



Decatur Village Council Rules of Proceedings

All meetings of the Village council will be held in compliance with state statutes, including the Open Meetings Act, 1976 PA 267 as amended, and with these rules.

I. Regular and Special Meetings

A. Regular Meetings

Regular Meetings of the Village council will be held on the first Monday of each month beginning at 7:00 pm at the Village Hall. If Council wishes to change the schedule of meetings, a Resolution must be passed. A change of a single Regular Meeting does not require a Resolution, it only requires approval by majority of Council. Any change must comply with the mandatory 18 hour posting requirement detailed in the Open Meetings Act.

B. Special Meetings

A Special Meeting shall be called by the President or at least three Council Trustees with at least 24 hours' notice to each member of the council served personally or left at the Council Trustee's usual place of residence or sent to their regular email address. Special Meeting public notices shall state the time, date, location and purpose of the meeting. No official action shall be transacted at any Special Meeting of the council unless the item has been stated in the notice of such meeting.

C. Posting Requirements for Regular and Special Meetings

1. Within 10 days after the first meeting of the council following the fiscal year (March), a public notice stating the dates, times and places of the regular monthly council meetings will be posted at the Village offices.
2. For a rescheduled Regular or a Special Meeting of the council, a public notice stating the date, time, and place of the meeting shall be posted at least 18 hours before the meeting at the Village office.
3. The notice described above is not required for a meeting of the council in emergency session in the event of a severe and imminent threat to the health, safety or welfare of the public when two-thirds of the members of the council determine that delay would be detrimental to the village's efforts in responding to the threat.
4. If requested, the Village shall provide by first-class mail copies of the public notice. The fee for filling such request shall be \$20 annually and shall be paid prior to the request being filled.

D. Minutes of Regular and Special Meetings

The clerk shall attend the council meetings and record all the proceedings and resolutions of the council in accordance with [Section 64.5 of the General Law Village Act of 1895 as amended and] the Open Meetings Act. In the absence of the clerk, the council may appoint one of its own members or another person to temporarily perform the clerk's duties.

Within 15 days of a council meeting a synopsis showing the substance of each separate decision of the council or the entirety of the council proceedings shall be prepared by the clerk and shall indicate the vote of the councilmembers. After the Village President or Village Manager approves this document, it shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Village or posted in three public places in the Village.

A copy of the minutes of each Regular or Special council meeting shall be available for public inspection at the Village offices during regular business hours.

E. Work Shops

Upon the call of the Village President or the council and with appropriate notice to the councilmembers and to the public, the council may convene a work session devoted exclusively to the exchange of information relating to municipal affairs. No votes shall be taken on any matters under discussion nor shall any councilmember enter a formal commitment with another member regarding a vote to be taken subsequently.

II. Conduct of Meetings

A. Meetings to be Public

All Regular and Special meetings of the council shall be open to the public, and citizens shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard in accordance with such rules and regulations as the council may determine, except that the meetings may be closed to the public and the media in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

All official meetings of the council and its committees shall be open to the media, freely subject to recording by radio, television and photographic services at any time, provided that such arrangements do not interfere with the orderly conduct of the meetings.

B. Agenda Preparation

An agenda for each regular council meeting shall be prepared by the Village President, or their designee, with the following order of business:

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and Roll Call
2. Public Comment
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of Agenda
 - b. Approval of Council Minutes
 - c. Approval of Bills
4. Communications to the Council
5. Officer Reports
6. Unfinished Business
7. New Business
8. Public Comment
9. Council Comments
10. Adjournment

Any councilmember shall have the right to request an addition of item(s) to the agenda before it is approved.

C. Consent Agenda

A consent agenda may be used to allow the council to act on numerous administrative or noncontroversial items at one time. Included on this agenda can be noncontroversial matters such as approval of minutes, payment of bills, approval of recognition resolutions, etc. Upon request by any member of the council, an item shall be removed from the consent agenda and placed on the regular agenda for discussion.

D. Packet Distribution

Agendas, reports, and other supplemental information should be distributed to the members of the Village Council on or before 5:00 PM on the Friday prior to a scheduled Regular Meeting. Otherwise it should be three days prior to that meeting date if schedule allows.

Information to be included into the monthly packet should be collected by the Village Manager and submitted by 3:00 PM on the Wednesday prior to the meeting at which the information is to be discussed.

E. Quorum

A majority of the entire elected or appointed and sworn members of the council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all council meetings. In the absence of a quorum, a lesser number may adjourn any meeting to a later time or date with appropriate public notice.

