

**Town of Montreat
Board of Commissioners
Rules of Procedure**

(Adopted 11/14/2002)

(Revised 2/13/2003); (Revised 9/11/2003); (Revised 1/8/2004)

(Revised 8/14/2008); (Revised 2/12/2015)

Rule 1. Regular Meetings

The Board shall hold a regular meeting on the second Thursday of each month and said meeting shall begin at 7:00 p.m. During months when a Public Hearing is scheduled, the regular meeting will begin with the Public Hearing.

Rule 2. Special, Emergency and Recessed (or Adjourned) Meetings

A. Special Meetings. The Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, or any two members of the Board may at any time call a special meeting of the Board of Commissioners by signing a written notice stating the time and place of the meeting and the subject(s) to be considered. At least 48 hours before a special meeting is call in this manner, written notice of the meeting shall be (1) delivered to the Mayor and each Board member or left at his or her usual dwelling place; (2) posted on the Board's principal bulletin board in the Town Services Office and for information on the bulletin board in the Post Office; and (3) mailed or delivered to each newspaper, wire service, radio station, television station and person who has filed a written request for notice with the Town Clerk. Only those items of business specified in the notice may be transacted at a special meeting called in this manner, unless all members are present or those who are not present have signed a written waiver. Even in such a case, the Board shall only discuss or transact items not specified in the notice if it determines in good faith at the meeting that it essential to discuss or act on the item immediately.

A special meeting may also be called or scheduled by vote of the Board in open session during another duly-called meeting. The motion or resolution calling or scheduling the special meeting shall specify its time, place and purpose. At least 48 hours before a special meeting called in this manner, notice of the time, place and purpose of the meeting shall be (1) posted on the Board's principal bulletin board in the Town Services Office and for information on the bulletin board in the Post Office; and (2) mailed or delivered to each newspaper, wire service, radio station, television station and person who has filed a written request for notice with the Town Clerk. Such notice shall also be mailed or delivered at least 48 hours before the meeting to each Board member not present at the meeting at which the special meeting was called or scheduled, and to the Mayor if he or she was not present at that meeting. Only those items of business specified in the notice may be transacted at a special meeting called in this manner, unless all members are present or those who are not present have signed a written waiver. Even in such a case, the Board shall only discuss or transact items not specified in the notice if it determines in good faith at the meeting that it essential to discuss or act on the item immediately.

- B. Emergency Meetings.** Emergency meetings of the Board of Commissioners may be called only because of generally unexpected circumstances that require immediate consideration by the Board. Only business connected with the emergency may be considered at an emergency meeting. Once of the following two procedures must be followed to call an emergency meeting of the Board:
1. The Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, or any two members of the Board may at any time call an emergency meeting by signing a written notice stating the time and place of the meeting and the subject(s) to be considered. The notice shall be delivered to the Mayor and each Board member or left at their usual dwelling place at least six hours before the meeting.
 2. An emergency meeting may be held at any time when the Mayor and all members of the Board are present and consent thereto, or when those not present have signed a written waiver of notice provisions. Notice of an emergency meeting under (1) or (2) shall be given to each local newspaper, local radio station and local television station that has filed a written emergency meeting notice request including their telephone number(s) with the Town Clerk. This notice shall be given either by telephone or by the same method used to notify the Mayor and Board members and shall be given at the expense of the party notified.
- C. Recessed or Adjourned Meetings.** A properly called regular, special or emergency meeting may be recessed or adjourned to a time and place certain by a procedural motion made and adopted in open session during the regular, special or emergency meeting. The motion shall state the time and place where the meeting will reconvene. No further notice need be given of a recessed or adjourned session of a properly called regular, special or emergency meeting.

