RESOLUTION 2025 - 85

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING MEETING PROCEDURES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Walton County, Florida (the "Board") has previously established meeting procedures to more efficiently conduct their meetings, with the most current version of the meeting procedures being approved on November 24, 2015, and amended on December 8, 2015, January 22, 2019, June 8, 2021, and July 27, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds it necessary to update their meeting procedures to more accurately represent how meetings are conducted by amending and reorganizing their current meeting procedures, thereby establishing new meeting procedures; and

WHEREAS, it is in the County's best interest for the Board to adopt the following Resolution establishing their meeting procedures.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of County Commissioners of Walton County, Florida, approves as follows:

1. **Adoption of Recitals and Meeting Procedures.** The recitals above and following meeting procedures are hereby adopted:

These are the meeting procedures for the Board of County Commissioners, the governing body of Walton County, Florida.

I. PROCEDURES FOR THE AGENDA

There shall be an agenda for every meeting of the Board of County Commissioners (the Board) which shall determine the order of business conducted at the meeting. Administration shall prepare the agenda. The Board shall not take action upon any matter, proposal, or item of business which is not on the agenda. The agenda shall be approved by the Board at the meeting.

Process for Creating Agenda Items: Matters are placed on the agenda when Administration properly receives and approves either an Agenda Item Request (for staff) or Public Agenda Submission Form through the County's website.

Deadlines and Terms for Submissions: Agenda submissions/requests for County Commissioners and County departments must be received by Administration no later than noon at least eight (8) days prior to the regularly scheduled bi-monthly meeting. All other submissions/requests must be received by Administration ten (10) days prior to the regularly scheduled bi-monthly meeting.

The official agenda is to be published at 1:00 PM on the Thursday prior to the following week's Regular Meeting. After this point, all items received will be required to be submitted as add-ons, which shall be considered as additions by the Board at the outset of its meeting. These additions to the agenda may only be submitted by County Commissioners, the County Administrator, the Chief Financial Officer, or the County Attorney, and shall only be approved when it is essential, necessary, and in the County's best interest to do so. No add-on item may be voted on unless the submittal made, and approved as an addition, includes complete documentation on the issue to be discussed and a specific statement of the action requested.

All documentation/material, including Power Point presentations and videos, must be provided to Administration by the agenda submission deadline to be included in the agenda packet and considered by the Board. Any submission for publication by Walton County shall not contain any abusive, profane, inflammatory, obscene, or racist language in accordance with FCC regulations; nor may submissions solicit, promote, or discuss any commercial product or activity not currently under consideration by the Board.

The following are sections of the Regular Meeting Agenda, along with an explanation of and rules that apply to each section:

COMMISSIONER ATTENDANCE

- The attendance of each Commissioner is observed and announced prior to the beginning of the meeting.
- **Quorum:** Quorum of the Board shall be defined as the in-person presence of at least three (3) members of the Board. No meeting of the Board shall be convened without a quorum present; however, properly noticed workshops may be convened with less than a quorum present. No action shall be taken by the Board with less than a quorum present at the time of action.
- **Failure to Attain a Quorum:** Should no quorum attend within thirty (30) minutes after the hour appointed for the meeting of the Board, or should the lack of a quorum be determined based upon communications received by the County

Administrator, the meeting shall be declared cancelled, with all items rescheduled to the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

OPENING COMMENTS

- Any general announcements that are not a part of the regular agenda but are deemed appropriate by the Chair. Opening comments shall only be given by the Chair, or a member of County staff designated by the Chair to give those comments. This section of the agenda is not intended for, and shall not be open to, public comments.

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG, AND MOMENTS OF SILENCE

- As part of the opening comments, and prior to the commencement of the meeting itself, the Chair may elect, in their sole discretion, to have an invocation, the Pledge of Allegiance, a moment of silence, or any other such occurrence. A section may be placed on the agenda designating such an occurrence, but need not be placed on the agenda.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

- Recognizing the attendance of any observed elected officials or special guests by the Board.

CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting shall begin with the call to order and remain open until the adjournment. The Chair shall call the meeting to order. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair. In the absence of the Chair and the Vice-Chair, the Commissioners present shall select a Chair. Upon the arrival of the Chair or the Vice-Chair, the temporary Chair shall relinquish the Chair at the conclusion of the item immediately before the Board.

