

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
RULES OF ORDER
TUSCOLA COUNTY, MICHIGAN
Revised 1/2/13**

1. PURPOSE

These rules are adopted by the Board of Commissioners of Tuscola County pursuant to Section 46.11 of the Compiled Laws of Michigan, as amended.

2. MEETINGS

2.1 Organizational Meeting

The first meeting in each calendar year shall be the organizational meeting. At each such meeting, the County Clerk shall preside at the start of the meeting. The organizational meeting may be held in December of the current year provided all current commissioners remain unchanged for the next two year term. If there are any commissioner changes for the next two year term, then the organizational meeting shall be held within 72 hours after New Year's Day.

The first item of business shall be election of the Chairperson of the Board. There are two procedural steps related to electing the Chairperson that have to be decided prior to conducting the election:

The Board Chairperson shall be elected each odd numbered year for a 2-year term, unless the Board provides by resolution that the chairperson shall be elected annually to a 1-year term. The Board needs to make a decision on this term length. If no action is taken the Michigan law states the term shall be for 2-years.

The Board also needs to make a decision regarding the potential use of a secret ballot. State law provides that the vote of the Chairperson may be accomplished by way of a secret ballot. If the Board chooses to conduct the election of the Board Chairperson by secret ballot, a majority of the Board must first vote to do so.

Unless a secret ballot is chosen, the clerk shall call for nominations for the office of chairperson and when nominations are closed by majority vote or no other nominations are forthcoming, the clerk shall call for a vote. When one nominee receives a majority of the votes of the members elected and serving, the nominee shall be declared chairperson.

The next order of business is to proceed with the election to the office of Vice-chairperson, which shall be conducted by roll call vote.

There is no statutory provision for the election of the vice-chairperson by secret ballot or to have a 2-year term, therefore the vice-chairperson is elected for a 1-year term.

2.2 Regular Meetings

At its first meeting in each calendar year, the Board of Commissioners shall establish its schedule including meeting times of regular meetings for the balance of the year.

2.3 Special Meetings

The Board of Commissioners shall meet in special session upon the call of the chairperson of the board. The chairperson may convene a meeting of the Board upon his/her discretion. Notice shall be given as provided in Rule 3.3.

2.3.1 As an alternate means of calling a special meeting, upon the written petition filed with the county clerk and signed by one-third or more of the members. The petition for a special meeting shall specify the time, date, place, and purpose of the meeting.

2.4 Emergency Meetings

Emergency meetings of the Board of Commissioners may be held only with the approval of two-thirds of the members of the Board and only if delay would threaten severe and imminent danger to the health, safety, and welfare of the public. A meeting is defined as an emergency meeting only if it must be held before public notice as provided in Rule 3.3 can be given. Actions taken at an emergency meeting should be ratified at the next publicly noticed meeting.

2.5 Place of Meetings

Meetings of the Board of Commissioners shall be held in the chambers of the HH Purdy Building (125 W. Lincoln Street, Caro) unless public notice of the meeting states a different location. Whenever the regular meeting place of the Board shall appear inadequate for members of the public to attend, the chairperson may change the meeting location to a larger facility in the county. A notice of such change shall be prominently posted on the door of the regular meeting place.

2.6 Time of Regular Meetings

The time of regular meetings shall be stated in the regular schedule of meetings adopted under Rule 2.2. Matters on the agenda and not yet acted upon at the time of adjournment will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting or special meeting if one is called.

2.6.1 Change in Schedule

Change in the regular meeting schedule shall not be made except upon the approval of a majority of the members. In the event the Board shall meet and a quorum is not present, the Board, with the approval of those present, may adjourn the meeting to a later day and time provided that proper notice to members and the public is given.

3. PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETINGS

The county clerk shall provide the proper notice for all meetings of the Board. Such notice shall include, but not necessarily be limited to the following:

3.1 Regular Meetings

Posting a notice within 10 days after the first meeting of the Board in each calendar year indicating the date, time, and place of the Board's regularly scheduled and committee meetings.

3.2 Schedule Change

Whenever the Board shall change its regular Board schedule of meetings, a posting of notice of the change will be done by the clerk within three days following the meeting in which the change was made. Committee meeting changes from the original schedule will be posted by the Controller/Administrator's Office.