Rule 3. Organizational Meeting

On the second Thursday in December following a general election in which municipal officials are elected, the Board shall meet for the newly elected members to subscribe to the oath of Office as the first item of New Business. As the second item of New Business, the Board shall elect a Mayor Pro Tem from among its members. The organizational meeting shall not be held before the municipal election results are officially determined, certified and published in accordance with Subchapter IX of Chapter 163 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Rule 4. Agenda

I. Agenda and Regular Meetings

- A. The Town Clerk shall prepare a proposed agenda for each meeting. A request to have an item of business placed on the agenda for an agenda or regular meeting must be received in writing by the Town Clerk no later than the Friday before the first Thursday of each month.
- B. The Deputy Town Clerk shall perform the duties of clerk when the Town Clerk is absent.
- C. Any Board member, by a timely request, may have an item placed on the proposed agenda.
- D. The Town Clerk shall prepare the agenda packet to the Board. The packet shall include, for each item of business placed on it, as much background information on the subject as is available and feasible to reproduce. A copy of all the proposed ordinances shall be attached to the agenda. Each Commissioner shall receive a copy of the agenda packet by the Tuesday morning preceding the Agenda Meeting of the Board. Supporting background information for items on the agenda may be added after the Friday prior to the Agenda Meeting. The Board may elect to discuss or defer discussion until the following meeting. The agenda packet shall also be available for public inspection and distribution or copying when it is distributed to the Board members. The cost for copying shall be in accordance with the current Fee Schedule.
- E. The Board shall hold an Agenda Meeting on the Thursday before the regular monthly meeting to ask questions and thoroughly explore the proposals that must be voted on at the regular meeting. Additions to the regular monthly meeting agenda shall not be allowed unless an unexpected and pressing matter arises. This restriction avoids surprise and is consistent with the spirit of the Open Meetings Law, although neither is actually part of the law. As the first item of business at the Agenda Meeting, the Board shall discuss and adopt the agenda for the meeting.
 - 1. The Board may, by majority vote, add an item that requires immediate action that is not on the agenda. Written copies of particular documents connected with the item(s) shall be made available at the meeting to all Board members.

2. The Board may, by majority vote, add items to or subtract items from the proposed agenda, except that (a) the Board may not subtract items stated in the notice of a special meeting called by the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem or two Board members, unless those calling the meeting consent to the deletion; (b) the Board may not add items to the proposed agenda stated in the notice of special meeting called by the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem or two Board members, unless all members are present, or those who are absent sign a written waiver of notice; and (c) only business connected with the emergency may be considered at an emergency meeting.
 3. The Board may add items to the proposed agenda of a special meeting only if it determines in good faith at the meeting that it is essential to discuss or act on the item immediately.
 4. The Board may designate certain agenda items “for discussion and possible action.” Such designation means that the Board intends to discuss the general subject area of that agenda item before making any motion concerning that item.
- F. **Consent Agenda.** During the Agenda Meeting or prior to approval of the Consent Agenda, any Commissioner may have an item moved from the Consent Agenda to New Business for discussion. Prior to the approval of the Consent Agenda, the Mayor will ask if any member of the public has questions regarding items on the Consent Agenda; however, items can only be moved from the Consent Agenda at the request of the Mayor or a Commissioner.
- G. The Town Clerk will maintain a mailing list of interested parties who wish to receive a copy of the agenda regularly, and will mail or e-mail a copy of the agenda to those individuals on the mailing list but will not mail copies of the accompanying materials.
- H. **Open Meetings Requirement.** The Board may not deliberate, vote or otherwise take action on any matter by reference to a letter, number or other designation, or other secret device or method, with the intention of making it impossible for person attending a meeting of the Board to understand what is being deliberated, voted, or acted on.
- I. Resolutions, ordinances, motions and prepared statements must be in written form. Copies shall be provided for each Commissioner, the Mayor, the Town Administrator, the Town Clerk, the media packet and the public packet.
- J. Any attachment to the minutes shall be approved by a vote of the Commissioners.

- K. In the event of a divided vote, each side may furnish a signed explanation of its position within seven days of no greater than 100 words in length. This document may be attached as an appendix if approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

