

**RULES OF PROCEDURE
FOR THE
TOWN COUNCIL
OF THE
TOWN OF BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND**



**Last Approved by Mayor and Town Council
December 9, 2019**

Revised: November 10, 2025

ARTICLE 1. AUTHORITY, APPLICABILITY, AMENDMENT

1.1 Authority	4
1.2 Applicability	4
1.3 Amendment	4
1.4 Recession and Suspension of Rules	4

ARTICLE 2. GENERAL RULES OF PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

2.1 Meetings Shall be Public	4
2.1. Maryland Open Meetings Act	4
2.2 Regular Meetings	5
2.3 Work Sessions	5
2.4 Special Meetings	5
2.5 Emergency Meetings	6
2.6 Closed Sessions	6
2.7 Recessed Meetings	6
2.8 Information Meetings	6
2.9 Public Hearings	6
2.10 Roll Call and Attendance	6
2.11 Quorum	7
2.12 Loss of Quorum	7
2.13 Conflict of Interest	7
2.14 Presiding Officer	7
2.15 Place of Meeting	8
2.16 Notice of Meeting	8
2.17 Conduct of Meetings	8
2.18 Dissents and Protests	8
2.19 Courtesy, decorum, Conduct & Order	8
2.20 Council May Discipline its Own Members	10
2.21 Motions	11
2.22 Other Motions	11
2.23 Rules of Discussion of Pending Questions	11

ARTICLE 3. VOTING

3.1 Voting Rules	11
3.2 Voting Disqualification	12

ARTICLE 4. MINUTES & RECORD KEEPING

4.1 Minutes of Meetings	12
4.2 Record of Meetings	12

ARTICLE 5. SUSPENSION & AMENDMENT OF RULES

5.1 Suspension of Rules	13
5.2 Enforcement of Rules & Procedures	13

ARTICLE 6. THE AGENDA

6.1 Agenda	13
6.2 Order of Business	14

ARTICLE 7. WORK SESSION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

7.1 Purpose	14
7.2 Agenda	14
7.3 Documents and Exhibits Presented	15
7.4 Technical Questions	15
7.5 Audience Comments or Questions	15

ARTICLE 8. GENERAL

8.1 Council Requests	15
8.2 Council Request for Funding	15
8.3 Use of Staff Resources	15

ARTICLE 9. PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY MAYOR & COUNCIL

9.1 Representation or Position by Mayor & Council	15
---	----

ARTICLE 1. AUTHORITY, APPLICABILITY, AMENDMENT

1.1 Authority

Article II, Section 207 - Rules of the Town Charter of the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland, grants the Town Council the right to determine its own rules of procedure; the following rules are enumerated under and by authority of said provision.

1.2 Applicability

The rules of procedure adopted by the Town Council are applicable to Town Council meetings.

1.3 Amendment

These rules may be amended or new rules adopted, by a majority vote of the members of the Town Council present.

1.4 Recession and Suspension of Rules

A motion to suspend these rules and procedures may be brought pursuant to a majority vote of the members of the Town Council present.

ARTICLE 2. GENERAL RULES OF PROCEDURES AND POLICES

2.1 Meetings Shall be Public

A meeting occurs when a quorum of the Mayor and Town Council convenes to consider or transact public business.

All meetings of the Town Council shall be governed by the Maryland Open Meetings Act and shall ordinarily be public, and notices thereof shall be posted as provided under the Maryland Open Meetings Act, General Provisions Article, Title 3, Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 3-302. Except in the case of an emergency meeting, notice of all meetings shall be given at least 24 hours in advance. Nothing in this section precludes the Council from meeting in closed session as outlined in The Maryland Open Meetings Act. The information required in 3-306 of the Open Meetings Act as to notice to the public of the time, vote, persons present and topics discussed shall be appended to the minutes of the next public meeting.

