



County
Effingham
Georgia
Board of Commissioners

RULES OF PROCEDURE

FOR THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY GEORGIA

June 16, 2026, revised draft version

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Section 1.0 - Meetings

1.01 Regular and Special Called Meetings

Regular and Special Called Public Meetings of the Effingham County Board of Commissioners (also referred herein as the "Commission", the "Commissioners" or the "Board") shall be held at such times and places as may be determined by the Acts of the General Assembly or as scheduled by the Board. All meetings shall be publicly advertised in accordance with the Open Meeting Requirements of this State.

1.02 Executive Session Meetings

Executive Sessions shall be conducted in accordance with the Georgia Open Meetings Act as now or hereafter amended. Each Board member who participates in Executive Session discussions shall execute a notarized affidavit to be filed with the Executive Session Minutes certifying that the subject matter of the Executive Session was devoted to matters within the exceptions provided by O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1), O.C.G.A § 50-14-3(b)(1) or O.C.G.A § 50-14-3(b)(2)

1.03 Work Sessions

The Board may hold a Work Session on any item, upon a properly made motion, second and approval by the Board a Work Session will be advertised in accordance with the Open Meetings Law. Work Sessions allow for a less formal gathering and discussion of information. While recommendations may be provided by the Board, official actions must be handled in a regular or special called meeting properly advertised.

Work Sessions will be conducted the Third Tuesday of each month, unless there is no information available to be discussed.

1.04 Adjourned Meetings

An Adjourned Meeting is a continuation of the meeting immediately preceding, whether a Regular or Special Meeting:

1. If the scheduled business of the Commission is not completed due to time constraints or emergency, the meeting shall be adjourned to the following day or a specific day scheduled by the Commission to allow for the completion of pending business.
2. In an Adjourned Meeting (regular or special), only business which would have been proper to consider at that meeting may be considered and acted upon at the Adjourned Meeting.
3. Adjourned Meetings resume business under the same rules, limitations and rights as the original meeting from which it was adjourned.

4. The continuation of a public hearing will be allowed provided it is postponed to a certain date.

Section 2.0 – Quorum

2.01 Adjournment Upon Absence of a Quorum at Commencement of Meeting

Any (4) four members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for any meeting of the Board. If a quorum of members is not present to commence, the meeting shall be adjourned by the Chairman. Should a member be delayed in his/her arrival, the Chairman shall call for a recess until such time the board member is present.

2.02 Adjournment Upon Loss of a Quorum During Meeting

If during the meeting their ceases to be a quorum, all business shall conclude and another day be set at which to reconvene.

Section 3.0 – Meeting Procedures

3.01 Meeting Time & Place

Board of Commissioners Meetings are held at the County Administrative Complex in the Commission Meeting Chambers in Springfield, GA 31329. Regularly scheduled meetings are held on the First and Third Tuesday of every month. Regularly scheduled meetings begin at 5:00p.m.

3.02 Parliamentary Procedures

Each Commissioner shall be mindful of others. The Chairman will run an orderly and proper meeting.

3.03 Recess

The Board may recess for lunch, dinner or breaks during any public meeting. During such recess, the Board may not discuss nor conduct any County business except as otherwise permitted in this policy. The Board members must be accessible to the public during any recess.

3.04 Election of Vice Chairperson

At the first regular meeting in January of each year, in open session, the Board shall elect from its members a vice chairperson. The Chairperson will open the floor for nominations of persons to serve as vice chairperson. After the Chairperson closes the nominations, each Commissioner will fill out a written ballot and sign it and return the ballot to the County Clerk. The Clerk shall immediately tally the ballots and orally ~~annouce~~announce each Board members vote and shall enter the written ballots into the Board's official minutes.

3.05 Voting

When called for by the Chairperson voice votes and show of hands will be used, Board Members will respond with "Aye". An affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Board in attendance shall be required to adopt a motion. If a tie vote occurs, the Chairman shall be required to vote in order to move the motion forward.

3.06 Providing Documents at the Meeting

Any documentation to be provided to the Board by staff or ~~citizen~~citizens shall be presented to the Clerk of Commission to be distributed to the Board. Additionally, if a power point is presented a copy of said presentation shall be submitted to the Clerk.