CONSIDER ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

- All additions and deletions shall be considered at this time, and shall require a majority vote of the Board to add or delete those items on the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA WITH ADDITIONS AND/OR DELETIONS

- After any additions or deletions are requested, or if there is no request from Commissioners to add or delete any items, the agenda shall be voted on and approved by the Board by majority vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- This section of the agenda is to allow for individuals wanting to be heard on an item on the same agenda when they will not be present for the discussion during the meeting or for items on the consent agenda. Persons speaking on regular agenda items in this time shall forfeit the right to be heard on any and all regular agenda items. All comments are subject to the rules for Public Participation in Section III of these meeting procedures. This Public Comment period shall be limited to fifteen (15) minutes unless extended by the Chair..

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

- A portion of the agenda shall be designated as a Consent Agenda. The general rule, in broad terms, is that matters that have received ample time and discussion by the Board previously, budgeted items, or otherwise ministerial acts of the Board that do not commit the Board to any firm direction or obligation or complete a specific project, may be placed on the Consent Agenda. Any Commissioner may remove items from the Consent Agenda at the beginning of the meeting, and such items shall be moved to the regular agenda under the department selected on the Agenda Item Request and voted on individually.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- After any items are removed or if there is no request from Commissioners to remove any items, the Consent Agenda may be voted on and approved by the Board with one motion.

CITIZEN REQUESTS

- Any citizen may place a request on the agenda of a Regular Meeting of the Board and be heard concerning any matter determined by Administration to be within the scope of the Board's jurisdiction. To be added to the agenda, an individual must submit the agenda submission form to Administration by the agenda submission deadline of the meeting at which they wish to appear. Citizen Requests are limited to five (5) minutes, unless additional time is requested and granted by the Chair. To be considered a Citizen Request, there must be specific action requested of the Board, otherwise, citizens can address the Board with their comments during the Public Comment section of the meeting. All comments are subject to the rules for Public Participation in Section III of these meeting procedures.
- When Administration places a citizen's request on the agenda, the Commissioners shall be furnished information prior to the meeting as to the request being made by the citizen. All documentation/materials for distribution must be provided to Administration by the agenda submission deadline to be included in the agenda

packet and considered by the Board. Late distribution of such material or distribution to other individuals or groups without furnishing advance copies to the Commissioners may result in deferral of the speaking opportunity to a future meeting, to allow the Commissioners an opportunity to review the material before taking action on any requests.

ITEMS FOR THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR, COUNTY DEPARTMENTS, THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, AND THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

- These items are placed on the agenda by staff through an Agenda Item Request and shall be presented to the Board during the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING

- For statutory purposes, certain items must be advertised and brought to the Board for action in the form of a Public Hearing.
- Budgetary items shall be brought before the Board in accordance with County policy and Florida Statutes 129 and 200.

COMMISSIONERS

- Each individual Commissioner has the ability to place items on the agenda through an Agenda Item Request, and the items are under their name in a section of the agenda to be discussed with the other members of the Board. These items can either be for discussion only or may specify a requested action.

OTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS

- This section of the agenda is to allow members of the public to comment on any public business that they choose, regardless of whether their comments pertain to an item on the agenda or not, subject to the rules for Public Participation in Section III of these meeting procedures. Information presented shall be done so as information only and if a request for vote or action is made, the item, at the discretion of the Board, may be placed on the next regularly scheduled board meeting agenda for discussion and potential action by the Board. This Public Comment period shall be limited to fifteen (15) minutes unless extended by the Chair.

PLANNING ITEMS

REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

- The term of a commissioner commences on the second Tuesday after the general election; therefore, the Board shall reorganize at the meeting on or subsequent to this date.

ADJOURN

- A motion to adjourn shall always be in order and decided without debate, except that the motion shall contain a time to hear the balance of the agenda if the same has not been completed. The Chair may adjourn the meeting at their discretion.

II. RULES OF DEBATE FOR THE BOARD

The Board has declined to adopt a specific form of parliamentary procedure, instead granting the Chair broad discretion to run meetings in an orderly fashion, in accordance with these rules.