Maryland Open Meetings Act

The Maryland Open Meetings Act, Chapter 3-A-The Right to “attend” a meeting, Section 3-303(a) provides “Whenever a public body meets in open session, the general public is entitled to attend”. That means that members of the public may come to a meeting and observe it. With one exception pertaining to the closing of a meeting, it does not mean that they are entitled to speak (City of New Carrollton v Rogers, 287 Md 56, 72 (1980) (While the Act does not afford the public any right to participate in the meetings, it does assure the public the right to observe the deliberative process and the making of decisions by the public body at open meetings). So, unless the public body is governed by laws that require the particular body to receive public comment, the decision of whether to allow members of the public to speak is up to the public body. Ordinarily, the

management of the public comment period is up to the presiding officer. See, e.g. 9 OMBC Opinions 232, 233(2015) (stating that the Act does not regulate the presiding officer's decisions on whether to allow a member of the public to speak). Complaints about the manner in which a presiding officer conducts a public comment period thus do not state Open Meetings Act violations. 8 OMBC Opinions 84, 85 (2012)

2.2 Regular Meetings

Regular meetings. The Council shall meet at such time as may be prescribed by ordinance or resolution, but not less frequently than once each month unless the Council at the meeting immediately preceding, by a majority vote, cancels the next regularly scheduled meeting. All regular open meetings of the Council shall be open to the public, and the rules of the Council shall provide that citizens of the Town have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at any such meetings, pursuant to Article II, Town Government, Section 205-Meetings (b). Special meetings or work sessions are not regular meetings of the Council, but shall be open to the public unless closed according to state law.

Regular meetings of the Town Council shall ordinarily be on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 PM. The Council may, by majority vote at a regular meeting, change the days or times of meetings as circumstances may necessitate.

2.3 Work Sessions

Purpose. Town Council may call and hold work sessions for the purpose of conducting a detailed and thorough exploration of matters that may properly come before the Town Council. **The work session is a meeting subject to the Open meetings Act. However, the formal adoption or passage of Ordinances, Charter Amendments, Budget Amendments, Legislation or Resolution, should not be done at a work session.**

Regular Work Sessions shall ordinarily be on the second Monday of each month at 5:30 P M. The Council may, by majority vote at a regular meeting, change the days or times of meetings as circumstances may necessitate, pursuant to Article II, Town Government, Section 205-Meetings (c) Work sessions are not regular meetings and no opportunity need be provided under Section 205 of the Charter for citizens to speak; or under the Maryland Open Meetings Act, Chapter 3-A-The Right to "attend" a meeting, Section 3-303(a).

2.4 Special Meetings

Special meetings are called by the Town Clerk upon written request of the Mayor, or two or more of the Council Members. Any such notice shall state the subject to be considered at the special meeting and no other subject shall be considered, except by unanimous consent of all members present.

2.5 Emergency Meetings

In case of an emergency or urgent public necessity, which shall be expressed in the meeting notice, it shall be sufficient if members receive, and notice is posted two (2) hours before the

meeting is convened. Notice shall be provided also to the media and public by electronic notification.

2.6 Closed Sessions

The Mayor and Town Council may close a meeting to the public by a vote in open session under the circumstances, conditions and for reasons set forth in the Maryland Open Meetings Act, Closing a Meeting – Section 3-305-306 (c). Notice of Closed Session shall be given as required by law.

2.7 Recessed Meetings

No meeting shall be recessed for a longer period of time than until the next regular meeting except when required information has not been received, or, in the case of work sessions or special meetings, to a date certain by motion agreed to by the Council.

2.8 Information Meetings

The Mayor and Town Council may hold information meetings to present information to, and obtain feedback from, residents of the Town. The Mayor and Town Council will determine the rules governing presentations at such meetings.

2.9 Public Hearings.

This section is only used when a statutorily required public hearing is part of the order of business. The Mayor shall first request staff comments. The Mayor shall open the public hearing and receive citizen input in the following order: proponents, then opponents. While the public hearing is open, Council may ask questions of the speakers, but may not deliberate or argue with the public on the matter at hand. Those speaking at a public hearing are required to follow the rules established herein for citizen comments. Upon conclusion of citizen comments, the Mayor shall close the public hearing. Council may deliberate or take action on the matter at hand upon the closing of the public hearing.

2.10 Roll Call and Attendance

- A. A. A majority of the members of the council then in office shall constitute a quorum.
- B. B. Before the council proceeds with the business before it, the Town Clerk shall conduct a roll-call and note the members present for the minutes. The late arrival of members shall be entered into the minutes.
- C. C. Members must be physically present at the council chamber dais to vote. Proxy or absentee voting is not permitted.

2.11 Remote Attendance

The Town Council recognizes the benefits of the fullest practicable attendance and participation by its members. However, in limited instances, the business of the Council may benefit from a Council member's remote participation by means of audio or video conferencing ("remote attendance").