II. Special, Emergency and Workshop Meetings

- A. The Town Clerk shall prepare a proposed agenda for each meeting.
- B. The Town Clerk shall prepare the agenda packet to the Board. The packet shall include, for each item of business placed on it, as much background information on the subject as is available and feasible to reproduce. Each Board member shall receive a copy of the agenda packet. The agenda packet shall also be available for public inspection and distribution of copying when it is distributed to the Board members. The cost of copying shall be determined in accordance with the current Fee Schedule.
 - 1. Items may be added to the agenda in the following ways. The Board may, by majority vote, add an item that requires immediate action that is not on the agenda. Written copies of particular documents connected with the items shall be made available at the meeting to all Board members.
 - 2. The Board may, by majority vote, add items to or subtract items from the proposed agenda, except that (a) the Board may not subtract items stated in the notice of a special meeting called by the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem or two Board members, unless those calling the meeting consent to the deletion; (b) the Board may not add items to the proposed agenda stated in the notice of special meeting called by the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem or two Board members, unless all members are present, or those who are absent sign a written waiver of notice; and (c) only business connected with the emergency may be considered at an emergency meeting.
 - 3. The Board may add items to the proposed agenda of a special meeting only if it determines in good faith at the meeting that it is essential to discuss or act on the item immediately.
- C. The Board may designate certain agenda items “for discussion and possible action.” Such designation means that the Board intends to discuss the general subject area of that agenda item before making any motion concerning that item.

- D. The Town Clerk will maintain a mailing list of interested parties who wish to receive a copy of the agenda regularly, and will mail or e-mail a copy of the agenda to those individuals on the mailing list but will not mail copies of the accompanying materials.
- E. **Open Meetings Requirement.** The Board may not deliberate, vote or otherwise take action on any matter by reference to a letter, number or other designation, or other secret device or method, with the intention of making it impossible for person attending a meeting of the Board to understand what is being deliberated, voted, or acted on.
- F. Resolutions, ordinances, motions and prepared statements must be in written form. Copies shall be provided for each Commissioner, the Mayor, the Town Administrator, the Town Clerk, the media packet and the public packet.
- G. Any attachment to the minutes shall be approved by a vote of the Commissioners.
- H. In the event of a divided vote, each side may furnish a signed explanation of its position within seven days of no greater than 100 words in length. This document may be attached as an appendix if approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

Rule 5. Public Address to the Board

- A. Any individual or group who wishes to have an item of business placed on the agenda for the agenda or regular meeting of the Board shall make a written request to the Town Clerk. The Board shall determine at the meeting whether it will hear the individual or group. The time limit for any individual or representative of a group addressing the Board shall be three minutes, unless a majority of the Board agrees to additional time. Public comments will be heard at the end of the meeting for items not on the agenda.
- B. Commissioners are not expected to comment on matters brought to the Board during this time, but to delay action or comment until the Town staff has had an opportunity to research the subject matter and report any necessary and relevant information to all Board members.

Rule 6. Public Comments

- A. Public comments will be heard at the beginning of the meeting for items on the agenda. Any individual speaking during the public comment period shall address the entire Board and any polling of the Commissioners is inappropriate for public comment.
- B. The time limit for any individual or representative of a group addressing the Board shall be three minutes, unless a majority of the Board agrees to additional time.
- C. Commissioners are not expected to comment on matters brought to the Board during this time, but to delay action or comment until the Town staff has had an opportunity to research the subject matter and report any necessary and relevant information to all Board members.

Rule 7. Order of Business

I. Agenda Meeting

- A. Items shall be placed in the agenda according to the "Order of Business." The purpose of the agenda meeting is to ask questions and thoroughly explore proposals that must be voted on at the regular meeting.
- B. The Commissioners usually agree to discuss items and normally take action at the regular monthly meeting.
- C. The Commissioner placing an item on the agenda should present that item. Questions or comments from the other Commissioners will then be heard. The Commissioner will make it known if the proposed item will be placed on the agenda for a vote, considered for further discussion, delegated to staff or other boards or deleted.
- D. The meeting shall generally be limited to one and one-half hours.

II. Regular Meeting

- A. Items shall be placed on the agenda according to the "Order of Business." The Order of Business for each regular meeting shall be as follows:

- Welcome
- Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation
- Discussion and Adoption of Agenda
- Public Hearings (as needed or required by law)
- Presentations to Council (as needed)
- Mayor's Communications
- Consent Agenda
- Town Administrator's Communications
- Administrative Reports
- Public Comment for items on Agenda
- Old Business
- New Business
- Public Comment for items not on Agenda
- Commissioner Communications
- Closed Session (as permitted by law) – optional
- Return to open session and adjourn or continue

- B. However, by general consent of the Board, items may be considered out of this order. No item during the Town Administrator's report shall be given that requires a vote at that time, unless the Board has added said item to the agenda.
- C. Board approval to follow the meeting agenda automatically approves the Consent Agenda and approval of the minutes.
- D. Any attachment to the minutes must be approved by a vote of the Commissioners.
- E. The meeting shall generally be limited to one and one-half hours.