3.3 Special and Emergency Meetings

If the Board shall schedule a special meeting under Rule 2.3 or an emergency meeting under Rule 2.4, notice of such meeting shall be posted immediately by the clerk. No meeting, except emergency meetings, shall be held until the notice shall have been posted at least 18 hours. Commissioners will be notified by written or telephone communication of said meeting.

4. QUORUM, ATTENDANCE, CALL OF THE COUNTY BOARD

4.1 Quorum

A majority of commissioners of the Board, elected and serving, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of ordinary business of the Board.

4.2 Attendance

No member of the County Board may absent himself or herself without first having notified the chairperson of his or her intent to be absent from a scheduled meeting.

5. AGENDA FOR MEETINGS

5.1 Agenda Preparation Responsibility

The Controller/Administrator, after first reviewing pending matters and requests, shall prepare a draft of the agenda of business for all regularly scheduled Board of Commissioners, committee, and other meetings. The chairperson of the Board or chairperson of the respective committee shall review and add or delete items, as he/she considers proper. Unanticipated agenda items that require discussion or decisions may be covered under the other business agenda reference. It is each individual's responsibility to attend the meeting to understand other business items that may be covered.

5.2 Distribution of Regular Board of Commissioner Agenda and Materials

Upon completion of the agenda for the regular Board meeting, the Controller-Administrator shall immediately distribute to Commissioners copies of the agenda together with copies of reports, etc. which shall relate to matters of business of the agenda.

Unless extenuating circumstances arise, a paper copy of the agenda and attachments will be sent enough in advance of the scheduled meeting date to allow commissioner review prior to the meeting. A paper copy of the complete agenda and attachments is made available in the Controller/Administrator's Office. An electronic copy of the agenda and attachments is also made available on the county web www.tuscolacounty.org. The Controller/Administrator's office electronically notifies all department heads and other requesting parties when agendas are available on the website.

It is stressed that other agenda items may be added the day of the meeting. Also, certain items may be covered under the agenda heading "other business/on-going matters."

5.3 Distribution of Committee Meeting Agendas

Committee agendas (in draft form) will be made available electronically via the county website in advance of the scheduled meeting. The Controller/Administrator's Office also notifies all department heads and other requesting parties when the agenda is available on the website. It is stressed that other agenda items may be added the day of the meeting. Also, certain items may be covered under the agenda heading "other business/on-going matters." There may be extenuating circumstances where it is not possible to distribute the agenda in advance of the meeting.

5.4 Consent Agenda

The Board shall use a "Consent Agenda" according to the resolution and rules approved by the Board on January 25, 2000. The consent agenda motions will be prepared by the Controller/Administrator's Office.

5.5 Order of Business

The order of business at all Board meetings shall follow the following agenda, unless the Board approves modifications during the "Agenda" section of the meeting:

- a. Call to Order
- b. Prayer
- c. Pledge of Alliance
- d. Roll Call
- e. Adoption of Agenda
- f. Action on Previous Meeting Minutes
- g. Brief Public Comments
- h. Consent Agenda
- i. New Business
- j. Old Business
- k. Correspondence
- l. Committee and Liaison Reports
- m. Closed Sessions (if necessary)
- n. Extended Public Comment
- o. Adjournment

6. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

6.1 Chairperson

The person elected chairperson in the first meeting each year of the Board shall preside at all meetings of the Board. In the absence of the chairperson, the person elected vice-chairperson shall preside. If neither the chairperson nor the vice-chairperson is present, the clerk shall preside until the commissioners present elect a commissioner to preside during the absence of the chairperson or vice-chairperson.

6.2 Form of Address

Any person, including Board members, wishing to speak at a meeting shall first obtain the approval of the chairperson and each person who speaks shall address the chairperson, and not other members of the audience, other commissioners or staff in attendance.

6.3 Disorderly Conduct

The chairperson shall call to order any person who is being disorderly by speaking or otherwise disrupting the proceedings, by failing to be germane, by speaking longer than the allotted time, by speaking vulgarities, or by violating Board rules. Such person shall there upon be seated until the chairperson shall have determined whether the person is in order. If a person so engaged in presentation shall be ruled out of order, he or she shall not be permitted to speak further at the same meeting except upon special leave by the Board of Commissioners. If the person shall continue to be disorderly and to disrupt the meeting, the chairperson may order the person to leave the meeting. Since the purpose of the meeting is to discuss public business and not address individual personalities, "personal attacks" on government officials are prohibited and shall be considered "out of order".

