

Board of County Commissioners

Okaloosa County, Florida

Title: Procedures for Meetings of the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners

Date Adopted: April 1, 2014

Effective Date: April 1, 2014

Revised: March 7, 2017

SECTION 1: REFERENCES

Resolution No. 2014-76

Resolution No. 2017-67

Roberts Rules of Order Revised

SECTION 2: PURPOSE

The purpose of these Rules of Procedure ("Rules") is to provide for the smooth and orderly functioning of the business of the Board of County Commissioners ("Board") and to provide a basis for resolving questions of procedure when they arise.

SECTION 3: APPLICABILITY

These Rules shall govern all official meetings of the Board. The members of the Board, County staff, and the public shall adhere to these Rules.

SECTION 4: RULES OF ORDER

To the extent they are not in conflict with these Rules, *Roberts Rules of Order Revised* shall serve as a guide to official meetings of the Board. Accordingly, no action taken by the Board shall be deemed void or invalid because of the failure to adhere to *Roberts Rules of Order Revised*.

SECTION 5: PRESIDING OFFICER

The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Board. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall preside. In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, a presiding officer shall be selected by a majority vote of those Commissioners present. The presiding officer of the Board shall have the following functions:

- a. Opening the meeting and calling the meeting to order, having ascertained that a quorum is present.

b. Announce the business to come before the Board, in accordance with the prescribed order of business.

c. Recognizing Commissioners to speak.

d. Recognizing members of the public or staff to speak.

e. Deciding all questions of order.

f. Preserving decorum and order, and in case of disturbance or disorderly conduct in the Commission Chambers, may cause the same to be cleared or cause any disruptive individual to be removed in order to maintain and preserve decorum and civility.

g. Adjourning meetings when there is a sudden emergency affecting the safety of the Board and others.

The decision of the presiding officer shall stand unless reversed by a majority vote of the members present after the proper motion has been made and seconded to reverse such a decision.

SECTION 6: RULES OF DEBATE

a. Decorum.

1. Every Commissioner desiring to speak should address the Chairman, and upon said recognition by the Chairman, should confine discussion to the question under debate.

2. Commissioners shall refrain from: attacking another individual's motives; speaking adversely on a prior motion not pending; speaking while another Commissioner is speaking; speaking against their own motions; and generally disturbing the Board.

3. A Commissioner once recognized should not be interrupted when speaking unless the Commissioner is being called to order. The Commissioner should then cease speaking until the question of order is determined, without debate, by the Chairman. If in order, said Commissioner shall be at liberty to proceed.

4. A Commissioner shall be deemed to have yielded the floor when he/she has finished speaking. Commissioners may claim the floor only when recognized by the Chairman.

b. Motions.

1. A motion and a second to the motion shall precede any action on an agenda item. A second merely implies that the Commissioner agrees that the motion should come before the Board and not that he/she necessarily favors the motion.

2. Types of Motions:

- a) Main Motion: brings a matter before the Board.
- b) Divide the Question: divides a motion into two or more separate motions.
- c) Amend: modifies the main motion, in whole or in part.
- d) Postpone to a Certain Time: state the time the motion or agenda item will be resumed.
- e) Postpone Indefinitely: disposes of a question without bringing it to a direct vote.
- f) Close Debate: closes debate on the motion (same as "calling the question")

3. Steps in handling a motion:

- a) Any Commissioner wishing to make a motion shall address the Chairman. Once recognized, the Commissioner shall state the motion.
- b) Another Commissioner may second the motion.
- c) The Chairman restates the motion, thus placing it before the Board for consideration.
- d) Discussion ensues.
- e) The Chairman takes and announces the vote.

4. If the Chairman wishes to put forth or second a motion, he/she shall relinquish the Chair to the Vice-Chairman until the main motion, on which he/she spoke, has been disposed.

5. An amendment to a motion must be germane, that is, it must relate to the substance of the main motion. An amendment may not introduce an independent question, and an amendment may not serve as the equivalent of rejecting the original motion.

c. Debate.

1. Every Commissioner has the right to speak on every motion before it is finally acted upon.
2. All discussion must be confined to the immediately pending question and to whether or not it should be adopted.
3. No Commissioner may speak twice on the same motion as long as any other Commissioner who has not spoken on the motion desires to do so.

SECTION 7: VOTING.

- a. Voting. Unless otherwise directed by the Chairman, all votes shall be taken by voice or by electronic vote, if available.
- b. Tabulating the Vote. The Chairman shall tabulate the votes and announce the results.
- c. Duty to Vote. Every Commissioner must vote, unless they publicly stated that they are abstaining from voting due to a conflict of interest pursuant to Section 112.3143, Florida Statutes. If any Commissioner declines to vote "aye" or "nay" by voice or electronic vote, his/her silence or inaction shall be counted as an "aye" vote.
- d. Changing Vote. Any Commissioner may change his/her vote before the next item is called for consideration, or before a recess or adjournment is called, whichever occurs first, but not thereafter.
- e. Majority Vote; Supermajority Vote; Tie Vote. The passage of any motion, policy, ordinance or resolution shall require the affirmative vote of at least the majority of the Board who are present and eligible to vote. If a supermajority vote is required by Florida Statutes, this shall require the affirmative vote of a majority plus one member who are present and eligible to vote.

SECTION 8: AGENDA.

Prior to a Board's meeting, an agenda will be prepared and made available to the public which will set forth the matters that will be considered at the meeting. Additional matters may be added to the agenda and considered by the Board, with the affirmative vote of a supermajority of the Board, as that term is defined above.

SECTION 9: PERIODIC REVIEW

The Board shall periodically review these Rules and adopt any amendments deemed necessary. Amendments to these Rules shall be approved and adopted by the Board in the form of a resolution.