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### RESOLUTION NUMBER 2024- 74

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LEVY COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING RULES OF THE COUNTY COMMISSION; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

**WHEREAS,** on April 25, 2023, the Board of County Commissioners of Levy County, Florida ("the Board") adopted Resolution Number 2023-18 which updated rules for the conduct of Board meetings, agenda management, public participation, quasi-judicial proceedings and use of County letterhead by Commissioners; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 18, 2024, the Board discussed revisions to the Rules and on October 15, 2024, the Chair, County Manager and County Attorney met to discuss these revisions and then prepared this Resolution for Board consideration.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of County Commissioners, of Levy County, Florida, that:

**Section 1.** The following are adopted as rules of the Board:

## Rule 1. REGULAR MEETINGS

Each regularly scheduled meeting of the Board (a "Regular Meeting") will be held at the date, time and location set forth in the schedule adopted by the Board for each calendar year. The order of business for each Regular Meeting is as follows:

Order	Description/Instructions	
Call to Order	By the presiding officer	
Invocation	By a Commissioner designated by the presiding officer	
Pledge of Allegiance	By a Commissioner designated by the presiding officer	
Commission Roll Call	By the Clerk	
Adoption of the Agenda	The Board may amend the agenda at this time, including setting time certain items; re-ordering, removing or continuing items and adding non-agenda items	
Recognition of Public Officials	Any elected or appointed public officials present at the meeting may address the Board on matters of public interest	

Proclamations or Special Recognitions	Since these items are often celebratory in nature, the general rule of no applause or cheering is waived for this portion of the meeting		
General Public Comment	Any person may comment on matters that are <b>not</b> on the agenda, refer to Rule 10 for requirements		
Agenda Items – these may be business, informational or public hearings	<ul> <li>Submitted by County Constitutional Officers</li> <li>Submitted by County Commissioners</li> <li>Submitted by the County Manager, County Attorney and/or County Departments</li> <li>Quasi-judicial hearings will be identified on the agenda and will be conducted in accordance with Rule 12.</li> </ul>		
General Public Comment	A second opportunity for any person to comment on matters that are <b>not</b> on the agenda, refer to Rule 10 for requirements		
Commissioner Reports	Each Commissioner may share and discuss matters of public interest		
Approval of Expenditures	As required by Section 136.06(1), Florida Statutes, the Board must review all proposed expenditures to determine they serve a County purpose prior to payment by the Clerk		
Approval of Minutes	The minutes of prior Board meetings prepared by the Clerk		
Adjourn			

# Rule 2. SPECIAL MEETINGS, JOINT MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS

 A Special Meeting, Joint Meeting or Workshop may be called: (1) by vote of the Board at any Regular Meeting; or (2) by written request of the County Manager, County Attorney or a Commissioner submitted to the Board Office, which request must state the date, time and location of the meeting or workshop and a description of the matter(s) to be discussed.

Upon receipt of the written request, the Board Office will contact each Commissioner to determine if a quorum is available for the requested meeting or workshop. If the Board Office confirms a quorum is available, the Board Office will notify each Commissioner of the date, time, location and subject matter(s) to be discussed at the meeting or workshop.

A **Special Meeting** is for the limited purpose of discussing and/or transacting official business concerning the matters described in the notice. Votes on the noticed matters may be taken at a Special Meeting.

A **Workshop** is for informational items and informal discussions only and no votes on business may be taken. Procedural or administrative votes, such as scheduling the matter for a future meeting, directing staff to take further action, or adjourning the meeting may be taken.

A **Joint Meeting** is a meeting with the governing body of any adjacent county or municipality in Levy County to discuss matters regarding land development, economic development, or any other matter(s) of mutual interest. In accordance with Section 125.001, Florida Statutes: (a) by adoption of this Resolution, the Board authorizes participation in any Joint Meeting called in conformity with this Rule; (b) each Joint Meeting must be held at a public place within the jurisdiction of Levy County or within the jurisdiction of another participating county or municipality if due public notice of same is provided in the jurisdiction of all participating counties and municipalities; (c) No official vote by the Board may be taken at a Joint Meeting; (d) and the Joint Meeting may not take the place of any public hearing required by law.