6.4 Brief and Extended Public Comment Period

A brief public comment period will be provided early on the Board agenda. Comments during this period will be limited to 3 minutes in order to leave time for the Board to conduct other items on the agenda unless this time is waived by the Chairperson.

Another public comment period will be provided later on the agenda with the length of public comment extended. The length of comment during this period will be at the discretion of the Chairperson.

6.5 Procedures to Address the Board

Any person who addresses the Board shall state their name for the record. When there are many people who desire to address the Board, the Chairperson may implement other reasonable rules for public participation, including but not limited to requiring the completion of a written request to speak at the meeting.

7.0 RECORD OF MEETINGS

7.1 Minutes and Official Records

The county clerk shall be clerk of the Board and shall be responsible for maintaining the official record and minutes of each meeting of the Board. The minutes shall include all the actions and decisions of the Board. The minutes shall include the names of the mover and seconder and the vote of the commissioners. The record shall also state whether the vote was by voice or by roll call; when by roll call, the record shall show how each member voted. The clerk shall maintain, in the office of the clerk, copies

of each resolution and ordinance or other matter acted upon by the Board. The official minutes, however; may refer to those matters by an identifying number and the descriptive title of the ordinance, resolution/motion, or other matter.

7.2 Record of Discussion

The clerk shall not be responsible for maintaining a written record or summary of the discussion or comments of the Board members nor of the comments made by the members of the public.

7.3 Request for Remarks to Be Included

Any Commissioner may have his or her comments printed as part of the record upon the concurrence of a majority of the other members. Comments to be included in the record shall be provided in writing by the member.

7.4 Public Access to Meeting Records

The clerk shall make available to members of the public the records and minutes of the Board meetings in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. Draft board minutes, prepared but not approved by the Board, shall be available for public inspection not more than eight business days following the meeting. Minutes approved by the Board shall be available within five business days of the meeting at which they were approved. The Board shall also promptly mail copies of minutes to persons who have subscribed and paid the fee therefore as determined by the Board, consistent with any requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.

7.5 Board Stationery

County Board stationery cannot be used for personal commissioner use unless approved by the Full Board of Commissioners.

8.0 COMMITTEES

8.1 Committee of the Whole

All commissioners shall serve on a Committee of the Whole which will be advisory only but responsible for making recommendations to the Board but not decisions for the Board. The Committee of the Whole may have topic leaders whereby a commissioner is assigned to lead topics areas such as finance, personnel, building and grounds, etc. The County Clerk shall keep minutes of these meetings. The consent agenda motions will be prepared by the Controller/Administrator's Office.

8.2 Statutory Finance Committee

A Statutory Finance Committee (consisting of all five commissioners) will be responsible for review and approval of all claims and per diems. In the event that the Statutory Finance Committee meets in a continuous meeting setting with the Full Board or a Committee of the Whole meeting, the Statutory Finance Committee meeting shall be separately called, opened and adjourned, and separate minutes shall be kept. The County Clerk must keep the minutes of this meeting. The County Clerk will maintain minutes of all Statutory Finance Committee meetings and shall make them available to necessary parties and they shall be included with each Board packet.

8.3 Grievance Committee

Two commissioners will be appointed and serve on the union contract grievance committee.

8.4 Commissioner Appointments

The Board chairperson shall appoint commissioners to various boards and commissions and in certain cases as a liaison to boards and commissions.

9.0 CLOSED MEETINGS

9.1 The vote to hold a closed meeting shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision was made.

9.2 The Board of Commissioners may meet in closed session, closed to members of the public, upon the motion of any member and roll call approval by two-thirds of the members for the following purposes:

9.2.1 To consider the purchase or lease of real property, until an option to purchase or release that property is obtained.

9.2.2 To consult with its attorney regarding trial or settlement strategy in connection with specific pending litigation, but only when an open meeting would have a detrimental financial effect on the litigating or settlement position of the county Board.

9.2.3 To consider a County attorney's written opinion.

9.2.4 To review the specific contents of an application for employment to a county position and the applicant requests that the application remains confidential. Whenever the Board meets to interview an applicant, the meeting shall be open to the public.

