

TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF RICHMOND, RHODE ISLAND
RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. Purpose

These rules are adopted to establish uniform procedures for the conduct of town council meetings.

2. Officers

A. Each newly-elected town council shall first meet on the Tuesday after the board of canvassers certifies the election of at least three members. At that meeting, the town council shall elect a president and a vice president from among its members. The town clerk shall preside at the meeting until the president has been elected.

B. The officers elected at the first town council meeting of each term shall serve for the entire two-year term, except as provided in subsection C. below.

C. When, in the judgment of the other members of the town council, the president or vice president is unwilling or unable to satisfactorily perform his or her duties as an officer, the president or vice president may be removed from office. The affirmative vote of four town council members is necessary to remove a president or vice president from office.

D. If a president or vice president is removed from that position, or if a president or vice president is unable to complete his or her term as an officer, the town council shall elect another member to serve in that office for the remainder of the two-year term.

3. Meeting time and location

A. Regular town council meetings shall be held on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. except in July and August, when there shall be one meeting each month on a date designated by the town council. Any meeting may be rescheduled for cause.

B. Town council meetings shall take place in the town council chamber at the Richmond Town Hall or at any other location designated in advance by the town council.

C. No town council meeting shall continue past 9:00 p.m. unless a majority of the town council members present vote to allow the meeting to continue.

4. Agenda

A. The town clerk, in consultation with the town administrator, shall prepare the agenda for each town council meeting. A town council member who wishes to have a matter placed on the agenda for discussion or for a vote must submit the agenda item to the town clerk in writing no later than 4:00 p.m. on the Wednesday before the next scheduled meeting. The town clerk, in consultation with the town administrator, shall have the authority to decide whether agenda items submitted by members of the public will be placed on an agenda.

B. Items shall appear on the agenda in the following order:

1. Call to order.
2. Roll call.
3. Pledge of allegiance to the flag.
4. Resolutions.
5. Public hearings.
6. Consent agenda.
7. Public forum.
8. Town administrator's report
9. Police chief's report.
10. Public works director's report.
11. Finance director's report.
12. Other department reports.
13. Appointments and resignations.
14. Licenses.
15. Unfinished business.
16. New business.
17. Communications.
18. Closed session.
19. Resumption of open session.
20. Vote on matters taken up in closed session.
21. Adjournment.

C. An item may be added to the agenda by a majority vote of the town council members present, but the town council may not vote on that item except:

1. To refer the matter to another body or official, or

2. When a vote is necessary to address an unanticipated situation that requires immediate action to protect the public health, safety or welfare.

5. Conduct at meetings

A. The town council president shall preside at each meeting. If the president is absent, the vice president shall preside. If both the president and vice president are absent, the remaining members shall elect a president pro tempore. The town clerk shall preside over the election of a president pro tempore.

B. Every motion must be a concise statement of a proposed action. A motion should contain enough detail to make clear the purpose of the motion and the action to be taken.

C. A person who wishes to speak may do so only after being recognized by the presiding officer. After being recognized, the person shall identify himself or herself by name and, if the speaker's address is relevant to the matter being discussed, by address. The person shall direct his or her remarks to the presiding officer, not to any other town council member or any other person present.

6. Public forum

A. The purpose of the public form is to give members of the public an opportunity to bring to the attention of the town council matters that are not on the agenda for that meeting. The presiding officer shall have the authority to limit the length of time each person may speak to three minutes and the authority to prohibit any person from speaking more than once.

B. During the public forum, a town council member may respond to a comment made by a member of the public if that matter is not on the agenda, but town council members may not initiate discussion of a matter not on the agenda, and the town council may not vote on a matter not on the agenda except:

1. To refer the matter to another body or official, or
2. When a vote is necessary to address an unanticipated situation that requires immediate action to protect the public health, safety or welfare.

C. After town council discussion has concluded on any agenda item, but before town council members vote on that item, the presiding officer may, at his or her discretion, allow members of the public to comment on that agenda item. Public comment shall be confined to the matter under consideration. The presiding officer shall have the authority to limit the length of time each member of the public may speak, the authority to limit the total length of time members of the public may comment on an agenda item, and the authority to prohibit any person from speaking more than once.

7. General provisions

A. These rules are intended to supplement the provisions of the Richmond Home Rule Charter and the Richmond Code of Ordinances. In a case of a conflict between these rules and the charter or code, the charter or code provision shall supersede these rules.

B. Any of these rules may be temporarily suspended by a majority vote of the town council.

C. Procedural matters not addressed in these rules shall be governed by the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief*, published by the Robert's Rules Association.

D. These rules shall remain in effect until amended or repealed by the town council.

Adopted 15 September 2015

Amended 5 September 2017

Amended 18 December 2018

Amended 21 September 2021

Amended 7 June 2022

Amended 20 December 2022

Amended 18 July 2023 by the addition of Addendum A

Amended 15 August 2023

ADDENDUM A

Procedure for Appointment of Volunteer Members of Boards and Commissions

A. The purpose of this policy is to establish a fair and orderly process for appointing volunteer members of boards and commissions.

1. The town clerk's office will maintain a list of vacant seats on boards and commissions. The list will be posted at the town hall and on the town website.
2. Near the end of each term of a sitting board or commission member, the town clerk will ask that member whether he or she would like to be reappointed.
3. New applicants must certify that if appointed, they will review the on-line recording of the most recent open government summit sponsored by the R.I. Attorney General's Office (<https://riag.ri.gov/about-our-office/divisions-and-units/civil-division/government-litigation/open-government-0>) and the on-line ethics training offered by the R.I. Ethics Commission (<https://ethics.ri.gov/ethics-education>) within 60 days of their appointment.
4. New applicants must attend, either in person or remotely, the town council meeting at which their appointment will be considered.
5. Criteria for appointment to a board or commission include, but are not limited to:
 - a) The person's professional experience, expertise, or interest in the subject matter regularly considered by the board or commission.
 - b) If the person is a new applicant, the person's anticipated ability to regularly attend all board or commission meetings.
 - c) If the person is an incumbent, the person's record of attendance during the most recent term served.
6. Requests for reappointment by incumbents will be listed first on the meeting agenda. If someone in addition to an incumbent applies for appointment to a seat, the town clerk will notify the incumbent so that he or she may appear in person at the town council meeting or may write to the town council explaining why he or she would like to be reappointed.
7. If an alternate member of the zoning board of review or the board of canvassers wishes to be appointed to a full seat, the alternate member will submit an application to the town clerk for appointment to the full seat and a resignation from the alternate seat that is conditional on appointment to the full seat. Both the application for appointment and the

conditional resignation will be listed on the meeting agenda. If the town council votes to appoint the alternate to a full seat, the town council will vote to accept the resignation. If the town council does not vote to appoint the alternate to a full seat, the town council may vote to file the resignation.

8. If a member of a board or commission does not request reappointment, the town clerk will notify the board or commission, will include the seat on the list of vacant seats on boards and commissions, will include the correspondence in the communications section of the next town council meeting agenda, and will send a letter on behalf of the town council thanking the person for his or her service to the town.

9. If a member of a board or commission resigns before the end of a term, the town clerk will notify the board or commission, will include the seat on the list of vacant seats on boards and commissions, and will include the resignation correspondence in the appointments and resignations section of the next town council meeting agenda for acceptance by the Town Council.

B. This policy shall remain in effect until amended or repealed by the town council.

Date of Adoption: 18 July 2023