### Rule 3. EMERGENCY MEETINGS

Emergency Meetings may be called when necessary by the Chair or by the County Manager or County Attorney. A written call will be issued by the Board Office stating the date, time, location and the business to be transacted at the Emergency Meeting. No other business may be transacted. The Emergency Meeting may occur no sooner than two (2) hours after the written call is issued and the Board Office will make reasonable effort to notify members of the local news media (print and electronic) and the public.

## **Rule 4. "SHADE" MEETINGS**

State law provides several exemptions from Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine Law (Section 286.011, Florida Statutes) that allow the Board to meet in a session that is closed to the public (commonly referred to as a "Shade" Meeting). Shade meetings are exempt from the requirements of this Resolution, but must strictly comply with the particular statutory exemption under which the meeting is held.

# **Rule 5. PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS**

The Board Office will post notice of all Board Meetings and Workshops on the calendar on the County's website (<a href="www.levycounty.org">www.levycounty.org</a>) and on the bulletin board outside the Board Office in the Levy County Government Center located at 310 School Street, Bronson, Florida. In accordance with Sections 286.0105 and 286.26, Florida Statutes, printed notices of Board meetings and Board agendas will contain the following information (in the same or substantially similar language):

Should any agency or person decide to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, such agency or person will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which

record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing a special accommodation or an interpreter to participate in the proceeding should contact the County Clerk's Office at (352) 486-5266, or the Office of the Board of County Commissioners at (352) 486-5217, at least two (2) days prior to the date of the meeting. Hearing impaired persons can access the foregoing telephone number by contacting the Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8770 (Voice) or 1-800-955-8771 (TDD).

### **Rule 6. AGENDA PREPARATION**

An agenda for each Workshop and Meeting will be prepared by the County Manager or designee based on complete agenda packages that are received from a County Commissioner, the County Attorney, County Manager, a County Department Director or a County Constitutional Officer.

The deadline for submitting a complete agenda package is:

 Noon on the Tuesday prior to each Regular Meeting; and

 Noon seven (7) calendar days prior to a Special Meeting, Joint Meeting or Workshop

The County Manager may adjust agenda deadlines to accommodate holidays or other circumstances and may allow agenda items submitted past the deadline (but prior to public release of the agenda).

A "complete agenda package" includes all of the following:

(a) A properly filled out agenda cover sheet on the form provided by the County Manager, which includes the presenter's name, the action/motion being requested of the Board, an explanation of the agenda item including any relevant background information that will help the Board understand the history, context or reason for the request; a description of the source of funds and any other budgetary impacts of the request;

(b) All supporting/back-up documentation, such as, reports, maps, and documents for signature; and

(c) Hard copies of (a) and (b). The number of copies will be determined by the County Manager or designee, and may change from time to time.

Documents proposed for Board adoption or approval that constitute legally binding obligations of the Board, such as contracts or agreements, must be submitted to the

County Attorney for review and approval as to form and legal sufficiency prior to submission of the agenda package to the County Manager.

If a County Commissioner, the County Attorney, County Manager, a County Department Director or a County Constitutional Officer has a time sensitive or critical item that is not on a Board agenda (a "non-agenda item"), such person may request that the non-agenda item be added to the agenda at the time of Approval of the Agenda. The person submitting the non-agenda item must provide hard copies of the item and back-up for distribution to each Commissioner, the Clerk, the County Manager and the County Attorney.

# Rule 7. AGENDA REVIEW FOR REGULAR MEETINGS; PUBLIC RELEASE OF THE AGENDA

By 9am on the Thursday before each Regular Meeting, a draft agenda will provided to each Commissioner, so they may share any desired revisions or concerns with the County Manager and/or County Attorney.

