

## HATBORO BOROUGH COUNCIL

### MEETINGS GUIDELINES

Meetings of Hatboro Borough Council shall be conducive to promoting positive discussion and group decision-making.

The Council President shall be responsible for conducting Hatboro Borough Council meetings.

#### I. Borough Council Meeting Operations

##### A. Order of Business

1. A quorum of four Council members being present at the hour called, the Council President shall take the chair and proceed to business.
2. Should a quorum be assembled at the hour appointed, and the Council President be absent, the Vice-President shall serve during the meeting, or until the Council President shall appear. In the event that the Council President and the Vice-President are not present, the Pro Tem shall serve as Council President during the meeting or until the Council President or Vice-President shall appear. The person occupying the chair during a meeting shall be known as the President at such meeting.
3. If a quorum is not present at the time a meeting is scheduled to begin, the meeting shall not be called to order until a quorum is present. No business can be legally transacted until a quorum is present.
4. In the transaction of business, the following items shall be included and the order should be observed at regularly scheduled Council meetings:
  - a. Call to Order
  - b. Invocation
  - c. Pledge of Allegiance
  - d. Presentations
  - e. Plan Reviews
  - f. Announcements, Correspondence, Awards
  - g. Public Comment – By Hatboro Borough residents, property owners or interested parties. Requested limit 5 minutes per speaker.
  - h. Consent Agenda Items, including Approval of the Minutes. If any member of Council so indicates, any of the items on the Consent Agenda will be separately discussed and acted upon.

- i. Treasurer's Report — reports of cash balances & investment income
- j. President's Report
- k. Mayor's Report
- l. Boro Manager's Report
- m. Chief of Police Report
- n. Solicitor's Report
- o. Department Reports - Public Works Supervisor, Code Enforcement, Fire Marshall

Voting Items

- p. Warrant list, Manual Checklist, Payment of Bills, Transfers
  - q. Business — Old, New and Other
  - r. Public Comment —By Hatboro Borough residents, property owners or interested parties. Requested limit 5 minutes per speaker.
  - s. Adjournment
5. The following order shall be observed at work sessions at which no business can be transacted:
- a. Call to Order
  - b. Agenda Items for Discussion (for each item)
    - Council discussion
    - Public Comment (limited to the subject of the work session)
  - d. Adjournment
- B. Rules of Order
- 1. The President shall require courtesy to prevail at all times. The public, staff and members of Borough are expected to show courtesy at all times. Anyone conducting himself/herself in a discourteous manner may be removed from the meeting.
  - 2. Anyone conducting himself in a disruptive manner may be removed from the meeting.

3. Any council member may offer a motion or second a motion. All motions need to be seconded if they are to be discussed further or acted upon.
3. The President shall address points of order in preference to other business and shall decide questions of order. The President's decision shall be final in all matters.
4. A motion made should be repeated distinctly by the President or read aloud by the Recording Secretary before it is debated. After debate, the motion must again be repeated distinctly or read aloud before a vote is taken. Every motion shall be reduced to writing if the President or any member of Council requires it.
5. The member of Council who shall have made a motion shall have the liberty to withdraw it with the consent of the second.
6. The consideration of any question may be postponed to the next meeting or to a later date by tabling the motion. The time for reconsideration may be specified or unspecified. The question shall be considered when it is rescheduled on an agenda without the necessity of a motion to take the matter off the table.
7. An amendment may be moved on any motion, and shall be decided before the original motion, but no more than one amendment to a motion shall be entertained at the same time.
8. If a motion under debate is composed of two or more parts, the President or a member of Council may request that it be divided. A separate vote shall be taken on each part of the divided motion.
9. A motion for adjournment or brief recess shall always be in order and shall be decided without debate, except that it cannot be entertained when Council is voting on another question or while a member of Council is addressing Council.
10. No member of Council shall be interrupted while speaking. All members of Council will have the right to respond after being recognized by the President.
11. The President shall require that debate on any subject be pertinent to that subject.
12. Any member of Council may require a roll call vote on any question.
13. In a roll call vote, the order will be at the discretion of the President.
14. A motion to call the question shall be recognized by the President after members of Council have been given the right to speak on an issue. If seconded, it must be voted on without debate. A call for the question shall be recognized by the President as a statement by an individual that he/she is ready to proceed with the business at hand. Depending on how the motion is worded, a majority vote of at least four affirmative or negative votes, excluding abstentions, by Council members is required for adoption.

15. Anyone entertaining an item under New Business may do so at any meeting. However, no vote will take place at the time the item is introduced, unless it is an item on the agenda.

## II. Public Participation at Council Meetings

1. Hatboro Borough Council believes in, and is committed to, the principle that there should be public participation at all meetings of Council.

