



# Village of Vernon

## Council Meeting

## Rules of Procedure

Adopted: December 21, 2016

**VILLAGE OF VERNON  
COUNCIL MEETING RULES OR PROCEDURE**

**A. REGULAR AND SPECIAL MEETINGS**

All meetings of the Village Council will be held in compliance with state statutes, including the Open Meetings Act, 1976 PA 267 as amended, and with these rules.

**1. Regular**

Regular meeting of the Village Council will be held on the third Wednesday of each month beginning at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Work Sessions**

Work Sessions of the Village Council will be held on first Wednesday of each month beginning at 6:00 p.m. Work Sessions will be devoted exclusively to the exchange of information relating to municipal affairs. No votes shall be taken on any matters under discussion nor shall any council member enter into a formal commitment with another member regarding a vote to be taken subsequently.

*\*If Village business arises of urgent nature then the Village President may recommend that council take action at a work session as long as it complies with OMA. \**

January work session will be combined with regular council meeting. During the months of June, July, August, September there will be no work sessions.

**3. Special meetings**

A special meeting shall be called by the clerk upon the written request of the President or any three (3) members of the Council on at least 24 hours written notice to each member of the Council served personally or by email. Special meeting notices shall state the purpose of the meeting. No official action shall be transacted at any special meeting of the Council unless the item has been stated in the notice of such meeting.

**4. Length of Meeting**

Regular meetings and Work Session Meetings shall conclude no later than 10:00 p.m., subject to extension by the council.

**5. Posting requirements for regular and special meetings**

- a. Within 10 days after the first day of each calendar year, a public notice stating the dates, times and places of the regular monthly Council meetings will be placed at the Village office.
- b. For a rescheduled regular or special meeting of the Council, a public notice stating the date, time and place of the meeting shall be posted at least 18 hours before the meeting at the Village office.
- c. The notice described above is not required for a meeting of the Council in emergency session in the event of a severe and imminent threat to the health, safety or welfare of the public when two-thirds of the members of the Council determine that delay would be detrimental to the Village's efforts in responding to the threat.

**6. Schedule of Meetings**

Any changes to the meeting schedule will be announced & posted as required by open meetings act.

**7. Minutes of regular, work session and special meetings**

The clerk shall attend the Council meetings and record all the proceedings and resolutions of the Council in accordance with Section 65.5 of the General Law Village Act of 1895 as amended and the Open Meetings Act. In the absence of the clerk, the deputy clerk shall temporarily perform the clerk's duties. In the absence of the clerk and deputy clerk, the Council may appoint one of its own members or another person to temporarily perform the clerk's duties.

**8. Location**

All Meetings will be held at Village Offices 120 E. Main St. Vernon unless otherwise rescheduled by resolution of the Council.

## **B. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS**

### **1. Meetings to be public**

All work session, regular and special meetings of the Council shall be open to the public and citizens shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard in accordance with such rules and regulations as the Council may determine, except that the meetings may be closed to the public and the media in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

All official meetings of the Council and its committees shall be open to the media, freely subject to recording by radio, television, and photographic services at any time, provided that such arrangements do not interfere with the orderly conduct of the meetings.

### **2. Agenda Preparation**

An agenda for each regular Council meeting shall be prepared by the Clerk, with approval of the President, with the following order of business:

- a. Call to order
- b. Pledge of Allegiance
- c. Roll call of Council
- d. Approval of Council minutes
- e. Approval of bills and accounts
- f. Call to audience (public comments)
- g. Special presentation
- h. Public hearings
- i. Items of business
- j. Communications to the council
- k. Call to audience (public comments)
- l. Adjournment

Work Session agendas shall also be prepared by the Clerk, with approval of the President with the following format:

- a. Call to order
- b. Pledge of Allegiance
- c. Roll Call
- d. Public Input
- e. Items of Business
- f. Council Input
- g. Public Input
- h. Adjournment

Agenda requests must be made to the Village Clerk, with the appropriate detailed supplementary information provided. The agenda deadline is noon on the Friday immediately prior to the meeting. If an item of business is specific to a property, the Clerk will give adequate notice to the property owner prior to meeting.

### **3. Agenda distribution**

Council members shall receive their agenda electronically no later than the Friday prior to the Council meeting.

### **4. Quorum**

A majority of the entire elected or appointed and sworn members of the Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all Council meetings. In the absence of a quorum, a lesser number may adjourn any meeting to a later date with appropriate public notice.