By noon on the Thursday before each Regular Meeting, the Chair (or in the Chair's absence, the Vice Chair) may hold an Agenda Review Meeting with the County Attorney and County Manager, or designee(s). The Agenda Review Meeting is for the purpose of reviewing the proposed agenda, determining if more information is needed for any agenda item and managing and finalizing the agenda.

By 2pm on the Friday prior to each Regular Meeting, the County Manager or designee shall prepare and release to the public a final version of the agenda. Once released to the public, the agenda will not be further modified until the adoption of the agenda on the day of the meeting.

The foregoing dates may be adjusted by the County Manager to accommodate holidays or other circumstances.

# Rule 8. ATTENDANCE; QUORUM; VOTING; RECESS, CONTINUANCE OR CANCELLATION OF A MEETING

Commissioners are expected to attend all scheduled Board meetings. Three (3) Commissioners constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. If a quorum is lost during a meeting, the remaining Commissioners may finish discussions (but take no action) and may adjourn the meeting.

In accordance with Section 286.012, Florida Statutes, each Commissioner who is present at a meeting shall vote on each matter, unless that member has a conflict of interest under state ethics laws or, in the case of a quasi-judicial matter, is unable to be an impartial decision-maker. Commissioners shall vote "yes" in support of a motion and "no" when voting not to support a motion. Silence by a member will be recorded as a "yes" vote.

 The Board may recess and reconvene or continue any meeting to a time certain as may be determined by the Board during any meeting. Any meeting may be cancelled for cause (including, but not limited to, emergency conditions, lack of agenda items, a quorum will not be present) by the Chair and the County Manager. The Board Office will provide notice of the cancellation to all Commissioners and will post public notice as specified in Rule 5. Otherwise, upcoming meetings may be cancelled by vote of the Commission at any Regular Meeting.

#### **Rule 9. PRESIDING OFFICER; RULES OF DEBATE**

The Chair shall be the presiding officer of the Board. At a Regular Meeting in December each year, the Board will elect one of its members to serve as the Chair and one to serve as the Vice Chair (who shall be the presiding officer in the absence of the Chair.) In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice Chair, any member may call the meeting to order and the quorum present will designate a presiding officer for that meeting.

All discussion and comment during a meeting should be directed to the Chair, as the presiding officer. In the event the presiding officer must leave the meeting room, the presiding officer shall pass the gavel to any Commissioner who will lead the meeting until the presiding officer returns.

 The presiding officer shall call the Commission to order at the time noticed for the meeting. The presiding officer, with the assistance of the Sergeant-at-Arms, shall preserve order and decorum at all meetings. The presiding officer, or other County staff person specified by the Board in its motion, is authorized to and shall sign all ordinances, resolutions, proclamations, contracts, agreements and other documents approved by the Commission.

 The presiding officer may move, second and debate, subject only to such limitations of debate as are enforced by these rules on all members. If the presiding officer desires to make a motion or second a motion, the presiding officer shall relinquish the gavel to any Commissioner who shall serve as the presiding officer until the Chair has finished their motion or second.

No motion may be debated or put to a vote unless seconded. No Commissioner may reserve the priority to make a motion. At any time, a Commissioner may state "I move that we vote immediately." This motion will apply to any pending motion(s). Further, any motion to vote immediately: (1) must be seconded; (2) is not debatable; (3) cannot interrupt a speaker; (4) requires a two-thirds vote (because it prevents or cuts off debate); (5) takes precedence over all pending motions; and (6) can have no motion applied to it except withdrawal by the Commissioner who made the motion. All motions or amendments shall be reduced to writing, by the Clerk, upon request of a member of the Board.

Each Commissioner desiring to speak shall address the presiding officer and, upon recognition by the presiding officer, shall confine their remarks to the question under

debate and shall avoid personal attacks or inappropriate language. A Commissioner who has the floor shall not be interrupted unless it is necessary for the presiding officer to call the Commissioner to order. In which case, the Commissioner must cease speaking until the question or order is determined by the presiding officer without debate and, if in order, the Commissioner may proceed.