Rule 8. Office of the Mayor

- A. The Mayor shall preside at the meetings of the Board. A member must be recognized by the Mayor in order to address the Board. The Mayor shall have the following powers:

1. To rule any motions in or out of order, including the right to rule out of order any motion patently offered for obstructive or dilatory purposes;
 2. To determine whether a speaker has gone beyond reasonable standards of courtesy in his remarks and to entertain and rule on objections from other members on this ground;
 3. To call a brief recess at any time;
 4. To adjourn in an emergency;
 5. To vote to break a tie vote of the Commissioners.
- B. The Town Attorney, Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk or his or her designee shall act as parliamentarian.

Rule 9. Office of the Mayor Pro Tem

The Mayor Pro Tem shall be entitled to vote on all matters and shall be considered a Board member for all purposes, including the determination of a quorum. In the Mayor's absence, the Board may confer on the Mayor Pro Tem any of the Mayor's powers and duties. If the Mayor should become physically or mentally unable to perform the duties of his or her office, the Board may by unanimous vote declare that the Mayor is incapacitated and confer any of the Mayor's powers and duties on the Mayor Pro Tem. When the Mayor declares that he or she is no longer incapacitated and a majority of the Board concurs, the Mayor shall resume the exercise of his or her powers and duties. If both the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem are absent from the meeting, the Board may elect from among its members a temporary Chair to preside at the meeting.

Rule 10. When the Presiding Officer is in Active Debate

If the Mayor or other presiding officer becomes actively engaged in debate on a particular proposal, he or she shall designate another Board member to preside over the debate. The Mayor or other presiding officer shall resume presiding as soon as action on the matter is concluded.

Rule 11. Action by the Board

- A. The Board shall proceed by motion. Any member may make a motion.
- B. All motions require a second.
- C. A member may make only one motion at a time.

- D. A substantive motion is out of order while another substantive motion is pending.
- E. A motion shall be adopted by a majority of the votes cast, a quorum being present, unless otherwise required by these rules or the laws of North Carolina.
- F. The Mayor shall state the motion and then open the floor to debate on it. The Mayor shall preside over the debate according to these general principles:
 - 1. The member who makes the motion is entitled to speak first;
 - 2. A member who has not spoken on the issues shall be recognized before someone who has already spoken;
 - 3. To the extent possible, the debate shall alternate between opponents and proponents of the measure.

Rule 12. One Motion at a Time

A member may make only one motion at a time.

Rule 13. Substantive Motions

A substantive motion is out of order while another substantive motion is pending.

Rule 14. Adoption by Majority Vote

A motion shall be adopted by a majority of the votes cast, a quorum being present, unless otherwise required by these rules or the laws of North Carolina. A majority is more than half.

Rule 15. Voting by Written Ballot

The Board may choose by majority vote to use written ballots in voting on a motion. Such ballots shall be signed, and the minutes of the Board shall show the vote of each member voting. The ballots shall be available for public inspection in the Town Clerk's office immediately following the meeting at which the vote took place and until the minutes of that meeting are approved, at which time the ballots may be destroyed.

Rule 16. Debate

The Mayor shall state the motion and then open the floor to debate on it. The Mayor shall preside over the debate according to the following general principles:

- A. The maker of the motion is entitled to speak first;
- B. A member who has not spoken on the issues shall be recognized before someone who has already spoken;
- C. To the extent possible, the debate shall alternate between opponents and proponents of the measure.

Rule 17. Ratification of Actions

To the extent permitted by law, the Board may ratify actions taken on its behalf but without its prior approval. A motion to ratify is a substantive motion.

Rule 18. Procedural Motions

In addition to substantive proposals, the following procedural motions, and no others, shall be in order. All motions require a second before the motion can be discussed. Unless otherwise noted, each motion is debatable, may be amended and requires a majority vote for adoption.

In order of priority (if applicable), the procedural motions are:

Motion 1. To Appeal a Procedural Ruling of the Presiding Officer. A decision of the presiding officer ruling a motion in or out of order, determining whether a speaker has gone beyond reasonable standards of courtesy in his or her remarks, or entertaining and answering a question or parliamentary law or procedure may be appealed to the Board, as specified in Rule 8. This appeal is in order immediately after such a decision is announced and at no other time. The member making the motion need not be recognized by the presiding officer and the motion, if timely made, may not be ruled out of order.