Section 4.0 – Agenda

4.01 Order of Business

Below is a ~~listing~~list of topics for the agenda template:

Call to Order – 5:00 PM

Roll Call

Invocation

Pledge to the Flag

Agenda Approval

Minute Consideration

Public Comment

Correspondence

Appearances/Presentations

Consent Agenda

Old Business

New Business

Reports from Commissioners and Staff

Executive Session

Planning Board Presentments – 6:00 PM

Planning Board Unfinished Business

Additions to the Agenda as Necessitated by Executive Session

Executive Session Minute Consideration

Adjournment

4.02 Preparation

1. An agenda for each meeting will be prepared by the County Clerk, incorporating the advice of the Board and the County Manager and approval of the Chairperson at least three (3) days in advance of the regular meeting.
2. Except as permitted by the General Assembly of Georgia, no resolution, contract or item of business that requires Board approval prior to the expenditure of funds shall be executed by the Board or any staff member until after a motion properly made, seconded and approved by a majority of the Board during an open and public meeting.

3. Each Commissioner and the County Manager shall, after notifying the Chair, have the authority to place items on the agenda by submitting a memorandum/~~notice~~ to the Clerk identifying the agenda item and any relevant supporting documents.
4. All documents necessary to enable the Board to reach a decision regarding particular agenda items will be submitted to the Clerk no later than 5:00 pm 12 calendar days preceding the meeting. The Clerk may allow emergency items and supplemental information to be added to the agenda up to the day prior to Commissioners receiving their agenda and meeting materials. If any new items are added to the agenda after the deadline, the County Manager and the Chairman must be notified prior to the inclusion on the agenda. The agenda and meeting materials shall be made available to Commissioners on the Thursday immediately preceding the scheduled meeting. The same agenda and meeting materials shall be made available to the public preceding the scheduled meeting. In the event any of the days or scheduled events fall on a County approved holiday, the due dates shall be moved to the day prior to the County approved holiday.
5. Members of the public may request to be placed on the agenda as an Appearance or for a Presentation. To be considered, a meeting participation form shall be completed and submitted to the County Clerk, and approved by the Chairman, at least three business days before the agenda deadline.

All agenda items must be accompanied by a staff report which includes details about the item being presented for consideration of approval by the Board. This report must contain a recommendation by Staff (i.e.: approve, deny, table, remove) the request.

All other supportive documentation related to Administrative Reports must be received no later than the Monday prior to the Tuesday commission meeting.

4.03 Additions to the Agenda

Additions to the agenda at the scheduled meetings are disfavored. In the event of an emergency or extraordinary circumstances, and as permitted by the acts of the General Assembly of Georgia, items may be added to the agenda during a meeting upon motion properly made, seconded, and approved by the Board.

4.04 Removal or Withdrawal of an Agenda Item

Agenda items may be removed to a later meeting only upon a motion properly made, seconded and approved by the Board.

4.05 Public Participation

Public comments shall be limited to the agenda item under consideration. Such public comments shall be limited ~~to three (3) minutes per person~~ and no speaker shall be permitted to speak more than once, except as permitted by the Board. Any member of the public wishing to comment on an agenda item upon which public comment has been permitted shall approach the podium, only after being recognized by the Chairman and state his or her name for the record ~~upon being recognized by the Chairperson~~. The Board Chair reserves the right to remove from the meeting any member of the public who makes inappropriate or offensive comments or who intentionally causes a disruption.

4.06 Public Hearings

The Board shall schedule public hearings as may be required by County Ordinance or by acts of the General Assembly of Georgia for the purpose of soliciting public comment on agenda items. Public Hearings may be scheduled at any time and place determined by the Board and permitted by the County Ordinances or acts of the General Assembly of Georgia. The Board may not take any action on an agenda item for which a public hearing is required, except after giving any and all required notices and after conducting such hearing in accordance with all applicable ordinances and acts of the General Assembly of Georgia.

A time limit of 15 minutes shall be imposed upon the total number of people who wish to speak in favor of the zoning request, including the initial presentation of the zoning applicant. Thereafter, a time limit of 15 minutes shall be imposed on the total number of persons who wish to speak in opposition to the zoning application. Summary remarks by the zoning applicant shall be limited to five minutes. These time limits may be extended at the discretion of the presiding officer upon a showing of good cause by the person so requesting.

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4.07 Consent Agenda

A Consent Agenda may be prepared for the Board to unanimously adopt a motion on routine items. Any items of business that are expected to receive unanimous approval and where no debate is expected may be placed on a consent agenda.

