HMDC MODEL CONGRESS (FALL 2024, Week 8)

What We Will Discuss (Today)

Here is the agenda for today's lesson…

Review of the Homework (ex. Quiz Questions)

Brief Review of City Council Proceedings

Activity: City Council Meeting (A Simulation of Local Government)

Reviewing the Homework (Quiz 7)

PLEASE REVIEW AS A GROUP

What We Will Discuss (Today)

Today we'll explore how city governments make decisions. Building on what we learned from our mock trial, we'll see how city councils work to solve local problems. Each student will take part in choosing a new mayor and then help run a real city council meeting.

•Today's Plan: We'll start by going over last week's homework, then learn how city meetings work, and put these ideas into practice

•Learning Goals: Each student will help pick a new mayor and take part in making choices about our city's needs

•Hands-on Work: We'll use real meeting rules to discuss and vote on important city matters

The Role of the Mayor

The mayor stands as the primary leader of city government, making critical decisions that shape the community's future and quality of life. Each action a mayor takes must balance immediate needs with long-term planning while considering diverse community viewpoints and available resources. The position demands someone who can unite different groups, solve complex problems, and maintain the public's trust.

• **Vision Development:** A mayor shapes the city's direction by identifying key challenges, proposing innovative solutions, and building support across different community groups to tackle pressing issues

• **Resource Management:** The mayor oversees budgets, coordinates city services, and allocates resources to meet community needs while maintaining fiscal responsibility and planning for future growth

• **Community Leadership:** Acting as the city's voice, the mayor brings people together during challenges, celebrates community achievements, and maintains open communication with all residents

Selecting Our Mayor

The process of choosing a mayor reveals how democratic systems work to select leaders who can best serve their communities. Each candidate must demonstrate their understanding of community needs and share their vision for improving life in our city. Through this selection, we learn how voters evaluate leadership qualities and weigh different approaches to solving city problems. This teaches the fundamental principles of democratic leadership while preparing us for our city council simulation. The process demonstrates how communities choose their leaders through open participation and fair voting. This selection gives every student the opportunity to experience direct democracy in action.

• **Volunteer Process:** Any student may nominate themselves by standing and formally announcing their intention to run, followed by a clear statement explaining their interest in serving as the class's leader for today's simulation

• **Speech Requirements:** Each candidate delivers a focused two-minute presentation outlining their vision for the city and demonstrating their readiness to lead the council with fairness and purpose

• **Voting Protocol:** After all speeches conclude, students will receive paper ballots, mark their choice privately, and submit them for counting, with the winner determined by simple majority vote

Running for Mayor

A strong mayoral campaign requires careful thought about both city needs and personal leadership qualities. Your campaign speech must outline specific problems facing the community while presenting clear solutions that demonstrate your understanding of local government. Each candidate needs to show they can think critically about complex issues while communicating their ideas effectively to all citizens.

• Vision and Goals: Present three specific challenges facing our city and outline practical solutions that show your understanding of how local government works and what changes are possible

• Leadership Style: Explain your approach to bringing people together, handling disagreements, and making tough decisions when different groups want different things

• Personal Connection: Share why you care about making the city better and how your background or experiences have prepared you to take on this important role

Sample Language for Mayoral Candidates

"I will work to expand our city's green spaces while supporting local business growth" "My plan focuses on improving public transportation and ensuring affordable housing" "Together we can build a safer, more prosperous community for all residents"

"Our city faces three key challenges. First, our downtown needs new life - I'll work with business owners to create a vibrant center that draws people in. Second, families need safe places for children to play - I'll improve our parks and add youth programs. Third, seniors struggle to get around - I'll expand our bus routes to serve them better."

"I grew up in this city. I've seen what works and what needs fixing. As your mayor, I'll focus on making our streets safer, supporting local shops, and creating jobs. These aren't just campaign promises - they're my commitment to every resident."

"Leadership means listening to everyone, even when we disagree. As mayor, I'll bring people together to solve problems. Whether it's fixing roads, improving schools, or helping businesses grow, we'll work as one community to make it happen."

Mayor's Acceptance Speech

An acceptance speech marks the shift from candidate to leader, setting the tone for your time as mayor. This moment requires genuine gratitude, recognition of the trust placed in you, and a clear commitment to serving all citizens equally. Your words need to unite those who supported you with those who voted differently, while reinforcing the key ideas from your campaign in a forward-looking way.