Motion 2. To Adjourn. The motion may be made at any time by a member of the Board and requires a majority vote.

Motion 3. To Take a Brief Recess.

Motion 4. Call to Follow the Agenda. The motion must be made at the first reasonable opportunity or it is waived.

Motion 5. To Suspend the Rules. The Board may not suspend provisions of the rules that state requirements imposed by law on the Board. For adoption, the motion requires a vote

equal to two-thirds of the actual membership of the Board, excluding the Mayor, unless he or she may vote in all cases, and any vacant seats.

Motion 6. To Go Into Closed Session. The Board may go into closed session for one or more of the permissible purposes listed in N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a). The motion to go into closed session shall cite one or more of these purposes and shall be adopted at an open meeting. A motion based on N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a) shall also state the name or citation of the law that renders the information to be discussed privileged or confidential. A motion based on N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a) shall identify the parties in each existing lawsuit concerning which the Board expects to receive advice during the closed session, if in fact such advice is to be received.

Motion 7. To Leave Closed Session.

Motion 8. To Divide a Complex Motion and Consider It By Paragraph. This motion is in order whenever a member wishes to consider and vote on subparts of a complex motion separately.

Motion 9. To Defer Consideration. The Board may defer a substantive motion for later consideration at an unspecified time. A substantive motion whose consideration has been deferred expires 100 days thereafter unless a motion to revive consideration is adopted. If consideration of a motion has been deferred, a new motion with the same effect cannot be introduced while the deferred motion remained pending (has not expired). A member who wishes to revisit the matter during that time must take action to revive consideration of the original motion, or else move to suspend the rules.

Motion 10. Call of the Previous Question. The motion is not in order until there have been at least 20 minutes of debate, and every member of the Board has had at least once opportunity to speak.

Motion 11. To Postpone to a Certain Time or Day. In consideration of a motion that has been postponed, a new motion with the same effect cannot be introduced while the postponed matter remains pending. A person who wishes to revisit the matter must either wait until the specified time or move to suspend the rules.

Motion 12. To Refer to a Committee or Board. The Board of Commissioners may vote to refer a substantive motion to a committee for its study and recommendations. Sixty days after a motion has been referred to a committee or board, the introducer of the substantive motion may compel consideration of the measure by the Board of Commissioners, whether or not the committee has reported the matter back to the Board.

Motion 13. To Amend. An amendment to a motion must be pertinent to the subject matter of the motion. An amendment is improper if adoption of the motion with that amendment would have the same effect as rejection of the original motion. A proposal to substitute completely different wording for a motion or amendment shall be treated as a motion to amend. A motion may be amended, and that amendment may be amended but no further amendments may be made until the last-offered amendment is disposed of by vote. Any amendment to a proposed ordinance, policy, resolution or order shall be reduced to writing.

Motion 14. To Revive Consideration. The motion is in order at any time within 100 days after a vote to defer consideration of it. A substantive motion on which consideration had been deferred expires 100 days after the deferral, unless a motion to revive consideration is adopted.

Motion 15. To Reconsider. The motion to reconsider must be made by a member who voted with the prevailing side (the majority side except in the case of a tie, in which case the “noes” prevail) and at the meeting during which the original vote was taken, including an continuation of that meeting through recess or adjournment to a time and place certain. The motion cannot interrupt deliberation of a pending matter, but is in order at any time before final adjournment of the meeting.

Motion 16. To Rescind or Repeal. The Board may vote to rescind actions it has previously taken or repeal item it has previously adopted. The motion is not in order if rescission or repeal of an item is forbidden by law.

Motion 17. To Prevent Reconsideration for Six Months. The motion shall be in order immediately following the defeat of a substantive motion and at no other time. For approval, the motion requires a vote equal to two-thirds of the actual membership of the Board excluding the Mayor, unless he or she may vote in all cases, and vacant seats. If adopted, the restriction imposed by the motion remains in effect for six months or until the next organizational meeting of the Board, whichever occurs first.