## **5. Attendance at council meetings**

Election to the Village Council is a privilege freely sought by the nominee. It carries with it the responsibility to participate in Council activities and represent the residents of the village. Attendance at Village meetings is critical to fulfilling this responsibility. A general law village Council is empowered by Section 65.5 of the General Law Village Act as amended to adjourn a meeting if a quorum is not present and compel attendance in a manner prescribed by its ordinance.

The Council may excuse absences for cause. If a council member has more than three (3) unexcused successive absences for regular or special Council meetings, the Council may enact a resolution of reprimand. In the event that the member's absences continue for more than three (3) additional successive regular or special meetings of the Council, the Council may enact a resolution of censure or request the council member's resignation or both.

## **6. Presiding officer**

The presiding officer shall be responsible for enforcing these rules of procedure and for enforcing orderly conduct at meetings. The President is the presiding officer. The Council shall appoint one of its member's President Pro Tempore, who shall preside in the absence of the president. In the absence of the President and President Pro Tempore, the member present who has the longest consecutive service on the Council shall preside.

## **7. Disorderly conduct**

The President may call to order any person who is being disorderly by speaking out of order or otherwise disrupting the proceedings, failing to be germane, speaking longer than the allotted time or speaking vulgarities. Such person shall be seated until the chair determines whether the person is in order.

If the person engaged in presentation is called out of order, he or she shall not be permitted to speak at the same meeting except by special leave of the Council. If the person shall continue to be disorderly and disrupt the meeting, the chair may order the Chief of Police or his or her designee to remove the person from the meeting. No person shall be removed from a public meeting except for an actual breach of the peace committed at the meeting.

## **C. CLOSED MEETINGS**

### **1. Purpose**

Closed meetings may be held only for the reasons authorized in the Open Meetings Act, which are the following:

- a. To consider the dismissal, suspension, or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent when the named person requests a closed meeting.
- b. For strategy and negotiation sessions connected with the negotiation of a collective bargaining agreement when either negotiating party requests a closed hearing.
- c. To consider the purchase or lease of real property up to the time an option to purchase or lease that real property is obtained.
- d. To consult with the municipal Attorney or another Attorney regarding trial or settlement strategy in connection with specific pending litigating or settlement position of the Council
- e. To review the specific contents of an application for employment or appointment to a public office when a candidate requests that the application remain confidential. However, all interviews by a public body for employment or appointment to a public office shall be held in an open meeting.
- f. To consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute.

### **2. Calling closed meetings**

At a regular or special meeting, the council members elected or appointed and serving, by a two-thirds roll call vote may call a closed session and under the conditions outlined in Section C1 of these procedures or Section 8 (15.268) of the Open Meetings Act. The roll call vote and purpose(s) for calling the closed meeting shall be entered into the minutes of the public part of the meeting at which the vote is taken.

### **3. Minutes of closed meetings**

A separate set of minutes shall be taken by the clerk, deputy clerk or designated secretary of the Council at the closed session. These minutes will be retained by the clerk, shall not be available to the public, and shall only be disclosed if required under a civil action, as authorized by the Michigan Open Meeting Act. These minutes may be destroyed one (1) year and one (1) day after approval of the minutes of the regular meeting at which the closed session was approved.

## **D. DISCUSSION AND VOTING**

### **1. Rules of parliamentary procedure**

The rules of parliamentary practice as contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Council in all cases to which they are applicable, provided that they are not in conflict with these rules, village ordinances or applicable state statutes.

The chair shall preserve order and decorum and may speak to points of order in preference to other council members. The chair shall decide all questions arising under this parliamentary authority, subject to appeal and reversal by a majority of the council members present.

Any member may appeal to the Council a ruling of the presiding officer. If the appeal is seconded, the member making the appeal may briefly state the reason for the appeal and the presiding officer may briefly state the ruling. There shall be no debate on the appeal and no other member shall participate in the discussion. The question shall be, "Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?" If the majority of the members present vote "aye," the ruling of the chair is sustained; otherwise it is overruled.

### **2. Conduct of discussion**

During the Council discussion and debate, no member shall speak until recognized for that purpose by the chair. After such recognition, the member shall confine discussion to the question at hand and to its merits and shall not be interrupted except by a point of order or privilege raised by another member. Speakers should address their remarks to the chair, maintain a courteous tone and avoid interjecting a personal note into debate.

No member shall speak more than once on the same question unless every member desiring to speak to that question shall have had the opportunity to do so.

The chair, at his or her discretion and subject to the appeal process mentioned in Section D.1, may permit any person to address the Council during its deliberations.

### **3. Ordinances and resolutions**

No ordinance, except an appropriation ordinance, an ordinance adopting or embodying an administrative or governmental code or an ordinance adopting a code of ordinances, shall relate to more than one subject, and that subject shall be clearly stated in its title.