- (a) Remote attendance by a member is considered an appearance towards a quorum.
- (b) Remote attendance by members should be announced by the presiding officer and will be reflected in the meeting minutes.
- (c) Council members attending remotely will participate and vote during the meeting as if they were physically present at the meeting. To ensure proper recording on a vote when a member is attending remotely, a roll call vote will be used. The Council member's vote must be audibly provided so that any participant may hear their vote. The presiding officer will confirm the vote.
- (d) Council members appearing remotely shall comply with all applicable laws and procedures, including these Rules, as if they were physically present at the meeting.

Nonemergency circumstances. Under nonemergency circumstances, remote attendance is intended to be an alternative and relatively infrequently used method for participation by Council members. Remote attendance protocol and procedures under nonemergency circumstances are as described in this section.

- (a) Generally, remote attendance is permitted at workshops, business meetings, regular meetings, special meetings, and closed meetings.
- (b) In no event may a Council member attend remotely unless necessary equipment is available. "Necessary equipment" means any telephone or other device equipped with a speaker function capable of broadcasting the member's voice clearly and sufficiently enough to be heard by those in attendance at the meeting. The device must allow the Council member to pose and answer questions. To ensure necessary equipment is available, a Council member seeking to attend a meeting remotely must contact the Town Clerk by 12 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

Emergency circumstances. One or more Council members may remotely attend a meeting (including workshop, regular meeting, special meeting, or closed session) via remote attendance under limited circumstances as set forth herein. There is no limit to the number of times a member may attend a meeting by remote attendance, and no limit to the number of members who may participate by remote attendance in a meeting. Remote attendance may occur during emergency circumstances as described in this section.

- (a) Remote attendance by one or more members is permitted, and may be required by the Mayor in lieu of in-person attendance, when action on an agenda item requires immediate action, remedy or discussion, and one or more of the following circumstances exists:

2.11 Quorum

A. Majority of the members elected to the Council shall constitute a quorum to do business, but a lesser number may adjourn from time to time and compel the attendance of absent members in such manner and under such penalties as may be prescribed by ordinance.

B. The affirmative vote of a majority of the members elected to the Council shall be necessary to adopt any ordinance, resolution, order or vote; except that a vote to adjourn, or regarding the attendance of absent members, may be adopted by a majority of the members present.

C. No member shall be excused from voting except on matters involving the consideration of his own official conduct or when his financial interests are involved, pursuant to Article II – Quorum-Section 208 of the Town Charter.

2.12 Loss of a Quorum

A. Once a meeting has been properly convened with the presence of a quorum and the number of persons necessary to constitute a quorum is no longer present, the Presiding Officer or a Council member shall declare the meeting recessed until a quorum is reestablished.

B. Upon reestablishment of the quorum, the Mayor and the Town Council shall resume consideration of the matter before it at the time of the recess.

C. If, in the opinion of the Presiding Officer, a quorum cannot be obtained within a reasonable period of time; the Presiding Officer shall declare the meeting adjourned until the next scheduled meeting.

D. At that next meeting, after taking up the usual preliminary matters, the Mayor and the Town Council shall resume its consideration of the matter that was before it when it previously adjourned. This shall not prevent any Council member from moving to table, defer, postpone, or make any other appropriate motion with respect to any pending matter.

2.14 Conflict of Interest

a. A Council member prevented from voting by a conflict of interest shall file a conflict of interest statement with the Town Clerk as soon as possible after the posting of an agenda which contains a conflict; unless a prior conflict of interest statement has already been filed with the Town Clerk.

b. A Council member prevented from voting by a conflict shall step down from the dais and take a seat in the audience, shall not vote on the matter, shall not participate in discussions regarding the matter or attempt to influence the Council's deliberation of the matter in any way, shall not attend Closed Sessions regarding the matter.

2.15 Presiding Officer

The Mayor shall serve as the Presiding Officer for all meetings of the Town Council. In the absence of the Mayor, the Mayor Pro Tem shall serve as the Presiding Officer. In the absence of the Mayor Pro Tem, the Town Clerk shall call the meeting to order if a quorum of the Council is present and the first order of business shall be for the Council to elect by majority vote, a temporary Presiding Officer from the members seated and in attendance. The temporary Presiding Officer shall serve in such capacity until the meeting is adjourned.

