

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Sec. 1 ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

The Council shall meet on the call of the Town Manager within two weeks after election. The Council shall elect a Chair whose title designation shall be Mayor, a Vice Chair whose title designation shall be Deputy Mayor, and such other offices as it may determine necessary to serve for the ensuing period until the next local election.

Sec. 2 REGULAR MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Council shall be held in the Town Hall beginning at 7:30 p.m. on the second and the fourth Mondays of each month unless otherwise determined by the Council. In the event that said Mondays fall on a State or Federal holiday, meetings shall be held on the following Tuesdays.

Sec. 3 SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of the Council may be called by the Mayor or by not less than three members of the Council. Notice of a special meeting shall be given not less than forty-eight hours prior to the time of such meeting, not including Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, by filing a notice of the time and place thereof in the office of the Town Clerk. Any such notice received under this section shall be posted inside the office of the Town Clerk and be posted on the meeting board located outside of the Town Clerk's office, as well as on the Town's Web Site. The requirement that such notice be given not less than forty-eight hours prior to the meeting may be waived, in case of an emergency, by the Mayor or not less than three members of the Council, who shall state in such notice the specific nature of such emergency which would preclude the giving of such forty-eight hours notice. The notice shall specify the date, time, and place of the special meeting and business to be transacted. No other business shall be considered at such meeting. In addition, at least forty-eight hours prior to the time of such meeting, written notice shall be delivered to the usual place of abode of each member of the Council and the Town Manager so that such is received prior to such special meeting, unless the forty-eight hour notice is waived as set forth above. This notice may be delivered by either hand-delivery or electronic delivery. If delivered by electronic delivery, telephone calls shall be made to each member of the Council and the Town Manager by the Clerk of the Council that such a special meeting has been set. The requirement of delivery of any such notice may be dispensed with as to any member of the Council who is actually present at the meeting at the time it convenes.

The Clerk of the Council shall certify upon the original copy of the notice filed with the records of the Council by whom the meeting was called and the manner in which the notice was delivered to the members of the Council and the Town Manager.

Sec. 4 PUBLIC MEETINGS

No ordinance or resolution shall be adopted, nor appointment or removal of members of any permanent board, agency, committee or commission appointed shall be made except in a meeting of the Council open to the public. The same process shall be followed for the creation or dissolution of any such entity itself. Recommendations for appointment or removal of permanent committee members or creation or dissolution of such committees shall come from the Committee on Committees for approval by the Council. Any mayoral appointment or removal shall be made known publicly at the next meeting of the Council presided over by the Mayor.

At least one public hearing, five days notice of which shall be given by publication in a daily or weekly newspaper having a circulation in the Town and by posting at the Town Hall and on the Town Website, shall be held by the Council before any ordinance shall be passed.

Sec. 5 QUORUM

The presence of a majority of the members of the Council shall constitute a quorum, but no ordinance, resolution or vote, except a vote to adjourn or to fix the time and place of the next meeting of the Council shall be adopted by less than five affirmative votes.

Sec. 6 THE MAYOR

The Mayor shall preside at all meetings. The Mayor shall preserve order and decorum. The Mayor shall decide all questions or orders, without debate except at the Mayor's request. The Mayor may speak and vote on all questions. The Mayor shall be an ex-officio member of all Council sub-committees without the right to vote, except for those sub-committees to which the Mayor is appointed as a member.

In the absence of the Mayor for whatever cause arising, the Deputy Mayor shall act as Mayor and as such, shall have all the powers and duties of the office of the Mayor.

In addition, if neither the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor are available to preside at a Council meeting, a majority of the Council members present shall elect one of themselves to preside over the meeting. This presiding councilor shall only have the power to preside over that one meeting, shall preserve order and decorum, and shall decide all questions or orders without debate, except as the presiding councilor shall request.

The Mayor shall represent the Town as the titular head of the government at meetings of such officials representing other municipalities, ceremonies, public gatherings and upon such other occasions as the Mayor's presence in such capacity may be beneficial to the Town.

The Mayor shall designate committees of the Council and appoint and/or remove members thereto, subject to being overruled by the Council.

The Mayor shall designate ad hoc committees of the Council and ad hoc public community committees and appoint and/or remove members thereto. An ad hoc committee is defined as one that is created for a limited time and a specific, limited stated purpose. The specific time period need not be stated in the designation of the committee but may be contingent in the accomplishment of its specific objectives.

Sec. 7 CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

The Clerk of the Council shall be appointed by the Council and shall keep the minutes of its proceedings which shall be a public record, and perform other duties as may be assigned by action of the Council.

Sec. 8 THE TOWN MANAGER

The Town Manager shall attend all meetings of the Council with the right to speak but not to vote, and shall perform other such duties as may be assigned by the ordinance or resolution of the Council (Charter, Sec. 502). The Council by simple majority vote may also ask the Town Manager to perform such other duties as it may assign in accordance with his or her contract with the Town.

Sec. 9 COMMITTEES

The Council may also from time to time appoint permanent, standing committees of the Council. Permanent standing committees of the Council shall be:

- I. Finance
- II. Administration & Education
- III. Public Safety
- IV. Economic Development
- V. Committee on Committees
- VI. Community Services Committee

Sec. 10 ORDER OF BUSINESS OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

At all regular meetings of the Council the order of business shall be as follows:

- I. Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Roll Call
- III. Announcements and Presentations
- IV. Citizen's Statements and Petitions
- V. Report from Council Subcommittees
- VI. Council Business
- VII. Financial Report (second council meeting of the month only)

- VIII. Report from the Mayor
- IX. Report from the Town Manager
- X. Approval of Minutes
- XI. Council Comments
- XII. Executive Session (if needed)
- XIII. Adjournment

Sec. 11 PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Except when a member of the Council has or desires the floor, the Town Manager shall have the privilege of the floor for the purpose of providing information to the Council concerning the business and affairs of the Town. The Town Attorney shall likewise have the privilege of the floor on the introduction or interpretation of any existing or proposed ordinance or resolution or on any question of legal procedure.