At the appropriate time of the meeting, the Chairman shall read all of the items on the Consent Agenda. If a Commissioner objects to an item being on the Consent Agenda the Chairperson shall remove the particular item from the Consent Agenda and move the item to the regular agenda. Following the reading of the Consent Agenda, the Chairman will ask for unanimous approval of the items on the Consent Agenda. If there are no objections, all of the items on the Consent Agenda will be adopted by unanimous consent.

4.08 Unfinished Business (Old Business)

In the event an item is postponed from a previous meeting where nor an approval or denial was decided~~no action was taken~~, it is considered as Unfinished Business. Said items typically appear on the agenda prior to New Business items, however, by a majority vote of the Board said items may be discussed at a later time during the meeting.

4.09 New Business

New Business items are matters initiated in the present meeting. After the Unfinished Business (old business) items have been addressed, New Business items shall be introduced in the order of the agenda outline unless amended by a majority vote of the Board.

4.10 Administrative Reports

During any public meeting and at the time designated for Reports from Commissioners and Staff, the Commissioners and staff may present reports of committee meetings attended, present issues for informational purposes only, and make announcements.

4.11 Planning Board Unfinished Business (Old Business)

Any Planning Board presentment, zoning public hearing, conditional use, rezoning, variance or the like, requiring public hearing, or related land use item that is postponed to a specific date from a previous agenda shall be placed on the corresponding agenda under this section and shall be heard no earlier than 6:00 p.m., or at a time properly noticed for a different time.

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Section 5.0 - Action of the Commission

5.01 Postponing of Regular Agenda Items

For a non-zoning item, a motion to postpone an item can be proposed if a commissioner believes that the item should be considered at until a future time. This motion sets a particular date and/or time for the item to be reconsidered again, which may be later in the same meeting, at a future meeting or upon the occurrence of a specified event (e.g. the issuance of a report which may clarify the issue under discussion).

5.02 Postponing of Zoning Public Hearings

1. *At Applicants Request* - A Zoning Public hearing item shall be postponed at the request of the applicant ~~one time and no more than one time~~ with just cause no more than once. Such request must be in writing or in person and received at least 48 hours prior to the meeting, 24 hours prior to the public meeting. A reasonable effort should be made by the applicant to notify neighboring property owners in this situation.
2. *For Applicant Absence or Additional Information* - A Zoning Public Hearing item may be postponed by a majority vote of the Board no more than ~~one time~~ once due to the absence of the applicant or to request additional information. If an applicant is absent from a public meeting and has previously requested the item to be postponed ~~tabled~~ or has previously been absent from a public meeting for ~~on~~ their item, then the item shall then be heard and action taken.
3. ~~*For Additional Information* - A Zoning Public Hearing item may be postponed by a majority vote of the Board only one time to receive more information from the Applicant or Staff.~~

5.03 Denial of an Item

The Commission reserves the right to decline or deny an item requested for consideration of approval if said action is not within the best interest of the community. Additionally, "if the decision of the county commission is to deny the rezoning of property, the same property may not again be considered for rezoning until the expiration of at least six months

immediately following the defeat of the rezoning by the county commission". - (per Appendix C, Article IX, Section 9.3.5 of the Effingham County Code of Ordinance)

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Section 6.0 – Minutes

6.01 Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting(s) shall be presented for approval at each meeting. Upon motion properly made, seconded, and approved by the Board, the Clerk and Chairman of the Board of Commissioners shall attest to the minutes.

6.02 Executive Session Minutes

Minutes of Executive Session shall be recorded by the Clerk, County Attorney or Deputy County Clerk but shall not be available for disclosure to the public. Any discussion concerning the Executive Session minutes may be heard in Executive Session prior to the adoption of the minutes. Upon approval of the Executive Session minutes by a majority of the Board in open session of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the duly recorded and approved minutes shall be transmitted to the Clerk of the Effingham County Board of Commissioners to be kept in a confidential file and preserved for in camera inspection in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(e)(2)(C). The minutes shall be ~~approved by~~ approved ~~by~~ a motion and duly seconded and approved by majority vote noting the minutes are true and correct to the best of their knowledge. Said minutes shall be signed and dated by the Chairman and attested by the Clerk.

6.03 Publishing and Posting of Actions

A summary of the subjects acted upon and those present at the meeting shall be written and made available to the public for inspection within two (2) business days of the adjournment of a meeting. The final agenda shall represent the summary action of the meeting.