2.16 Place of Meeting

a. All meetings of the Mayor and Town Council, unless otherwise determined, shall be held at the Town of Bladensburg Town Hall, Council Chambers 4229 Edmonston Road, Bladensburg,

Maryland. In addition to the customary forms of notification, the notice of change in meeting place shall be prominently posted on the door of the regularly scheduled meeting place.

2.17 Notice of the Meeting

a. Written notice of all public meetings of the Town Council shall be posted on the bulletin board at Town Hall, posted on the Town's website and Cable Channel. The notice will show the date, time, place and topic(s) of such meetings and shall include a proposed agenda and, if applicable, a notice that portions of the meeting may be closed.

2.18 Conduct of Meetings

Councilmembers shall be recognized by the presiding officer before speaking. Other persons at the meeting of the Mayor and Council may speak when called upon or authorized.

2.19 Dissents and Protests

Any member shall have the right to express dissent from or protest against any ordinance, resolution, or act of the Council and the reason therefor entered into the minutes. Such dissent or protest must be filed in writing, couched in respectful language, and presented to Council no later than the next regular meeting following the date of passage of the ordinance.

2.20 Courtesy, Decorum, Conduct and Order

These rules of order are meant to promote an atmosphere of courtesy and decorum appropriate for the efficient discussion of business. It is the responsibility of the Mayor (and members of the Town Council) to maintain that atmosphere of courtesy and decorum. The Mayor should always ensure that debate and discussion focus on the item and the policy in question, not on the personalities of the participants of the discussion. Debate on policy is healthy; debate on personalities is not. In order to assist in the creation and maintenance of that atmosphere the following rules shall govern all meetings.

1. Before a council member, staff member or an audience member may speak, they must first be recognized by the Mayor. Upon recognition the person requesting to speak shall hold the floor and shall make their point clearly and succinctly. Public comments will be limited to three (3) minutes. Persons making inappropriate, disrespectful and/or, personal attacks, overly redundant or slanderous remarks may be barred by the Mayor from further comment before the Council during the meeting. Audience members who wish to speak during an agenda must first sign-up on the sign-in sheet and submit it to the Town Clerk. The Mayor has the right to cut a speaker off if the discussion becomes too personal, too loud, too crude, inappropriate, disrespectful, redundant, or slanderous (*Maryland Open Meetings Act-Section 3-303 allows for the presiding officer or public body to remove an individual from a meeting if the Presiding Officer determines the behavior of the individual is disrupting an open session*).
2. If a person fails to request to speak before speaking, the Mayor shall rule them 'out of order' and remind them that they do not have the floor. While the Council is in session,

all council members must preserve order and decorum. A person shall neither, by conversation or otherwise, delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of any Council meeting, whether a Regular meeting, Special meeting or a work session, nor disturb any other person while speaking or refuse to obey the orders of the Mayor. Members of the Town Council should not leave their seats during a meeting without first obtaining permission of the Mayor, or making a motion to recess.

3. Every person desiring to speak shall address the entire Council and shall not single out a member of the Council, the audience or a staff member and confine themselves to the items on the agenda, avoiding all personal attacks and indecorous language.
4. Call for orders of the day, this is simply another way of saying, “let’s return to the agenda.” If a council member believes the discussion has strayed from the agenda. The motion does not require a vote. If the Mayor discovers that the discussion has strayed from the agenda, he or she simply returns to the business of the day.
5. A member of Council indulging in any language or conduct unbecoming a Councilmember shall be called to order by the presiding officer and, in such case; the offending member shall lose the floor and shall not proceed without the approval of a majority of the members present. The Council may, by majority vote, expel a member from a meeting for disorderly conduct or violation of Council rules.
6. Members shall not raise personnel matters pertaining to alleged improper performance or conduct of any Town employee(s) or Council appointee(s) at a public Council meeting. Any concerns about conduct or performance of any Town employee(s) or Council appointee(s) shall be brought to the attention of the Town Administrator, or a Closed session of the Council may be requested to discuss the personnel matter.
7. Members of the Council shall not take positions on either national or foreign political issues that do not affect the Town.
8. Demonstration or Disorder Among Bystanders – If any confusion, demonstration or disorder arises in the Council Chambers, the presiding officer may, upon his or her initiative or upon the request of any member, enforce order. If the offending person(s) be a spectator, such person(s) may be ejected from the Chambers. If any member of the Council shall object to the ruling of the presiding officer, such member shall have the right to appeal to the Council.
9. Town Administrator and Members of Staff – The Town Administrator shall have the right to take part in the discussion of all matters coming before the Council, and other members of staff shall be entitled to take part in discussions of the Council relating to their respective offices.
10. Members of the public may speak for three (3) minutes, (during Public Comment Time) at Regular Town Council meetings of the Mayor and Town Council according to procedures established by the Mayor and Council.
 - a. A sign-up sheet will be placed on the side table in the room for people to sign-in if they wish to speak. They will be called to speak at the podium in the order in which they were signed-in.