Rule 19. Renewal of a Motion

A motion that is defeated may be renewed at any subsequent meeting unless a motion to prevent reconsideration has been adopted.

Rule 20. Withdrawal of a Motion

A motion may be withdrawn by the introducer at any time before a vote.

Rule 21. Duty to Vote

Every member must vote unless excused by the remaining members according to law. A member who wishes to be excused from voting shall so inform the presiding officer, who shall take a vote of the remaining members. No member shall be excused from voting except upon matters involving the consideration of his or her own financial interest or official conduct. In all other cases, a failure to vote by a member who is physically present in the meeting room or who has withdrawn without being excused by a majority vote of the remaining members present shall be recorded as an affirmative vote.

Rule 22. Introduction of Ordinances

A proposed ordinance shall be deemed introduced on the date the subject matter is first voted on by the Board. N.C.G.S. §160A-75 provides that an ordinance may not be finally adopted at the meeting at which is introduced except by at least a two-thirds vote of the actual membership of Board, excluding vacant seats and not including the Mayor unless he or she has the right to vote on all questions before the Board.

Rule 23. Adoption of Ordinances and Approval of Contracts

- A. An affirmative vote equal to a majority of all the members of the Board not excused from voting on the question at issue (including the Mayor's vote in case of an equal division) shall be required to adopt an ordinance, to take any action that has the effect of an ordinance, or to make, ratify or authorize any contract on behalf to the Town. In addition, no ordinance or action that has the effect of an ordinance may be finally adopted on the date of its introduction except by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the actual membership of the Board, excluding vacant seats and not including the Mayor. No ordinance shall be adopted unless it has been reduced to writing before a vote on its adoption is taken.

- B. An affirmative vote equal to three-fourths of all the members of the Board of Commissioners shall be required for an ordinance making a change in a zoning regulation, restriction or boundary to become effective, if a valid protest petition is received in accordance with the requirements set out in N.C.G.S. §160A-385(a) and N.C.G.S. §160A-386. This rule shall not apply in those cases excepted by N.C.G.S. §160A-385(a).

Rule 24. Adoption of the Budget Ordinance

- A. Notwithstanding the provisions of any general law or local act:

1. Any action taken with respect to the adoption of the Budget Ordinance may be taken at any regular, recessed or special meeting of the Board by a simple majority of those present and voting, a quorum being present.
2. No action taken with respect to the adoption or amendment of the Budget Ordinance need be published or is subject to any other procedural requirement governing the adoption of ordinance or resolutions by the Board other than those requires by North Carolina General Statues.
3. The adoption and amendment of the Budget ordinance and the levy of taxes in the Budget ordinance are not subject to the provisions of any Town Charter or local act concerning initiative or referendum.

Rule 25. Closed Sessions

The Board may hold Closed Sessions as provided by law. The Board shall only commence a Closed Session after a motion to go into Closed Session has been made and adopted during an open meeting. The motion shall state the purpose of the Closed Session and must be approved by a majority vote of those Board members present and voting. The Board shall terminate the Closed Session by a majority vote. Only those actions authorized by statute may be taken in Closed Session. A motion to adjourn or recess shall not be in order during a Closed Session.

Rule 26. Quorum

A majority of the membership of the Board shall constitute a quorum. The number required for a quorum shall not be affected by vacancies. A majority is more than half. A member who has withdrawn from a meeting without being excused by majority vote of the remaining members present shall be counted as present for purposes of determining whether or not a quorum is present.

Rule 27. Public Hearings

Public hearings required by law, or deemed advisable by the Board, shall be organized by a special order and adopted by a majority vote setting forth the subject, date, place and time of the hearing as well as any rules regarding the length of time allotted for each speaker and any other pertinent matters. The special order is adopted by majority vote. Its specifications may include, but are not limited to, rules fixing the maximum time allotted to each speaker; providing for the determination of spokespersons for groups or persons supporting or opposing the same positions; providing for the selection of delegates from groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions when the number of persons wishing to attend the hearing exceeds the capacity of the hall (so long as arrangements are made, in the case of hearings

subject to the Open Meetings Law, for those excluded from the hall to listen to the hearing); and providing for the maintenance of order and decorum in the conduct of the hearing.