9.2.5 Other Reasons

The Board may also meet in closed session for the following reasons without the requirement of a two-thirds vote:

9.2.5.1 To consider the dismissal, suspension, or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, or to consider a periodic personnel evaluation of a public officer, employee, staff member, or individual agent if the named person requests a closed hearing. If the person rescinds his/her request for a closed hearing the matter at issue shall thereafter be considered only in open public meeting.

9.2.5.2 To consider strategy connected with the negotiation of a collective bargaining agreement.

9.2.5.3 To consider any other matter authorized as a topic of a closed meeting by the Open Meetings Act, upon the proper vote specified therein.

9.3 Minutes, Closed Meetings

Generally, the County Clerk shall prepare the minutes for closed meetings. If the Board Chair determines that it would be inappropriate for the Clerk to attend the closed meeting, he shall designate another party to take the minutes. The County's attorney may review the draft minutes of the Closed Meeting. The minutes are to be sealed and kept in the County Clerk's office. Such minutes do not have to be approved by the Board. The minutes shall not be disclosed to the public except upon the order of a court. With the approval of the Board Chair, the Clerk may destroy the minutes after one year and one day have passed after the meeting at which the Board approved the minutes of the meeting at which the Board voted to hold the closed meeting.

10. MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

10.1 Statement by Chairperson, Motions, and Resolutions

No motions or resolution shall be adopted until the presiding officer states the motion. All motions, except procedural motions and resolutions, may be required to be in writing upon the demand of any member. A request to recess for the purpose of writing out a motion or resolution shall be in order.

10.2 Rank of Motions

- a. Privileged Motions
- b. Fix the time to which to adjourn (to set the time for next meeting)
- c. Adjourn
- d. Recess
- e. Raise a question of privilege
- f. Call for orders of the day

10.3 Subsidiary Motions

- a. Lay on the table
- b. Call the previous question (immediately to close debate and making of subsidiary motions except lay on the table)
- c. Limit or extend the limits of debate
- d. Postpone to a certain time (postpone definitely)
- e. Refer to a committee
- f. Amend the main motion
- g. Postpone indefinitely
- h. Clear the floor of all motions

10.3.1 Main Motion

10.3.2 Non-debatable Motions

The motions to fix the time of the next meeting, adjourn, recess, point of privilege, call for orders of the day, to table, vote immediately, limit or extend debate shall be ordered and voted upon without debate.

10.4 Procedural Motions

10.4.1 Motion to Reconsider

The motion to reconsider shall be in order on any question that the Board has decided, but no question shall be reconsidered more than once. The motion to reconsider shall be in order on the same day as the vote to be reconsidered was taken, or at the following meeting. The motion to reconsider shall be made only by a member who voted with the prevailing side. A motion to reconsider a motion to amend shall not be in order if the main question has been voted upon. If the Board has adopted a motion to reconsider, however, motions to amend shall be in order.

10.4.2 Motion to Clear the Floor

The motion to clear the floor may be made by the chairperson or a member, whenever procedural matters have become sufficiently confused. If the motion to clear the floor has been adopted, it shall clear the floor of all motions as though they have been withdrawn. The motion shall not be subject to debate nor, if adopted, to reconsideration.

10.4.3 Temporary Suspension of the Rules

These rules may be suspended temporarily at any time by vote of two-thirds of the members elected and serving to achieve any legal objective of the Board in a legal manner.

10.4.4 Appeal Rulings of the Chairperson

Any Commissioner may appeal the ruling of the chairperson. On all appeals receiving a second, the question shall be "Shall the decision of the Chairperson stand as the decision of the County Board of Commissioners?"

11. VOTING

11.1 Abstaining from Voting

Whenever the Chair puts a question to the members, every commissioner present shall vote on the question. No member present shall abstain from voting "yes" or "no". In the event that a member refuses to declare a "yes" or "no", the Chair shall direct the Clerk to record the vote as a "no" vote.

11.2 Roll Call Votes

The names and votes of commissioners shall be recorded on Board actions to adopt final measures such as ordinances, resolutions, appointment or election of officers, etc. The election of the Board chairperson may be by secret ballot with the approval of a majority of commissioners present. Upon the demand of one fifth of the commissioners, a roll call vote shall be taken on other motions and actions.