- b. Each speaker is limited to one presentation per meeting and a maximum timed limit of three (3) minutes.
- c. If the subject matter does not pertain to Town business the Mayor shall advise the individual and/or make recommendations as to how they may get the issue addressed.
- d. Citizens speaking on agenda items shall restrict their comments to the subject matter listed.
- e. Citizens speaking on non-agenda items shall only speak on matters pertaining to Town business or issues which the Council would have the authority to act upon if brought forth as an agenda item.
- f. Council may not act upon or discuss any issue brought forth as a non-agenda item; except to: Make a statement of specific factual information given in response to the inquiry, or a recitation of existing policy in response to the inquiry.
- g. Proper respect, decorum, and conduct shall prevail at all times. Impudent, slanderous, or personal attacks are strictly prohibited and violators may be removed from the council chambers.
- h. No placards, banners or signs may be displayed in the council chambers or Town Hall. Exhibits relating to a presentation are acceptable.
- i. Arguing, intimidation or other disruptive behavior is prohibited. Discussion and/or debate are acceptable only on items specifically listed on the agenda.

2.21 Council May Discipline its Own Members

In the event a council member violates the Charter, these rules or any other ordinance of the Town, or acts in a manner that causes embarrassment or disgrace to the Town of Bladensburg, the Town Council on supermajority vote may discipline the offending member.

Such action may only take place after an executive session is held to discuss the offense. The offending member shall be present at the executive session to answer any questions asked by members of the Town Council or make other statements as he or she may desire to make in his or her defense. If the offending member refuses to attend the executive session, the remaining members of the Town Council may proceed in his or her absence.

The outcome of the executive session may be as follows and shall be made publicly in open session in accordance with the Maryland Open Meetings Act:

1. *No Action.* The Town Council chooses to take no action.
2. *Private Censure.* The Town Council may choose to privately censure the offending member, leaving their comments to the offending member left in the confines of the closed session.
3. *Public Censure.* The Town Council may choose to publicly censure the offending member through a resolution passed by supermajority vote and entered into the public record.

2.22 Motions – when reduce to writing

Every motion or proposition shall be reduced to writing on the call of any member, and shall a motion be made and seconded shall be deemed in possession of the Town Council and shall be read by the Town Clerk previous to debate, and may be withdrawn at any time previous to the vote being taken.

2.23 Other Motions

1. Motion to Adjourn – This motion, if passed, requires the Council to immediately adjourn to its next regularly scheduled meetings. This motion requires a simple majority.
2. Motion to Recess – This motion, if passed, requires the Council to immediately take a recess. Normally the Mayor will determine the length of the recess which could last for a few minutes to several hours. It requires a simple majority vote.
3. Motion to Table – This motion, if passed, requires discussion of the agenda item to be halted immediately, and the agenda to be placed on hold. The motion may contain a specific time to bring the item up again, or it may not specify a time. If no time is specified, the item shall be placed on the agenda at the following Council meeting.
4. Motion to Remove from the Table – This motion, if passed, allows the Council to remove an item previously placed on hold. A vote in favor of removing an item from the table must be made before the Council can take action on an item that was tabled.
5. Withdraw a Motion during the debate and discussion of a motion, the original maker of the motion on the floor, at any time, may interrupt the speaker to withdraw his or her motion. The motion is immediately deemed withdrawn and discussion on the motion shall cease. Council members are free to make the same motion or another motion.

2.24 Rules of Discussion of pending questions

After the previous question has been seconded and the main questions ordered, the member who has introduced, or the Town Administrator who has reported on the matter under consideration, shall have ample time to discuss the proposition pending, at the close of which the vote shall be taken.