F. Attendance at Council Meeting

Election to the Village council is a privilege freely sought by the nominee. It carries with it the responsibility to participate in council activities and represent the residents of the Village. Attendance at council meetings is critical to fulfilling this responsibility. A General Law Village council is empowered by Section 65.5 of the General Law Village Act as amended to adjourn a meeting if a quorum is not present and compel attendance in a manner prescribed by its ordinance.

1. All absences from meetings shall be recorded in the minutes of the meetings as an absence regardless of cause.

2. If a Council member is absent from any Regular or Special meeting for three consecutive meetings or for four or more total meetings in any six-month period; the council may enact a resolution of reprimand.
 - a. If the council member from section 2 misses another two meetings in a three-month period after being served with the resolution of reprimand, the Village Council may enact a resolution of censure or request the councilmember's resignation or both.
 - b. Shall a council member fail to attend the subsequent Regular Council Meeting after being served with the resolution of censure or request for resignation, the Village Council may by resolution petition to the Governor of the State of Michigan to utilize the powers granted to him by Article 7, Section 33 and Article 5, Section 10 of the Michigan Constitution to remove the Council member from office.
 - c. Any resolution resulting in the petition for removal shall only be approved with a 2/3 affirmative vote of the Village Council.

G. Presiding Officer

The presiding officer shall be responsible for enforcing these rules of procedure and for enforcing orderly conduct at meetings. The Village President is ordinarily the presiding officer. The council shall appoint one of its members as the Village President Pro Tempore, who shall preside in the absence of the Village President. In the absence of both the Village President and the Village President Pro Tempore, the member present who has the longest consecutive service on the council shall preside.

H. Disorderly Conduct

The Village President may call to order any person who is being disorderly by speaking out of order or otherwise disrupting the proceedings, failing to be germane, speaking longer than the allotted time or speaking vulgarities. Such person shall be seated until the chair determines whether the person is in order.

If the person so engaged in presentation is called out of order, he or she shall not be permitted to continue to speak at the same meeting except if requested by Council. If the person shall continue to be disorderly and disrupt the meeting, the chair may order the Sergeant-at-Arms to remove the person from the meeting. No person shall be removed from a public meeting except for an actual breach of the peace committed at the meeting.

III. Closed Meetings

A. Purpose

Closed meetings may be held only for the reasons authorized in the Open Meetings Act, which are the following:

1. To consider the dismissal, suspension, or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent when the named person requests a closed meeting.
2. For strategy and negotiation sessions connected with the negotiation of a collective bargaining agreement when negotiating party requests a closed hearing.
3. To consider the purchase or lease of real property up to the time an option to purchase or lease that real property is obtained.
4. To consult with the municipal attorney or another attorney regarding trial or settlement strategy in connection with specific pending litigation, but only when an open meeting would have a detrimental financial effect on the litigating or settlement position of the council.
5. To review the specific contents of an application for employment or appointment to a public office when a candidate requests that the application remain confidential. However, all interviews by a public body for employment or appointment to a public office shall be held in an open meeting.
6. To consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute.

B. Calling Closed Meetings

At a Regular or Special Meeting, the council members, elected or appointed and serving, by a two-thirds roll call vote may call a closed session under the conditions outlined in Section C.1 of the Open Meetings Act. The roll call vote and purpose(s) for calling the closed meeting shall be entered into the minutes of the public part of the meeting at which the vote is taken.

C. Minutes of Closed Meetings

A separate set of minutes shall be taken by the clerk or the designated secretary of the council at the closed session. These minutes will be retained by the clerk, shall not be available to the public, and shall only be disclosed if required by a civil action, as authorized by the Michigan Open Meetings Act. These minutes may be destroyed one year and one day after approval of the minutes of the regular meeting at which the closed session was approved.

IV. Discussion and Voting

A. Rules of Parliamentary Procedure

The rules of parliamentary practice as contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the council in all cases to which they are applicable, provided they are not in conflict with these rules, Village Ordinances or applicable state statutes. The Village President may appoint a parliamentarian.

The chair shall preserve order and decorum and may speak to points of order in preference to other councilmembers. The chair shall decide all questions arising under this parliamentary authority, subject to appeal and reversal by a majority of councilmembers present.