11.3 Voting Via Voice

When in the judgment of the chairperson, the Board of Commissioners will cast a unanimous vote on the question on the floor, the Chairperson may put the questions to the members by stating: "Without objection, the chair will direct the clerk to enter

a unanimous affirmative (or negative) vote on the question. Is there objection? Hearing none, the clerk is directed to enter a unanimous affirmative (or negative) vote on the question.” At this point, the clerk shall enter an affirmative (or negative) vote for each of the members present.

If any member objects, he or she should do so aloud. Whereupon, the chairperson shall direct the clerk to call the roll.

11.4 Votes Required

Procedural and other questions arising at a meeting of the Commissioners, except for those decisions required by statute to have a higher majority, shall be decided by a majority of the members present. A majority of the members elected and serving shall be required for final passage or adoption of a measure, resolution, or the allowance of a claim.

12. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Robert’s Rules of Order (Newly Revised) shall govern all questions of procedure not otherwise provided by these rules or by state or federal law. The legal counsel to the Board or other person so designated by the Board shall serve as the Board’s parliamentarian and shall advise the presiding officer regarding rules of procedure.

13. INTRODUCTION AND ADOPTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTIONS

13.1 Definition

Any action regarding the operation or administration of a department of the county government or containing policies of the Board of Commissioners applicable to one or more departments of the county, and not adopted as an ordinance, shall be declared administrative policy.

13.2 Introduction

Any commissioner may introduce an administrative resolution at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Commissioners in the regular order of business.

13.3 Order for Consideration

The regular order for consideration of proposed administrative resolutions shall be:

13.3.1 Introduction, first reading by title, and reference to the appropriate committee, as determined by the Board chairperson.

13.3.2 Report by the committee considering the proposal and placement on the agenda under new business – adoption of resolutions.

13.3.3 Full Board discussion and vote. Each member shall be given opportunity to discuss the resolution and offer such amendments as she or he shall consider appropriate. Amendments shall be made in the following forms:

“I move to amend by striking the following (sections or words).”

“I move to amend by striking the following (sections and words) and inserting the following (sections or words).”

“I move to amend by inserting the following (lines or words) after (describe the location).”

“I move to amend by adding the following (lines or words) after (describe the location).”

Before calling for a vote on the proposed amendment, the chairperson shall direct the clerk to read the proposed amendment and to state how the section or sentence will read if the amendment is approved. Thereafter, the chairperson shall call the question on the amendment.

13.3.4 Form

Each administrative resolution shall conform to the form required for introduction and adoption.

13.5 Committee Review

The chairperson of the Board shall refer all proposed administrative resolutions to an appropriate committee of the Board. The committee shall review the proposal and invite effected departments of the county to comment and offer explanations. The committee, in its report, shall include a summary of the comments and objections to the resolution. Any administrative resolution reported without recommendation shall automatically lie on the table until ordered removed by the Board.

13.6 Adoption

The Board of Commissioners may adopt the committee recommendation or refer the report to a standing committee where further consideration can be given. On the final adoption of a proposed amendment, the vote shall be taken by a record roll call or in accordance with Rule 11.3. A majority of the commissioners elected and serving shall be required for adoption, unless a statute requires a larger number of votes to adopt the policy.

13.7 Notification

Upon the final adoption of an administrative resolution, the Board secretary shall notify each county department head of the Board action. Such notification shall be by title or summary. The Board secretary shall make available a copy of the full administrative resolution.

13.8 Record of Administrative Resolutions

The clerk shall keep a copy of each administrative resolution of the Board in a separate file or book with appropriate subcategories according to subjects covered. The record of each administrative resolution shall provide the date of adoption, the record vote of each commissioner, and any amendments thereto adopted by the Board.

14. INTERPRETATION & OPERATION

14.1 Intent Controls

These Rules shall be interpreted in a manner to effectuate their intent, and as a general rule, form should not be elevated over substance.

14.2 Coordination

Wherever possible, these Rules should be interpreted in a manner consistent with state law and County ordinance.

14.3 Severance

If any Rule herein is determined to be unlawful, it shall be struck and the remaining Rules shall continue in full force and effect.

14.4 Ratification

In the event that a Board action shall be declared invalid because of a failure to follow these Rules, the Board shall have the right to ratify the action and to make such ratification nunc pro tunc (effective as of the original date of the defective action).

14.5 Amendment

The Board may amend these Rules at any time upon a majority vote of the members serving.