VOTING

3.1 Voting Rules

When a question is put, every Council member present shall vote either in the affirmative or a negative, or abstain if there is a conflict of interest on the matter being voted on before the Council. Any member shall be entitled to abstain so long as such member gives a reason for abstaining and such reason falls within one of the following:

1. When the vote would or could be considered improper pursuant to the Town and State Ethic Laws.
2. When the vote could or may show bias for or against a person, organization or business that the member has a close personal relationship with thus reflecting poorly on the member and office such members holds.

3. When any member has a direct financial gain or personal gain from the outcome of the vote.

All voting shall be made by voice vote. All votes will be taken by a “roll call” by the Town Clerk and shall be stated as a “yea” or “nay”. A record of the “yeas” and “nays” shall be entered upon the minutes of the proceedings of the Council.

3.2 Voting Disqualification.

1. A member shall not vote upon any matter on which the member is disqualified due to a conflict of interest, or any quasi-judicial action regarding that in which the member is biased.
2. A member shall openly state an abstention due to a conflict of interest or bias.
3. A member who is abstaining due to a financial conflict of interest shall publicly identify the financial interest in detail sufficient to be understood by the public, except that disclosure of the exact street address of a residence is not required.
4. As to any other conflict of interest, the member's determination may be accompanied by an oral or written disclosure of the conflict of interest.
5. A member who is disqualified by a conflict of interest in any matter shall not remain on the dais during the discussion and shall not vote on that matter. However, the member may remain on the dais for Consent Calendar items if the member states the abstention from the vote due to the described conflict of interest before the Consent Calendar is voted on in one motion.

MINUTES AND RECORD KEEPING

4.1 Minutes of Meetings

Minutes of regular meetings, special meetings, public hearings, public meetings, and work sessions shall be made available to the Public by the Town Clerk. However, *minutes shall not be available until approved by the Council in a regular meeting.* Approved minutes are also posted on the Town’s website. Minutes of closed sessions of the Council held in accordance with applicable state law *shall not be open to public inspection and shall remain sealed.*

4.2 Record of Meetings

The Town Clerk or the Town Clerk's designee shall be responsible for minutes of each Regular Meeting and Work session of the Mayor and Town Council and for maintaining the official record, which shall include all Council actions. Minutes shall include:

1. All motions made, the name of the motion maker and second, the method and outcome of the votes taken, names of guests and their affiliation; and
2. Copies of resolutions, new or revised ordinances or other actions approved by the Mayor and Town Council.

SUSPENSION AND AMENDMENT OF RULES

5.1 Suspension of Rules

Any provisions of these rules not governed by federal, state law or the Town Charter may be temporarily suspended by a super majority vote of the Town Council and may be amended in a similar fashion if such amendment was introduced at the previous regular meeting of the Town Council and shall have received preliminary approval of the Town Council at such meeting. For the purpose of this section, preliminary approval shall mean a motion and a second with a majority vote to preliminary approve the amendment.

5.2 Enforcement of Rules and Procedures

The following provisions may be used to enforce the good order of the meeting. The action may be taken by the Mayor under his or her own action, or upon a motion to enforce by any council member.

1. *Warning* - The Mayor may order any person (council member, staff member or audience member) in violation of these rules to be silent.
2. *Removal* - If, after receiving a warning from the Mayor, the person continues to disturb the good order of the meeting, the Mayor may order the person to leave the meeting. If the person does not leave the room, the Mayor may have the individual removed by the Police.
3. *Motion to Enforce*. Any council member may move to require the Mayor to enforce these rules and the affirmative vote of a simple majority of the Council shall require the Mayor to do so. A motion to enforce is an allowable interruption and is not debatable.

THE AGENDA

6.1 Agenda.

1. The agenda shall outline the established order of business.
2. The Town Administrator shall include on the agenda any item at the request of any member of Council, provided that the member of Council shall have furnished to the Town Administrator a description of the item in time for inclusion with the printed agenda.
3. At least two days before each regular meeting, the Town Clerk shall provide each member of Council a copy of the agenda for the forthcoming meeting, together with copies of all ordinances, resolutions, and background material of matters to be considered at the meeting.
 - a. *Under Section 3-302 (C) of the Maryland Open Meetings Act, the ability to observe does not mean that the public body must provide to the audience copies of the documents being reviewed by the members. However, the public must be given a grasp of what is being discussed and acted on. The Compliance Board has advised that an oral summary or general description of the documents in question will ordinarily serve this purpose.*
4. Copies of the agenda shall be posted on the Town website and on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building the Friday prior to each regular meeting. A reasonable number of copies of the agenda shall be available to the public at the Council meeting or earlier upon request, as available.