6.04 Correction of Minutes

The responsibility for correcting and approving the minutes shall be vested only in the members of the Commission. The minutes may be corrected whenever an error is noticed regardless of the time which has elapsed a meeting with a majority approval of the Board.

Section 7.0 – Second Readings

7.01 Process for Second Reading Approvals

Agendas will include both the First and Second Readings for zoning petitions consecutively for consideration by the Board. The Second Reading will be heard if the first reading passes unanimously and without any additional stipulations or requirements. If the First Reading is

not approved unanimously or if there are additional stipulations or requirements, the Second Reading will be postponed until the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 8.0 - Validity of Actions of the Board of Commissioners

8.01 Terms of Policy

The failure to strictly adhere to the terms of this policy shall not invalidate any action of the Board that is otherwise valid under the Acts of the General Assembly of Georgia and County Ordinances.

Section 9.0 – Decorum of Debate

9.01 Discussion of the Issue

In discussion, a Commissioner may critique the nature or likely consequences of the proposed measure but must avoid personalities, and under no circumstances may he/she attack or question the motives of another commissioner or staff.

9.02 Call to Order, Remarks

The Chair shall immediately call as “out of order” any remarks made in regards to comments outside the issue being addressed; or another commissioner may call this breach of procure to the attention of the Chair. In either case, comments shall immediately cease the breach of decorum.

9.03 Disruptions

During discussion or voting, a commissioner shall not disturb/interrupt another Commissioner in any way that may be considered disruptive to the proceedings or hamper the transaction of business.

9.04 Call For Questions

The Chairman or any Commissioner may call for question in order to control the discussion beyond a reasonable time. A majority vote approving the call for question shall end the discussion and yield to a five (5) minute maximum question time, followed by a motion of the board on the agenda item being considered.

Without a majority vote for question the discussion may continue for an additional ten (10) minutes followed by a motion to resolve or postpone the item.

Commented [SJ1]: This section was added by Chairman Corbitt

Section 10.0 - Parliamentary Procedures

10.01 Parliamentary

The County Attorney or his/her designee shall serve as Parliamentarian and shall advise and assist the Chair and the Commission in matters of parliamentary law.

10.02 Parliamentary Procedures

Each Commissioner shall be mindful of others. The Chairman will run an orderly and proper meeting.

Section 11.0 - Amendments

11.01 Rules to be amended

These rules may be amended by a majority vote of the Board of Commissioners at a regular or special meeting of the Effingham County Board of Commissioners, provided the amendment has been properly ~~noticed prior~~ noticed prior to the meeting/vote.

Section 12.0 - Additional Information

12.01 Boards and Committees Listing (Appendix A)

12.02 Additional Resources for Reference

- (a) Georgia's Open Meetings and Open Records Laws, (ACCG, 7th Edition
- (b) Effingham County Code of Ordinances
- (c) Georgia Sunshine Laws, 6th Edition

APPENDIX A

BOARDS & COMMITTEES

Aging Service Advisory Council (3-year term)
Archives Committee
Board of Elections (4-year term)
Board of Equalization (2-year term)
Coastal Area District Development Authority (3-year term)
Coastal Regional Commission (1-year term)
Coastal Georgia Resources Conservation Development Council
Communications Commission (not active)
Construction Board of Adjustment and Appeals (4-year term)
Department of Family and Children Services Board (5-year term)
Effingham Family Connection Board (2-year term)
Getaway Community Service Board (3-year term)
Board of Health (6-year term)

Historic Preservation Advisory Council (3-year term)
Hospital Authority of Effingham (4-year term)
Effingham County Industrial Development Authority (4-year term)
Savannah Harbor - Interstate 16 Corridor Joint Development Authority (Chairman BOC/ 2 year term) (Chairman IDA/ 4 year term)
Library Board (3-year term)
Greater Savannah Regional Alliance <i>(formerly Middle Coastal Unified Develop Authority)</i> (4-year term)
Planning Board (4-year term)
Pandemic Influenza Planning Committee (not active)
Recreation Board (4-year term – conterminous w/ Commissioner districts)
Coastal Workforce Development Board (2-year term)
DBHDD (Department of Behavioral Health & Development Disabilities Advisory Council) <i>formerly SE Regional MHDDAD DBHDD</i> (3-year term)
Southeast Georgia Regional IX EMS Council (4-year term)
Tax Assessors Board (4-year term)
Transportation Board (2-year term)

Tree Ordinance Committee (not active)
Veteran's Park
CORE MPO (Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization) (2-year term)