After the decision of any question, it shall be in order for any Commissioner to move reconsideration. If the motion to reconsider is approved by a majority of those members present, the item shall be placed on a future agenda for reconsideration, subject to legal, contractual, fiscal, quasi-judicial and other constraints as staff may advise the Board. If the Board does not specify the future date when the item will be heard, the Chair, in consultation with the County Manager and/or County Attorney, will determine the date.

## **Rule 10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**A. Public Participation Encouraged.** The Board recognizes the right of all persons to address their elected officials and express their thoughts and opinions about County government matters. The Board encourages participation in the County government process, whether though public comment, volunteering to serve on a County Board, or emailing, calling or meeting with County Commissioners or County Staff.

**B.** How and When Public Comment is Taken. It is recognized that Board Meetings are a limited public forum in which the Board must conduct necessary County business and so these rules balance the rights of persons to speak on County government issues, while ensuring the transaction of County business in a timely manner.

1. <u>General Public Comment</u>. At Regular Meetings, general public comment is an opportunity for persons to address the Board in person concerning issues that are **not** on the agenda. Each speaker is limited to a maximum of 3 minutes and the total public comment period is limited to 30 minutes. Since Special Meetings and Workshops are limited to the specific matter(s) on the agenda, there is no general public comment.

2. <u>Public Comment on Agenda Items</u>. In accordance with Section 286.0114, Florida Statutes, the Board will take public comment on all agenda items, except for ministerial acts (such as approval of minutes and proclamations) and acts taken by the Board to deal with an emergency situation affecting the public health, welfare or safety, if allowing public comment would cause an unreasonable delay in the ability of the Board to act. Generally, each speaker is limited to a maximum of 3 minutes and must confine their comment to the agenda item being considered. As directed by the presiding officer, public comment may be taken once during an item, rather than upon every motion concerning that item.

3. <u>Time Limits</u>. Time limits in this Rule are a guide and may be revised by the presiding officer based on the number of participants and/or to provide equal time for opponents and proponents speaking to any particular issue.

### C. Procedures for Public Comment. Each speaker must:

- 1. State their name in an audible tone of voice;
- 2. Limit their comments to the topic (general or agenda item) and the time provided;
- 3. Address their comments to the Chair as the presiding officer and not to any individual member of the Board, staff, or any other person;
- 4. Follow directions given by the presiding officer; and
- 5. Provide 7 copies of any documents they present to the Clerk for distribution to each Board member, the Board Office and the Clerk.

### **RULE 11. ORDER AND DECORUM; SERGEANT-AT-ARMS**

- **A.** Conduct in Meetings. Persons attending Board meetings are prohibited from engaging in disruptive conduct (defined in B below) and from possessing food, drink, props, signs, posters, or other similar materials in the meeting room.
- **B. Disruptive Conduct.** "Disruptive conduct" in the meeting room or the County Government Center includes, but is not limited to:
  - 1. Entering discussion without being recognized by the presiding officer;
  - 2. Refusal to confine comment to the topic;
  - 3. Refusal to conform to time limits on speaking;
  - 4. Refusal to leave speaking podium;
  - 5. Refusal to follow orders given by the presiding officer; or
  - 6. Any conduct that violates rules of order and disrupts the meeting. This includes, but is not limited to:
    - a. Violent or tumultuous conduct threatening the safety of another;
    - b. Conduct creating danger to property or any person;
    - c. Provoking or engaging in a fight;
    - d. Use of words that may threaten or outrage others;
    - e. Using obscene, profane, or vulgar language or language directed at personalities; or
    - f. Outbursts of approval or disapproval, jeers or heckling which interrupt a speaker or the deliberation of the Board.
- **C. Enforcement of Order and Decorum**. It is the duty of the presiding officer to maintain order and decorum at each meeting and workshop. Any Commissioner may request the presiding officer enforce order and decorum upon a motion and a majority vote of Commissioners present. In the event of "disruptive conduct":
  - The presiding officer will first warn the person(s) that their conduct is disrupting the meeting and they must immediately stop the disruptive conduct or leave the meeting.

