

Glossary of Terms for Common Council Meetings

Approve. Marked on agendas as APP. A motion by The Council to pass an item that would commit The City to action requiring the mayor's consent. When an item is approved, the approval motion is formally recorded by the Law Department and the city clerk then transmits the item to the mayor. The mayor has up to ten days to either sign (approve) or veto the item. If the mayor does not act at all on the item within 10 days, then the item is considered to be passed by default.

Approve with Conditions. Marked on agendas as APP w/ COND. A motion by The Council to pass an item that would commit The City to action requiring the mayor's consent, that will also be limited by unique restrictions placed on it by a council member.

Adopt. Marked on agendas as ADOPT. A motion made by The Council to pass an item that does not require the mayor's consent.

Receive and File. Marked as R&F. A Council motion to acknowledge receipt of an item and then remove it from meeting agendas. Once received and filed, the item exists in historical record, but is no longer considered up for discussion or pending action by The Council.

Without Recommendation. Marked as W/O Rec. A Council motion to advance an item from one meeting body, like a committee, to another, without recommending an action such as approve or deny.

Deny. Marked on agendas as DENY. A motion to have an item fail. Denials are final actions that will refuse the item's request and remove it from future consideration by The Council. Denials must be accompanied with stated reasons. These are often transmitted from a specific council member to the city clerk and the city's attorney.

Discharge. Marked on agendas as DISC or DISCHARGE. Items that are removed from a committee and placed on an agenda for the full Council to act on after that committee adjourned its most recent meeting.

Recommit. Marked as RECOMMIT. A motion to send an item back to the same committee that it was about to leave. This allows for more time for consideration by The Council.

Table. Marked as TABLED. A motion to pause deliberation on an item. There are no formal time limits on tabled items. Generally, if an item is tabled, it will remain there until at least the next meeting. However, items can be left on the table indefinitely.

Civil Service. Marked as CS. A regular committee of The Council to consider matters relating to human resources, civil services, and personnel.

Finance. Marked as FIN. A regular committee of The Council to consider matters relating to financial records, services, contracts, and the transfer of monies. As such this is also the committee most appropriate to review reports from the comptroller, regardless of the particular subject in the report.

Education. Marked as EDU. A special committee of The Council to consider matters relating to Buffalo Public Schools.

Police Oversight. Marked as POLO. A special committee of The Council to consider matters relating to Buffalo Police Department, community-police relations, and emergency services.

Legislation. Marked as LEG. A regular committee of The Council to consider matters relating to the passing or repealing of ordinances, permits, and licenses.

Community Development. Marked as CD. A regular committee of The Council to consider matters relating to the approval of real estate transactions, economic development plans, and neighborhood initiatives.

Claims. Marked as CLAIM. A special committee of The Council to consider claims against The City, including but not limited to personal injury, or unsettled payment agreements of the prior fiscal year. Due to the potential sensitive nature of these cases, it is not unusual to see the committee go into executive session to discuss details that may be harmful to individuals involved or damaging to pending litigation.