5. All meeting agendas and amendments to the agenda shall be approved by the Town Council at the beginning of the meeting. Items on the agenda can be reordered by the Mayor and Town Council during the scheduled meeting.
6. Items of routine business that generally require no discussion by Council may be placed on a Consent Agenda of a Regular Meeting. Any member of the Council may remove an item from the Consent Agenda and place it under Action Items.
7. All meeting agenda and amendments shall be approved by the Mayor and Town Council at the beginning of the meeting. Items on the agenda can be approved by the Mayor and Town Council during the scheduled meeting.
8. Agendas for Regular Meetings and Work sessions shall be published on the Friday prior to the meeting.
9. Consent Agenda: The items on the consent agenda may be accepted by the consent of the Council by a single vote, unless any individual should request the item be removed for further discussion. Any item pulled for discussion will be considered by the Council after a vote on the consent agenda.

6.2 Order of Business

- I. Call to Order
- II. Opening Prayer (non-denominational)
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. Approval of Minutes
- V. Public Comments
- VI. Mayor & Council Reports
- VII. Staff Reports
- VIII. Unfinished Business
- IX. Financial Business
- X. Consent Agenda
- XI. New Business
- XII. Adjournment

WORK SESSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

7.1 Purpose.

Purpose. Town Council may call and hold work sessions for the purpose of conducting a detailed and thorough exploration of matters that may properly come before the Town Council. **The work session is a meeting subject to the Open meetings Act. However, the formal adoption or passage of Ordinances, Charter Amendments, Budget Amendments, Legislation or Resolutions, should not be done at a work session.** The following rules shall prevail for the call and conduct of work session meetings.

7.2 Agenda.

Only a limited number of matters shall be considered by the Town Council during a work session, and sufficient time for consideration of such matters shall be provided. An abbreviated agenda order shall be used for all work session agendas.

7.3 Documents and Exhibits to be Presented.

When possible, staff shall make available to the Town Council all documents, exhibits, maps, plans, architectural drawings, specifications or other similar documents at least 72 hours before the beginning of the session.

7.4 Technical Questions.

All questions of a technical nature, which require a detailed explanation for understanding, may be considered in a work session. Council may, through the Town Administrator, request the attendance of such staff members or outside experts as may be required to answer such questions.

7.5 Audience Comments or Questions.

Audience comments or questions will not be considered at a work session.

GENERAL

Council Requests

8.1 Council Requests

Council requests that deal with policy issues and council requests that may be construed as direction shall be directed to the Town Administrator, except for general inquiries or questions, in which case the council may go to the department directors or key staff in the Town Administrators Office.

8.2 Council Requests for Funding

Council requests requiring funding must go through the Town Administrator and Town Treasurer. The Town Administrator and Town Treasurer shall respond in a timely manner.

8.3 Use of Staff Resources.

A request for use of staff time, other than standard requests for information from department heads, by the Mayor or a Councilmember must be made through the Town Administrator unless already approved by the Mayor and Council.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

9.1 Representation or position by Mayor or Councilmember.

When the Mayor or a Councilmember gives a statement in their elected capacity on an issue affecting the Town, the Mayor or Councilmember shall first identify the adopted position of Mayor and Council with respect to that subject, if any. Thereafter, the Mayor or Councilmember may provide a statement of personal opinion or comment (including a minority or opposing viewpoint), provided the Councilmember expressly acknowledges that such statements do not represent the position of the Town.

As the Mayor and Town Council, we have fully read and understand the above Rules and Procedures governing the Town of Bladensburg's Public Meetings and agree to abide by the Rules and Procedures adopted by the Town Council on _____

Takisha James, Mayor

Date

Marilyn Blount, Council Member

Date

Kalisha Dixon, Council Member

Date

Trina Brown, Council Member

Date

Carroll McBryde, Council Member

Date

Attested et al:

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Acting Town Clerk

Date