"Thank you for putting your trust in me. I heard all the ideas shared today - from every candidate and from you. Your passion for making our city better inspires me. Now, let's work together to build the community we all want to see."

"I stand here grateful and ready to serve. To those who supported me - thank you for your confidence. To those who preferred a different choice - I will work hard to earn your trust. Every voice matters as we build our city's future together."

"I accept this honor knowing the real work begins now. The challenges ahead need all of us - every council member, every citizen, every voice. Together, we'll make the changes our community needs, starting today."

Robert's Rules of Order (A Review)

Robert's Rules of Order provide the foundation for conducting orderly meetings in local government. These rules establish clear procedures for discussion, voting, and decision-making that ensure all voices can be heard. Following these guidelines helps maintain professionalism and fairness throughout council proceedings.

• **Meeting Structure:** Every meeting follows a prescribed order beginning with call to order, followed by roll call, and ending with adjournment. The structure helps members track progress and ensures all necessary business is addressed.

• **Basic Principles:** All members have equal rights to participate and propose ideas during council sessions. Every motion must be thoroughly discussed before a vote can take place.

• **Majority Rules:** Final decisions require a majority vote to pass, while protecting minority rights to voice opposition. The majority vote principle ensures democratic process while maintaining efficiency.

"I call this meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Madam Clerk, please call the roll."

Making and Seconding Motions

Motions are formal proposals that allow council members to take action on specific items. Every motion requires a primary sponsor who introduces it and a second from another member to show sufficient interest exists. The process ensures that only matters with adequate support receive council attention.

• Motion Introduction: The sponsoring member must be recognized by the chair and clearly state their proposal. The chair will then ask if any other member wishes to second the motion.

• Supporting Process: Another member must second the motion before any discussion can begin. Seconds indicate preliminary support exists but don't require the second sponsor to ultimately vote in favor.

• Clear Language: Motions must be stated precisely to avoid confusion about the proposed action. The clerk records the exact wording for official records.

"Madam Chair (or Mayor), I move that we allocate $50,000 for playground equipment at Central Park." "I second the motion."

Points of Order and Interruptions

Meeting interruptions serve important procedural purposes when council proceedings need immediate attention. These special motions allow members to raise urgent concerns about rules, procedures, or personal needs without waiting to be recognized. Understanding proper use of interruptions helps maintain orderly meetings while addressing critical issues.

• **Point of Order:** Used when a member believes proper procedures aren't being followed. The chair must immediately rule on whether the point is valid and how to proceed.

• **Point of Information:** Allows members to request clarification about procedures or facts under discussion. This tool helps ensure all members can make informed decisions.

• **Point of Personal Privilege:** Addresses immediate personal needs or comfort issues affecting a member's participation. These concerns might include room temperature, inability to hear, or similar issues.

For Example:
"Point of order! (wait): Madam Chair, We haven't voted on the amendment before moving to the main motion."
or "Point of information (wait): Could the sponsor clarify which budget line item would fund this proposal?"

The Debate Process

Council debates follow structured procedures to ensure thorough discussion of all perspectives while maintaining order. Each member has equal opportunity to express their views and respond to others' arguments within specific time constraints. The debate process helps council members fully explore issues before making decisions.

• **Speaking Order:** Members alternate between those favoring and opposing the motion to ensure balanced discussion. Each speaker must acknowledge both benefits and potential concerns while making their case.

• **Response Rules:** Members may speak twice on any motion, with the first speech limited to 5 minutes and the second to 3 minutes. Direct responses to questions don't count against these limits.

• **Debate Closure:** Debate continues until all members have spoken or a motion to end debate passes with two-thirds support. The chair ensures all perspectives are heard before closing discussion.

"Councilmember Chen, you have two minutes to present your argument regarding the health implications of allowing pets in restaurant dining areas."

The Amendment Process

Amendments allow council members to modify a motion during discussion by adding, removing, or changing specific elements. Each amendment must be voted on separately before returning to the main motion. The process ensures proposals can be refined during debate while maintaining clear voting procedures.

• Amendment Types: Modifications can add requirements, remove sections, or change existing language. Each change must relate directly to the original motion without altering its fundamental purpose.

