

David Belef-
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Suggestions:

PBSC meeting agenda should be worded to allow open discussion of, and voting for, any and all current and/or proposed rules by any member.

Question: To avoid any Brown Act conflicts, shouldn't we be posting/publishing "Staff reports", including correspondences received and input from PBSC members on the city's webpage dedicated to agendas and including such in members "packets"?

http://www.ci.vallejo.ca.us/city_hall/departments_divisions/city_manager/city_clerk/city_agendas_videos

Here is a proposal - not so much a "Rule" but simply a formatting change-

The Rule book should be divided into Chapters, paragraphs, sections, sub-sections and lines etc. with page numbers and a table of contents.

Ideally there would also be a searchable index.

Careful editing to eliminate redundant wording, and duplication is required.

Information that is included in charts, graphs, etc. need to be first included within the text of the rules, then if still desired, shown in the chart graph et. as an addendum.

Careful review to maintain accuracy and consistency is needed.

A Spanish and Tagalog version would also be nice (while maintaining the formatting of the English original).

Double check for flexibility in choosing dates for the gathering of ideas, project development, voting etc..

Note: This is as much detail as I have had time to write. Additional information will be provided if asked during the meeting.

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Participatory Budgeting Rule Book Changes -proposed by David Belef (this time written down as requested at the November 2019 PBSC meeting)
Beginning Cycle 8 and ongoing. (currently 6 proposed rules with another to follow if time permits)

1. Proposed rule

- **Proposals/projects with items that are currently budgeted or have had a request to be budgeted by the city of Vallejo, within the past year, are not allowed.**
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- **An exception to this rule is made if there are not enough projects submitted and developed to fill the ballot.**

Change to current or additional rule

Additional new rule

Related Current Rule

Reason:

Too often projects have been proposed, developed and voted upon that are regularly budgeted by the city council regardless of PB.

Justification:

Knowing that city departments already have a mechanism for budget requests and in fact often find funding from outside city coffers (grants etc), and also have the ear and sympathy of the City Council and City Manager, this rule ensures that PB monies are spent on the peoples ideas that would not otherwise be funded. This is what PB is about -letting the people have a voice, not giving the government an additional bullhorn.
This will encourage more participation and “buy-in” by citizens. It will foster the idea that the people are being heard and that Vallejo respects and honors their input.

support

notes

Rule Book Reference page

2. Proposed rule

*** The EXACT and specific location and scope of work to be performed must be identified and adhered to and is so stated in the ballot description (this may, if space is confined, be in the form of a map).**

Change to current or additional rule

Clarification of current rule with additional language

Related Current Rule

Reason:

This

justification

support

notes

Rule Book Reference page

3. Proposed rule

*** The project must have a start date within 3 months of the Vallejo city council approving the funds (if implementation is not begun within 3 months, that winning project funds are given to the next highest vote receiving project, that was not funded);**

Change to current or additional rule

Related Current Rule

Reason:

Too often projects are not fully developed prior to voting and or changed. This will help ensure that funds are spent within the current rule stating that projects are to be completed within the current cycle. It is not fair to the voters or the other projects that do adhere to the rules.

justification

support

notes

Rule Book Reference page

4. Proposed rule

- **Project details and budget dollar amount/costs must be voted on, and approved by, a majority of the Budget Delegates prior to submission to the ballot.**
- **(The intent is to be certain that when the Budget Delegates decide on which projects to move forward and ultimately be included on the ballot, that there are no surprises.**
- **I suggest a little leeway be granted for under estimates. This should be limited to 10% of the Budget Delegate's previously agreed and voted on amounts)**

Change to current or additional rule

additional clarification of the PB process

Related Current Rule

Reason

This is to prevent substantial changes to proposals without delegate consensus

justification

Example 1: PB Vallejo Cycle 2 committee had agreed in person, to limit the proposals request for funding to under \$100,000. On the final night to submit the project for ballot consideration, one budget delegate took it upon themselves to write in a request for \$1,000,000. (ten times the amount decided upon by committee)

Cycle 4 a similar though less costly thing happened by another person who tried to convince the delegates that anything less than the city departments request, was not possible; when in fact, the project did not even have specific details or project boundaries to justify such statements. This lead to more money being requested than the delegates had originally proposed as being a reasonable and fair request, while keeping within their ideas of what the people wanted, regarding choices in projects.

support

Years of complaints by the public and various PB Delegates, Steering Committee members, and staff asking how this happened....

notes

This can be as simple as providing the full proposal to delegates to review, then asking for their yes or no vote.

The likelihood of abuse is less than in previous cycles due to a more organized and formalized approach to delegate meetings with constant updates and requests for input from delegates.

The potential damages to the process have been limited by the PBSC's previous rule book changes that limit capital projects to \$300,000..

Unfortunately, those changes still do not ensure a fair and transparent process.

Without this rule change, these types of abuses are still possible.

Rule Book Reference page

5. Proposed rule:

*** Links to the latest adopted Vallejo City Budgets, and if existing, a simplified synopsis of that budget, shall be posted prominently on the PB Website and informational flyers.**

This linked webpage shall also include a "primer" on funding sources and restrictions placed upon some monies. A list and/or chart of city funding sources shall be a part of this "primer".

Change to current or additional rule

new additional rule

Related Current Rule

Reason

As a goal of Participatory budgeting, education relating to where, and how, taxpayers money is spent; is critical to an informed citizenry. The source of funding is also important to the understanding of why budget requests and decisions are made.

justification

support

During public outreach, much time is spent answering difficult budget questions often beyond the scope of PB. By having a quickly accessible link on hand, citizens can easily be directed to the information they seek. This will reduce the chance of miscommunication or misinformation.

notes

The goal is to have as much detail as the public could ever want, while at the same time providing an easy to comprehend outline of budgeting for those who simply wish to know the basics.

Rule Book Reference page

6. Proposed rule (this one is a combination of 3 rules listed above)

*** Proposals/projects with items that are currently budgeted or have had a request to be budgeted by the city of Vallejo, in the past year, are not allowed *unless* the following criteria and restrictions are met:**

The EXACT and specific location and scope of work to be performed is identified and adhered to and is so stated in the ballot description (this may, if space is confined, be in the form of a map);

the project has a start date within 3 months of the Vallejo city council approving the funds and if not implemented within 3 months, winning project funds are given to the next highest vote receiving project, that was not funded;

Change to current or additional rule:

New rule

Related Current Rule

Reason

justification

support

notes

Rule Book Reference page

7. Proposed rule

Change to current or additional rule

Related Current Rule

Reason:

justification

support

notes

Rule Book Reference page