Any member may appeal to the council a ruling of the presiding officer. If the appeal is seconded, the member making the appeal may briefly state the reason for the appeal and the presiding officer may briefly state the ruling. There shall be no debate on the appeal and no other member shall participate in the discussion. The question shall be, "Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?" If the majority of the members present vote "aye," the ruling of the chair is sustained; otherwise, it is overruled.

B. Conduct of Discussion

Speakers should address their remarks to the chair, maintain a courteous tone and avoid interjecting a personal note into debate.

No member shall speak more than once on the same question unless every member desiring to speak to that question shall have had the opportunity to do so.

The chair, at his or her discretion and subject to the appeal process mentioned in Section D.1., may permit any person to address the council during its deliberations.

C. Ordinances and Resolutions

No ordinance, except an appropriation ordinance, an ordinance adopting or embodying an administrative or governmental code or an ordinance adopting a code of ordinances, shall relate to more than one subject, and that subject shall be clearly stated in its title.

A vote on all ordinances and resolutions shall be taken by a roll call vote and entered in the minutes unless it is a unanimous vote. If the vote is unanimous, it shall be necessary only to so state in the minutes, unless a roll call vote is required by law or by council rules.

D. Roll Call

In all roll call votes, the names of the Village Trustees should be called in alphabetical order based on last name with the Village President voting last.

E. Duty to Vote

Election to a deliberative body carries with it the obligation to vote. Conflict of interest, as defined by law, shall be the sole reason for a member to abstain from voting. No member will abstain from voting unless that member states his or her conflict of interest. The council will by majority vote of the remaining members determine if the member will be allowed to abstain. The Village Attorney could be consulted for this decision.

A councilmember who is present and appropriately abstains or does not respond to a roll call vote shall be counted as voting with the prevailing side and shall be so recorded.

The right to vote is limited to the members of council present at the time the vote is taken. Voting by proxy or by telephone is not permitted.

All votes must be held and determined in public; no secret ballots are permitted.

F. Results of Voting

In all cases where a vote is taken, the chair shall declare the result.

It shall be in order for any councilmember voting in the majority to move for a reconsideration of the vote on any question at that meeting or at the next succeeding meeting of the council. When a motion to reconsider fails, it cannot be renewed.

V. Citizen Participation

A. General

Each council meeting agenda shall provide for reserved time for audience participation.

If requested by a member of the council, the presiding officer shall have discretion to allow a member of the audience to speak at times other than reserved time for audience participation.

B. Length of Presentation

Any person who addresses the council during a council meeting or public hearing shall be limited to three minutes in length per individual presentation. The President shall assign an elected or appointed Village official to maintain the official time and notify the speakers when their time is up.

C. Addressing the Council

When a person addresses the council, he or she should state his or her name and home address. Remarks should be confined to the question at hand and addressed to the chair in a courteous tone. No person shall have the right to speak more than once on any subject until all other persons wishing to be heard on that subject have had the opportunity to speak.

VI. Miscellaneous

A. Ethics and Expectations of Trustee Behavior

It is expected that Village Council Trustees will conduct themselves in the most professional manner as possible. That includes their compliance of any and all relating Ordinances pertaining to Council trustee behavior.

B. Adoption and Amendment of Rules of Procedure

These rules of procedure of the council will be placed on the agenda of the first meeting of the council following the seating of the newly elected councilmembers for review and adoption. A copy of the rules adopted shall be distributed to each councilmember.

The council may alter or amend its rules at any time by a majority vote of its members after notice has been given of the proposed alteration or amendment.

C. Suspension of Rules

The rules of the council may be suspended for a specified portion of a meeting by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present except that council actions shall conform to state statutes and to the Michigan and the United States Constitutions.

D. Bid Awards

Bids will be awarded by the council during regular or special meetings. A bid award may be made at a special meeting of council if that action is announced in the notice of the special meeting.

E. Committees

1. Council Committees

The Village Council should have the following standing committees:

- a. Budget/Finance
- b. Safety

Committee members will be appointed by the Village President. They shall be members of the council. The Village President shall fill any committee vacancies. The committee member shall serve for a term of one year and may be re-appointed.

Special committees may be established for a specific period by the President or by approval of the council which

specifies the task of the special committee and the date of its dissolution.

2. Citizen Task Forces

- a. Citizen task forces may be established by a resolution of the council which specifies the scope and task to be completed.

F. Authorization for Contacting the Village Attorney

1. The following officials (by title) are authorized to contact the Village Attorney regarding municipal matters:

- a. Village President
- b. Village President Pro-Tem
- c. Village Manager