- 2. If the disruptive conduct continues, the presiding officer will: (a) revoke the person's right to speak at the meeting; or (b) revoke the person's right to attend the meeting and direct the sergeant-at-arms to remove the person from the meeting. In addition, the presiding officer may: recess the meeting, adjourn the meeting, or take such other appropriate action as permitted by law.
- 3. Upon instructions of the presiding officer, the sergeant-at-arms (who may request assistance from any law enforcement officer assigned to the meeting) shall escort the person who engaged in the disruptive conduct from the Board meeting room and/or the County Government Center or other location of a meeting. The sergeant-at-arms will provide information explaining the law on trespass and Section 871.01, Florida Statutes, regarding Disturbing Schools, and Religious and Other Assemblies, and advise the person that there are alternate means of presenting the person's views to the Board. If the person refuses or resists removal, the person may be placed under arrest.
- **D. Sergeant-At-Arms.** The County Manager or designee shall be sergeant-at-arms at all Board meetings and workshops. The sergeant-at-arms will carry out all orders and instructions given by the presiding officer for the purpose of maintaining order and decorum.

#### **RULE 12. QUASI-JUDICIAL MATTERS**

**A. Parties and "Affected Party" status.** In a quasi-judicial hearing, the Parties (or individually a "Party") are the applicant, the County and each "affected party."

A person who believes they have a special interest in the matter or would suffer an injury distinct in kind and degree from that shared by the public at large, may request to be recognized as an "affected party." A request to be recognized as an "affected party" must be submitted on the application form (provided by the County) to the County Attorney before the close of business at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the Board meeting when the matter is noticed to be heard. At the hearing, the Board will make a determination of affected party status by considering the facts articulated in the application. If the Board determines that the person is not an affected party, that person may participate during public comment.

**B.** Quasi-Judicial Hearings; Formal or Informal hearing. Quasi-judicial hearings before the Board will be conducted as informal hearings, unless a Party (defined in A above) requests a formal hearing. The difference between a formal and informal hearing is the level of legal formality with which the hearing is conducted, with a formal hearing including swearing-in of all parties, cross-examination, rebuttal and closing (as indicated in C below). A Party that desires a formal hearing must submit a complete application for a formal hearing (on the form provided by the County) to the County Attorney before the close of business at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the Board meeting when the matter is noticed to be heard.

**C.** Order of Presentation for Quasi-Judicial Hearings; Time Limits. The following is the order of presentation for each quasi-judicial hearing (the portions unique to a formal hearing are so labeled). The time limits listed may be modified by the presiding officer to avoid unnecessary repetition or by the Board on motion of a Commissioner or upon request of a Party. In considering such request, the Board should be mindful of providing each Party with due process, but without undue repetition and delay. Repetitious comment or information may be limited or stopped by the presiding officer and the sharing, transferring or yielding of speaking time to another person is not allowed.

Order	Maximum Time Limit
Determination of affected party status, if any timely applications were submitted (refer to A above)	Not applicable
Disclosure of ex-parte communication (Refer to H below)	Not applicable
FORMAL HEARING ONLY: Swearing-in (Oath) of each Party who intends to testify	Not applicable
Introduction of the matter by County staff	3 minutes
Applicant presentation (the Applicant bears the burden of proof that their application has met all requirements) <sup>1</sup>	20 minutes
County Staff presentation (Staff will advise the Board of the requirements, provide professional analysis and recommendation(s)) <sup>1</sup>	20 minutes
Affected Party presentations (if any) <sup>1</sup>	10 minutes per person
FORMAL HEARING ONLY: Rebuttal (by Applicant and/or County Staff) <sup>1</sup>	5 minutes per person
FORMAL HEARING ONLY: Closing (by Applicant, County Staff and each Affected Party)	3 minutes per person
Public comment (the Board shall assign such weight and credibility to non-party comment as it deems appropriate)	3 minutes per person
Deliberation and vote of the Board (The Board shall deliberate and vote on a motion to approve, deny or continue the matter. The Board must base its decision on the competent, substantial evidence presented at the hearing and in the record.)	Not applicable

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Witnesses may be presented by any Party and cross examined by the other Parties. However, cross examination is limited to 10 minutes per witness. In addition, the Board may call any witness it deems necessary to reach a complete and informed decision. The examination of witnesses shall be conducted by direct examination on matters which are relevant and material to the issue. After the conclusion of direct examination, the witness may be cross-examined by another Party. Cross-examination is limited to matters raised in the direct examination of the witness All

questions shall be directed through the presiding officer and the witness shall answer the question unless the presiding officer deems the question to be irrelevant or immaterial.