• Friendly Changes: If the original motion's sponsor accepts an amendment, it can be adopted without a vote. These typically involve minor clarifications or improvements.

• Formal Process: Other amendments require a second, debate, and majority vote. The council votes on the amendment before returning to debate on the main motion.

"I move to amend the motion by adding a requirement that pet-friendly areas must be separated by a physical barrier."

Voting Process

Voting procedures ensure clear, accurate recording of council decisions while maintaining transparency. Each vote must follow specific steps that allow for proper documentation and member participation. These procedures help prevent confusion and maintain the integrity of council decisions.

• **Vote Initiation:** The chair clearly states the motion and voting method before proceedings begin. Members must understand exactly what they're voting on and how to cast their vote.

• **Recording Methods:** Votes can be taken by voice, show of hands, roll call, or electronic means. Each method has specific uses based on the importance and type of motion.

• **Result Declaration:** The chair must announce results immediately and the clerk must record them. The official record must show the exact count and how each member voted on significant issues.

A Sample Meeting (Part-1)

Chair: "I call this meeting to order. We move to new business."

Chair: "Our first item is the proposed ordinance on pets in restaurant dining areas. Would anyone like to make a motion at this time?"

Councilmember Davis: "I move that we allow restaurants to create designated pet-friendly outdoor dining areas."

Councilmember Chen: "Second."

Chair: "A motion made and seconded. Councilmember Davis, you have 2 minutes."

Davis: "Thank you, Mayor Park, members of the council. Ladies and gentlemen, this ordinance lets restaurants choose to offer pet-friendly outdoor seating. Many residents want to dine with their pets, and..."

Councilmember Thompson: "Point of information! Has the Restaurant Association taken a position on this?"

Chair: "Does the speaker wish to yield?"

Davis: "Yes. The Restaurant Association supports letting individual owners decide. Continuing my statement..."

A Sample Meeting (Part-2)

Chair: "Councilmember Garcia, speaking in favor, for 2 minutes."

Garcia: "Several nearby cities already allow this successfully. Their data shows increased business without safety issues..."

Councilmember Anderson: "Point of order! The speaker is referencing data not provided to the council."

Chair: "Point sustained. Please focus on verified information."

Chair: "Councilmember Thompson, speaking in opposition, 2 minutes."

Thompson: "This creates liability issues for restaurants and poses health concerns..."

Garcia: "I move to amend the motion to require that all pet-friendly areas must be separated by a physical barrier from regular dining areas."

Char: "Does the sponsor have a response?""

Davis: "As the original sponsor, I accept this as a friendly amendment."

Chair: "The amendment has been accepted by the sponsor. The motion now includes the requirement for physical barriers between pet and non-pet dining areas. Debate continues on the amended motion."

A Sample Meeting (Part-3)

Jackson: "I call the question."

Chen: "Second."

Chair: "The question has been called and seconded. This requires a two-thirds vote to end debate. All those in favor of ending debate, raise your hand."

[Council members vote: 5 in favor, 2 opposed]

Chair: "With 5 in favor and 2 opposed, we have the required two-thirds to end the debate. We will now proceed to vote on the main motion regarding pet-friendly dining areas..."

A Sample Meeting (Part-4)

Chair: "We will now vote on the amended motion to allow restaurants to create designated pet-friendly outdoor dining areas with physical barriers required. All those in favor, please raise your hand."
[Members raise hands]

Chair: "Please lower your hands. All those opposed, please raise your hand."
[Members raise hands]

Chair: "With 5 in favor and 2 opposed, the motion passes. The ordinance will take effect in 30 days. The clerk will prepare the document for publication. Do I hear a motion for further business?"

Garcia: "I move we take a 10-minute recess."

Thompson: "Second."

Chair: "A motion for recess has been made and seconded. All those in favor, raise your hand."
[Members raise hands]

Chair: "All opposed?"
[No hands]

Chair: "Motion passes unanimously. We'll recess for 10 minutes and reconvene at 8:45."

Break Time (~10 min)

During/After the break...

1. Mayoral Candidates = Prepare to announce your candidacy (speech prep!).

2. Council Members = review your bills for the City Council Meeting.

3. After the break: The City Council Meeting Simulation Begins!