All notice and other requirements of the Open Meetings law applicable to board meetings shall also apply to public hearings at which a majority of the Board is present; such a hearing is considered to be part of a regular or special meeting of the Board. These requirements also apply to hearings conducted by appointed committees of board members, if a majority of the committee is present. A public hearing for which any required notices have been given may be continued to a time and place certain without further advertisement. The requirements of Rule 2(C) shall be followed in continuing a hearing at which a majority of the Board, or of a board committee (as applicable) is present.

At the appointed time, the Mayor or presiding officer shall call the hearing to order and then preside over it. When the allotted time expires or when no one who has not yet spoken wishes to do so, the Mayor or presiding officer shall declare the hearing closed.

The regular meeting begins with a public hearing during those months when a public hearing is scheduled as announced during the prior month's meeting.

During those months when a public hearing is scheduled as announced during the prior month's meeting, the Board's regular meeting will begin with that public hearing. The moderator may restrict or elect not to hear comments of a repetitious nature or place a time limit on individual remarks. The Second Reading and Third Reading will not usually take place during the same meeting as the public hearing.

Rule 28. Quorum of Public Hearings

A quorum of the Board shall be required at all public hearings required by State law. If a quorum is not present at such a hearing, the hearing shall be continued until the next regular meeting without further advertisement.

Rule 29. Minutes

- A. Full and accurate minutes of Board proceedings, including Closed Sessions, shall be kept. The Board shall also keep a general account of any Closed Session so that a person not in attendance would have a reasonable understanding of what transpired. These minutes and general accounts shall be open to inspection by the public, except as otherwise provided in this rule. The exact wording of each motion and the results of each vote shall be recorded in these minutes, and on the request of any Board member, the "ayes" and "noes" upon any question shall be taken. Members' and other persons' comments may be included in the minutes if the Board approves.

- B. Closed Session minutes will be kept as required by law. Minutes of Closed Sessions shall be sealed and withheld from public inspection so long as public inspection would frustrate the purpose of the Closed Session. The minutes may be unsealed either by Board action or by action of an agent of the Board such as the Town Attorney, if and when the Closed Session's purpose would no longer be frustrated by making these records public.

Rule 30. Appointments

- A. The Board may consider and make appointments to other bodies, including its own committees, if any, only in open session. The Board may not consider or fill a vacancy among its own membership except in open session.
- B. Rather than proceeding by motion, the Board shall use the following procedure to make appointments to various other boards and offices:
- The Mayor shall open the floor for nominations, whereupon the names of possible appointees may be put forward by Board members.
 - The names submitted shall be debated.
 - When the debate ends, the Mayor shall call the roll of the Board members, and each member shall cast his or her vote.

If more than one appointee is to be selected, then each Board member shall have as many votes as there are slots to be filled. The votes from a majority of the Board members voting shall be required for appointment. A Board member may cast all of his or her votes or fewer than all of them, but he or she shall not cast more than one vote for a single candidate.

Rule 31. Committees and Boards

- A. **Establishment and Appointment.** The Board may establish and appoint members for such temporary and standing Town committees and boards as are needed to help carry out the work of Town government. Any specific provisions of law relating to the particular committees and boards shall be followed.
- B. **Open Meetings Law.** The requirements of the Open Meetings Law shall apply to all elected or appointed authorities, boards, commissions, councils or other bodies of the Town that are composed of two or more members and that

exercise or are authorized to exercise legislative, policy-making, quasi-judicial, administrative or advisory functions. However, the Law's requirements shall not apply solely to a meeting of the Town's professional staff.

Rule 32. Amendment of the Rules

These rules may be amended at any regular meeting or at any properly called special meeting that includes amendment(s) of the Rules as one of the stated purposes of the meeting, so long as the amendment is consistent with the Town Charter, general law, and generally accepted principles of parliamentary procedure. Adoption of an amendment shall require an affirmative vote equal or greater than two-thirds of all the actual membership of the Board, excluding any vacant seats and not including the Mayor.

Rule 33. References

- A. Suggested Rules of Procedure for a City Council, third edition by A. Fleming Bell, II is the source for these rules of procedure.

- B. To the extent not provided for in these rules and to the extent that the reference does not conflict with the spirit of these rules, the Board shall refer to Robert's Rules of Order for unresolved procedural questions.

Effective Date

This document shall become effective upon its adoption.