It shall be the policy of this Council to allow members of the public to address the Council during Citizen's Statements and Petitions on all agenda items, or any other matters of concern. Statements by members of the public may be oral or written and shall start with the speaker's name and address and shall continue for no longer than five (5) minutes, unless permitted by the Mayor or councilor presiding. The Mayor or councilor presiding may permit additional statements by the same person during Citizen's Statements and Petitions or at such other times during the agenda of Council meetings as he or she deems appropriate, subject to being overruled by the Council.

Sec. 12 EXECUTIVE SESSION

The rules of procedure shall be

- (a) An executive session may be convened by affirmative vote of two-thirds of such body present and voting.
- (b) Attendance at the executive session shall be limited to the Council and such other persons as may be required for advice and information as permitted by State law.
- (c) Executive sessions shall be only for those purposes permitted by State law. Any motion for executive session shall so specify the reason. Discussion in executive session shall be limited to the reason specified.

Sec. 13 MOTIONS

When a motion is made and seconded, it shall be stated by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, or councilor presiding and subject to amendment or withdrawal, except that such withdrawal cannot be made subsequent to a voted amendment, except as provided by Robert's Rules of Order.

When a motion is under debate, no further action shall be received except (1) to adjourn, (2) to recess, (3) to table, (4) for the previous question, (5) to limit or extend debate, (6) to postpone to a time and date certain, (7) to refer to committee, (8) to amend, (9) to postpone indefinitely, which motions shall have precedence in the order indicated.

Motions to table, to postpone to a time and date certain or to postpone indefinitely once having been decided, shall not be reconsidered.

Sec. 14 VOTING

The ayes, nays or abstentions of each council member on each vote shall be recorded in the minutes. If the vote is unanimous, the vote shall be indicated as unanimous.

Sec. 15 CITIZEN'S PETITIONS

Any petition by a citizen requesting Council action shall be in writing and state the citizen's name and address. If six (6) members of the Council shall so vote, such petition shall lie over to one of the next three succeeding meetings of the Council, to be placed on the Agenda and taken up during item VI of the regular order of business; but in no event shall such petition be acted upon at a meeting at which the petition is presented.

Sec. 16 SPECIAL COUNCIL ASSIGNMENTS

The Mayor shall assign all members of the Council desiring such, with the approval of the Council, as liaisons with council-appointed Town committees and Town-related Agencies through and with the cooperation of the Town Manager, so as to be particularly informed in the assigned area of concern. Assignments will be made in the areas of Town operation that are deemed appropriate by the Council. Each appointee shall report to the Council upon request or at his or her own discretion as to matters related to his or her respective area.

Sec. 17 INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTIONS

All ordinances and resolutions except those relating to appointment or designation of officers of the Council or its internal procedure shall be introduced in accordance with Sections 307, 308, 309 and 310 of the Town Charter.

Sec. 18 PARLIAMENTARY AND CHARTER AUTHORITY

The last published edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for the Council, except as otherwise provided in these rules; and except that should any of these rules be inconsistent with the provisions of the Charter, then the Charter shall prevail, except that there may be discussion after a motion to table has been offered.

Sec. 19 MINUTES

The Clerk of the Council shall keep the minutes of all Council meetings which shall contain a summary of council discussions and actions. Any statements to be made part of the minutes must be submitted to the Clerk of the Council in writing during such meeting, provided, that any Town Financial reports submitted to the Council shall be appended to the minutes of that meeting.

Sec. 20 AGENDA

The Town Manager, in consultation with the Mayor, or in his or her absence with the Deputy Mayor, shall cause to be prepared an agenda containing those items of new business to be considered at each Council meeting. Such agenda shall consist of items originating from the Town Manager's office together with items requested by any Council member, and shall be completed on Tuesday noon next prior to the Council meeting date. No item which is not listed on the regular agenda shall be considered as new business by the Council unless, by a vote of two-thirds of the total membership of the Council, this provision is waived. Council members requesting that an item be included on the agenda shall be responsible for opening discussion on such item and providing facts necessary for any action requested on such item.

Sec. 21 TELEPHONIC AND ELECTRONIC VOTING

Telephonic voting shall only be permitted if the absent member of the Council can be verified through a computer link-up or similar manner so the absent member of the Council can be confirmed by the members of the Council physically present at the meeting. All verbal communication by the absent Council member must be by telephonic communication in a manner that can be heard by not only the rest of the Council but also by the Clerk of the Council and any members of the audience that are present, and, if such Council meeting is televised, by the watching public. This process can only be carried out if all other members of the Council have been notified not less than forty-eight hours in advance of the Council meeting at which this telephonic voting will take place.

Sec. 22 SUSPENSION OR AMENDMENT OF RULES

Any of these rules may be suspended by the affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Council, provided that such action is not inconsistent with any provisions of the Charter.

Any amendment to these rules shall be submitted in writing at any meeting of the Council and may be adopted by the affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Council at a subsequent meeting of the Council.

AMENDED: June 11, 2012