**D.** Final action of the Board. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Board may: (1) continue the matter; (2) amend, approve or deny any written order or ordinance that is before the Board; or (3) direct the County Attorney to prepare a written order or ordinance (as appropriate to the matter being considered) that describes the approval and specifies any conditions, requirements or limitations; or that describes the reason(s) for denial, for consideration by the Board at a subsequent Regular or Special Meeting. Upon Board approval of a written order or ordinance, the presiding officer shall execute and the Clerk shall attest same and it shall constitute final action of the Board.

**E.** Representation of Parties. Any Party may be represented by an attorney. If an attorney represents a party, the attorney shall identify the person(s) they represent and whether their client supports or opposes the matter before the Board.

**F. Evidence.** Evidence before the Board will include, but not be limited to, verbal testimony and written evidence that addresses whether the application is consistent with and meets the requirements of the County's adopted Comprehensive Plan, Code, rules, policies or plans and other applicable laws. It is up to the Board to weigh the evidence presented and to determine whether such evidence is competent and substantial. The Board must base its decision on the competent, substantial evidence presented at the hearing.

**G. Continuances.** The Board may, at any time during a hearing, continue the hearing and may request further information from any Party.

H. Ex Parte Communications. In accordance with Section 286.0115, Florida Statutes, the Board adopts this process to disclose ex-parte communications (e.g., site visits, expert opinions, and other verbal or written communication outside of the quasi-judicial hearing) in order to remove the presumption of prejudice and to allow parties who have opinions contrary to those expressed in the ex-parte communication a reasonable opportunity to refute or respond to the ex-parte communication. Any Party may question, through the presiding officer, a Commissioner about any ex parte communications.

Before or during the hearing at which a vote is taken on the quasi-judicial matter, each Commissioner who received or engaged in ex-parte communications must:

1. As to verbal communications, disclose the subject of the communication and the identity of the person, group, or entity with whom the communication took place.

2. As to written communications, enter copies of all written communications into the record.

3. As to site visits and consultation with experts, disclose any investigations or site visits made by the Commissioner and the receipt of any expert opinions regarding the

1 2 3	quasi-judicial matter. If such are recommunications must be entered into the	duced to writing, then a copy of the written ne record.	
4	4. Confirm ability to be an impartia	al decision-maker, or if unable to be impartial, the	
5	Commissioner must abstain from discussion and voting in the quasi-judicial hearing.		
6			
7	RULE 13. WAIVER OF THESE RULES	5. These Rules (except those that are required	
8	by law or those that involve notice) may	be waived by affirmative vote of three members	
9	of the Commission at a public meeting.		
10	• 4 • 5 • 1 d • N • 1 • 0000 4		
11		8 is hereby repealed and shall be of no further	
12	force or effect. This Resolution shall bed	come effective upon adoption.	
13	DASSED AND DULY ADORTED	on December 17, 2024	
14	PASSED AND DULY ADOPTED	on December 17, 2024.	
15 16		BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS	
17		OF LEVY COUNTY, FLORIDA	
18			
19			
20		Desiree Mills, Chair	
21		,	
22 23 24	ATTEST: Danny J. Shipp, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Ex-officio Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners		
25			
26 27	Danny J. Shipp, Clerk	-	
27 28	Danity J. Shipp, Clerk		
20 29		Approved as to form and legal sufficiency	
29 30		Approved as to form and legal sufficiency	
31			
32		Nicolle M. Shalley, County Attorney	