

TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY
RESOLUTION 2026-09

A RESOLUTION DEFINING THE ROLE OF THE COMMISSION CHAIR IN THE TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY

Introduced by: Town of Cottage City Commission

WHEREAS, the Town of Cottage City operates under a Commission-Manager form of government; and

WHEREAS, under this form of government, the Town does not have a Mayor, but instead is governed by the Cottage City Commission as a body; and

WHEREAS, the Charter vests day-to-day executive and administrative authority in the Town Manager as chief administrative officer (§56), while the Cottage City Commission as a body retains broad administrative and enforcement powers under §§ 18 and 19; individual commissioners, including the Chair, retain only those limited procedural, legislative, and expressly granted duties provided by the Charter, the Code Ordinances, or state law; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and appropriate to clarify the role, duties, and limitations of the Commission Chair in order to promote effective governance and ensure the proper separation between legislative leadership and administrative operations while recognizing limited individual executive authority granted by state law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Cottage City Commission that the role of the Commission Chair shall be defined as follows:

1. Presiding Officer:

The Commission Chair shall serve as the presiding officer at all regular, special, and work session meetings of the Town Commission. The Chair shall maintain order, recognize speakers, and ensure that meetings are conducted in an orderly and efficient manner in accordance with the Maryland Open Meetings Act, the Town Charter, applicable ordinances, and any rules of procedure adopted by the Cottage City Commission.

2. Special Meetings:

The Commission Chair or a majority of the members of the Commission shall have the authority to call special meetings of the Town Commission when deemed necessary, consistent with the requirements of the Town Charter, applicable law, and public notice provisions.

3. Legislative and Procedural Role:

TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY
RESOLUTION 2026-09

The Commission Chair’s role is primarily procedural and legislative in nature. The Chair acts as the facilitator of Commission meetings and deliberations, and as such, serves as the official presiding officer of the governing body.

4. Administrative Authority:

The Commission Chair shall have no individual executive or administrative authority over the day-to-day operations of the Town, including the supervision or direction of Town staff, employees, contractors, or the routine administrative functions of the Town government, except as expressly authorized by the Town Charter, state law, an ordinance, resolution, or formal action of a majority (i.e., 3 votes) of the full Commission.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Commission Chair, as the principal executive officer of the Town for purposes of state law, shall have the authority to declare a local state of emergency pursuant to Maryland Public Safety Article § 14-111 and to perform any other duties expressly required of the senior elected official under state emergency management law and any emergency powers ordinance enacted by the Cottage City Commission. The Cottage City Commission as the governing body under state law must consent if a declared local emergency is to continue or be renewed beyond 30 days pursuant to PS Art., § 14-111(b)(1).

Pursuant to Charter Section 44, amended by Charter Amendment 2023-01, all checks issued in payment of salaries or other municipal obligations shall be issued and signed by the Town Manager and shall be countersigned by the Commissioner Chair and the Commissioner Secretary, except if either of those two commissioners is unavailable any other Commissioner may countersign.

In addition, the Commission Chair shall serve as the designated liaison with the Town Manager on routine personnel matters concerning the Town Manager, such as requests for time off or leave, provided that all such matters remain subject to the ultimate oversight and approval of the full Commission and consistent with any personnel policies adopted by the Cottage City Commission.

5. Equal Vote and Status

The Commission Chair shall remain a member of the Town Commission with the same voting rights, powers, and responsibilities as the other Commissioners, except for those additional duties specifically stated in the Charter or Town Code, or associated with presiding over meetings and calling special meetings.

6. Intent

It is the intent of this Resolution to clarify that the position of Commission Chair is one of leadership in governance and meeting administration, and not one of independent executive or administrative authority over Town operations.

TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY
RESOLUTION 2026-09

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED by the Town Commission of the Town of Cottage City this 8th day of April, 2026.

ATTEST: **TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY, MARYLAND**

John Hoatson, Town Manager

By: _____
Wanda Wheatley, Ward 3, Commissioner Chair

Julia Salsich, Ward 1, Commissioner

Reny Henderson Sr, Ward 2, Commissioner

Demetrius Givens, Ward 4, Commissioner

John Brooks, At-Large, Commissioner Vice Chair

CERTIFICATION

I, HEREBY CERTIFY, as the duly appointed Town Manager of the Town of Cottage City, Maryland, that on the 8th day of April 2026 with __ Aye votes and __ Nay votes, the aforesaid Resolution 2026-09 passed.

John Hoatson, Town Manager