The following guidelines shall govern public participation at meetings of Council:

- a. At each meeting, there shall two Public Comments period during which residents and taxpayers may make comments and inquiries of Borough business.
- b. Comments during a Public Comment period may only be made by bona fide residents or taxpayers (e.g., business owners) of Hatboro Borough, or interested parties.
- c. It is requested that a presentation be no longer than approximately five (5) minutes per person. An extension may be requested in advance.
- d. Should any discussion require more time than the five (5) minutes requested above, it may be granted at the discretion of the President.
- e. Interested parties are also encouraged to briefly speak on any matter under discussion by Council during the course of the meeting, and when recognized by the President.
- f. The President shall enforce the following:
  - i. Any person desiring to be heard shall approach the microphone only after being recognized by the President.
  - ii. All comments from any person recognized by the President are requested to be limited to approximately five (5) minutes. A speaker will not be interrupted while speaking.
  - iii. All speakers shall identify themselves by name and place of residence. In the case of non-residents with a business association in the Borough, the business association and location shall be identified.
  - iv. All questions to Council or to Borough Administration shall be directed to the President who may ask a member of Council or Borough Administration to respond. The President may also refer an issue to the appropriate Borough official for investigation and report at a future Council meeting.

- v. The President may extend any of the periods allotted for public participation.
  - vi. Under no circumstances may a member of the public, or staff or Council verbally, or in any other manner, attack or abuse any Member of Council, Borough employee, Borough resident, or other person.
  - vii. If there is a departure from these guidelines, by an individual demonstrating discourteous or disruptive behavior, the President, or his/her own motion, may limit or suspend the public comment portion of the meeting or declare a speaker out of order, and take the speaker's floor privileges from him/her.
2. Persons who have detailed and involved inquiries are encouraged to contact the Borough Administration during the working day. Interviews and meetings will be arranged whereby the issues can be discussed in depth without unduly delaying the Council meeting. The President may refer any inquiry would more properly be resolved by a personal meeting of the inquirer with a member of the Borough Administration or Council.

## II. Hatboro Borough Council Agenda and Minutes

### A. Agenda

#### 1. 1. Preparation

- a) The agenda shall be prepared in advance by the Borough Manager with the aid and advice of the Council President.
- b) Members of Council may place an item on the agenda by submitting the item in writing and any supporting information to the Borough Manager by 12:00 noon on Wednesday of the week prior to the Council meeting. In cases when this notice cannot be given, members of Council may verbally submit items to the Borough Manager, who shall consult with Council President regarding the appropriate placement of the item(s) on the agenda.
- c). The Boro Manager shall consult with Council President regarding the appropriate placement of item(s) on the agenda.

#### 2. Distribution

- a) The Borough Manager shall distribute the tentative agenda to Council on the Wednesday prior to a regularly scheduled meeting date. Copies of the agenda will be posted at Borough Hall, and will be included on the local government cable television channel and on the Borough website as soon as practical, but not later than the Monday preceding the meeting date.

- b) All council members shall be promptly notified of any changes as to the agenda.
- c) Copies of the final agenda shall be made available to meeting attendees at the time of the meeting.

B. Minutes

1. Preservation of Records

- a) It is the duty of the Borough Secretary to preserve a permanent record of the minutes of all regular business meetings of Council, as well as work sessions and all special business meetings held by Council, as well as all court orders relative to the laying out, opening and vacating of roads.
- b) Council may appoint a Recording Secretary to serve as minute-taker at the regularly scheduled meetings of Council.

2. Minutes shall show:

- a) Date, place, and time of meeting
- b) The fact that prior notice of the meeting was given
- c) A list of all members of Council members present, including late arrivals or early departures, and how each voted on each action
- d) The exact wording of motions as stated by the President
- e) The substance of all official actions
- f) The name of the member who moved for the adoption of an important motion, and the name of the member who seconded the motion.
- g) A record of all negative votes as well as any defeated motions
- h) A general record of all public comment
- i) The hour of adjournment
- j) The signature of the Borough Secretary
- k) Copies of all resolutions, ordinances, and any other pertinent documentation shall be included with the minutes of each meeting

3. Minutes Not Verbatim Unless Requested

- a) The minutes are not intended to be transcripts of the conversations and discussions of items or issues at the meetings. However, a member of the

Council may request a statement on a specific issue be entered verbatim into the minutes. This request shall be made at the public meeting.

4. Distribution and Availability of Minutes

- a) Each member of Council shall be provided with a copy of meeting minutes as part of the Council meeting distribution packet. Minutes shall be approved at the next scheduled meeting, if possible.
- b) Minutes shall be made available to the public for review on the Borough's website or by written request.
- c) Unless the custodian of the records agrees and with the consent of the Council, the official records (including the minutes) of the Borough may only be viewed or inspected at the site where the records are normally maintained.

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- 5. Audio Recordings: The written minutes of Council meetings shall be the sole official record of such meetings. Audio recordings of the meetings of Council may be produced to assist the Recording Secretary in the compilation of minutes.
  - a) Up until the time that the minutes are approved, existing audio recordings may be reviewed exclusively at Borough Hall, by appointment during normal business hours, so as not to disrupt the business of the Borough. All recordings are subject to a disclaimer that "written minutes of the Hatboro Borough Council meetings shall be the sole official record of such meetings."
  - b) Audio recordings of Council meetings, if any are made, will not be retained after that meeting's minutes are approved by Council.

IV. Affirmation of Meeting Policy

- A. Upon adoption, and at every Reorganization Meeting of Hatboro Borough Council thereafter, all members of Council shall sign a copy of this Meeting Policy to affirm their agreement to adhere by the provision of this Meeting Policy.

Adopted and affirmed by the

HATBORO BOROUGH COUNCIL

date: \_\_\_\_\_

members: \_\_\_\_\_