.02.030 (Council Actions) to clarify deadlines for filing amendments.

Summary of Changes:

- Allows any policy mediums (non-emergency ordinance, emergency ordinance, franchise ordinance, resolution, report, and quasi-judicial land use decision) listed in Sections 3.02.020 A–F to be amended.
- Allows for committee amendments to be filed in advance or offered from the dais.

- Requires that amendments proposed for full Council be submitted to the Council Clerk at least 24 hours before the meeting in which the item is heard, or continuation of an item to the next agenda so amendments may be properly vetted.

Legislative Intent:

- Ensure public transparency and provide adequate time for Councilors to review amendments.

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5. Technical Revisions

The amendment makes a handful of technical revisions throughout Chapter 3.02.

Summary of Changes:

- Clarifies that the Council President's agenda placement deadline applies only to items referred to the full Council, preserving time for committee review (3.02.020(B)(4)).
- Replaces the vague "three months" deadline with a precise 90-day requirement for agenda placement (3.02.020(B)(4)).
- Standardizes terminology for Council action on resolutions by replacing "pass" and "passage" with "adopt" and "adoption" (3.02.030(D)(2) and (3)).
- Removes the outdated one-time provision designating the Council Clerk as facilitator for the first election of a Council President (3.02.040(A)(5)).

Legislative Intent:

- Improve clarity, consistency, and usability of Chapter 3.02, ensuring that procedural language is precise and accurately reflects current Council practices.

Procedural Information

This item will be heard in the Portland City Council Governance Committee on Monday, February 9th, 2026. The committee begins at 2:30 PM.

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