A vote on all ordinances and resolutions shall be taken by a roll call vote and entered in the minutes unless it is a unanimous vote. If the vote is unanimous, it shall be necessary only to so state in the minutes, unless a roll call vote is required by law or by the Council rules.

### **4. Roll call**

In all roll call votes, the names of the members of the Council shall be called in alphabetical order with the President voting last.

## **5. Duty to vote**

Election to a deliberative body carries with it the obligation to vote. Council members present at a Council meeting shall vote on every matter before the body unless otherwise excused or prohibited from voting by law. A council member who is present and abstains or does not respond to a roll call vote shall be counted as voting with the prevailing side and shall be so recorded, unless otherwise excused or prohibited by law from voting. Conflict of interest, as defined by law, shall be the sole reason for a member to abstain from voting. The opinion of the Village Attorney shall be binding on the Council with respect to the existence of a conflict of interest. A vote may be tabled, if necessary, to obtain the opinion of the Village Attorney.

The right to vote is limited to the members of Council present at the time the vote is taken. Voting by proxy or by telephone is not permitted.

## **6. Results of voting**

In all cases where a vote is taken, the chair shall declare the result.

It shall be in order for any council member voting in the majority to move for a reconsideration of the vote on any question at that meeting or at the next succeeding meeting of the Council. When a motion to reconsider fails, it cannot be renewed.

## **E. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

### **1. General**

Each regular meeting agenda shall provide for reserved time for audience participation.

If requested by a member of Council, the presiding officer shall have discretion to allow a member of the audience speak at times other than reserved time for audience participation.

### **2. Length of presentation**

Any person who addresses the Council during a Council meeting or public hearing shall be limited to three (3) minutes in length per individual presentation. The clerk will maintain the official time and notify the speaker when their time is up.

### **3. Addressing the Council**

When a person addresses the Council, he or she shall state his or her name and home address. Remarks should be confined to the question at hand and addressed to the chair in a courteous tone. No person shall have the right to speak more than once on any particular subject until all other persons wishing to be heard on that subject have had the opportunity to speak.

## **F. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **1. Adoption and amendment of rules of procedure**

These rules of procedure of the Council will be placed on the agenda of the first meeting of the Council following the seating of the newly elected council members for review and adoption. A copy of the rules adopted shall be distributed to each councilmember.

The Council may alter or amend its rules at any time by a vote of a majority of its member after notice has been given on the proposed alteration or amendment.

### **2. Suspension of rules**

The rules of the Council may be suspended for a specified portion of a meeting by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present except that Council action shall conform to state statutes and to the Michigan and the United States Constitution.

### **3. Committees/Board Representatives**

Special committees may be established for a specific period of time by the President or by a resolution of the Council which specifies the task of the special committee and the date of its dissolution. All committees will meet as needed. Committee members will be appointed by the president. They shall be members of the Council. The President shall fill any committee vacancies. The committee member shall serve for their Council term. The President may reappoint members during that time to a different committee.

**a. Standing Committees/Representatives**

The Village shall have the following standing committees:

1. Finance/Administration – Consisting of President & Pro Tem
2. Building/Zoning – Consisting of President & Trustee

**b. Board Representatives** - the President may appoint specific members of Council to act as a representative for a specific project or department

- a. Library - Trustee
- b. Planning Commission – Trustee
- c. Downtown Development Authority – President

All board representatives will be appointed by the Village President and serve for their Council term. The Village President must serve on DDA according to the Downtown Development Authority Act. Each representative will report back to Council on happenings of the board. The President may reappoint members during that time to a different board.

**c. Citizen Task Forces**

Citizen task forces may be established by a resolution of the Council which specifies the task to be accomplished and the date of its dissolution. Members of such committees will be appointed by the president, subject to approval by a majority vote of the Council and must be residents of the village. Vacancies will be filled by majority vote of the Council in the same way appointments are made.

**4. Authorization for Contacting the Village Attorney**

The following officials (by title) are authorized to contact the Village Attorney regarding municipal matters:

- President
- President Pro-Tem (when acting as President)
- Clerk
- Police Chief

**ADOPTION**

Moved by Winkowski, Seconded by Kimmer to approve the amendments and adopt the Village of Vernon Council Meeting Rules of Procedure.

Yeas: Trustee Ethington, Rosser, Winkowski, President Pro Tem Kimmer, President Van Dusen

Nays: None

Adopted this 21 day of December, 2016

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Kristin Van Dusen -Village President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ellen R. Glass – Village Clerk