Making Motions: Any Commissioner may make a motion. If the Chair wishes to make a motion, they may relinquish the Chair to the Vice-Chair. Upon relinquishing the gavel, the Chair or any other Commissioner may move, second, and debate a subject only to such limitations of debate as are by these rules imposed upon all Commissioners.

Motions to amend and substitute motions are allowed; however, such motions cannot change the primary purpose of the motion on the floor and cannot change the fundamental character or the subject of the original motion. While the Chair has discretion in what motions to entertain, this discretion is limited; however, the Chair may recognize any other Commissioner in the order they see fit to determine who gets a motion or a priority issue.

Getting the Floor: Each Commissioner desiring to speak for any purpose shall address the Chair and, upon recognition, shall confine themselves to the question under debate.

Interruption; Point of Order; Appealing a Ruling of the Chair: A Commissioner, once recognized, shall not be interrupted when speaking unless another Commissioner believes there is a violation of the rules and requests a point of order. Once there is a suggestion that there has been a violation of the rules, the Commissioner in question shall cease speaking.

The Chair has the duty of making sure the rules are followed and must rule when a violation of the rules has been suggested by a Commissioner; however, the Board as a whole, not the Chair, is the final authority in judging whether the rules have been violated. Any Commissioner may appeal to the Board from the decision of the Chair's ruling on a point of order by requesting an appeal. When an appeal is requested, without debate the Chair shall submit to the Board the question, "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?" and the Commission shall decide by a majority vote.

Privilege of Closing Debate: Any Commissioner may move to close debate and call the question on any motion being considered. Such motion is not debatable and must receive a second. A majority vote is required to end debate.

Method of Voting: The vote upon any ordinance, resolution, motion, or other matter may be by voice vote or ballot. The Chair or any Commissioner may require a roll call vote to be taken.

Explanation of Vote: Once the question is called for a vote, there shall be no discussion by any Commissioner prior to voting and each Commissioner shall vote yes or no. Upon voting, any Commissioner may give a brief statement to explain their vote.

Tie Votes: Whenever action cannot be taken because the vote of the Board has resulted in a tie, the status quo shall continue in effect and the proposed ordinance, resolution, or motion that produced the tie vote shall be removed from the agenda without prejudice to its re-introduction on a de novo basis at a later time; provided that in land use and other quasi-judicial matters when action on a resolution or motion results in a tie vote the resulting vote shall be considered a denial.

Vote Change: Any Commissioner who has stepped away from the meeting temporarily when a vote is taken may record their vote and any Commissioner may change their vote before the next item is called for consideration or before a recess or adjournment is called, whichever occurs first, but not thereafter without the unanimous consent of the Board.

Reconsideration: Once action is taken on a proposed ordinance, resolution, or motion, neither the ordinance, resolution, or motion nor its repeal or rescission may be brought before the Board again during the six (6) month period following the said action unless a majority of the Commissioners present vote for reconsideration. This section does not restrict the ability of the Board to reconsider an action within the same meeting in which the action is first proposed.

Applicability: If the Board departs from these procedures without objection from a Commissioner, any actions taken by the Board will be binding. If there is any conflict with these procedures and any ordinance, the ordinance will prevail.

III. RULES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In addition to the Public Comment sections of the agenda, the public may comment on any scheduled agenda items before the matter is voted upon by the Board and after there is a Motion and Second on the item being considered, except for items which are procedural, non-deliberative motions of the Board including continuances, tabling, and to reconsider non-final actions.

The Board wants to ensure that the rights of individuals to participate in public meetings are balanced with maintaining decorum during that meeting and is committed to allowing members of the public an opportunity to offer comments and suggestions for the efficient and effective administration of government. All comments and suggestions during public meetings shall be subject to the following procedures:

Decorum: Order must be preserved. Speakers shall make a request to speak in an orderly manner and must be acknowledged by the Chair prior to speaking. Speakers must be courteous in their remarks and must refrain from personal attacks. Only one speaker will be acknowledged at a time. Once acknowledged, speakers shall only speak from the podium at the front of the room and begin their remarks by stating their name and spelling their last name (if requested by the Chair). Any person making irrelevant, impertinent, or slanderous remarks or who becomes boisterous or uses profanity while addressing the Board shall not be considered orderly or decorous.

Prohibited Matters:

Speakers shall not discuss any of the following:

Matters which concern the candidacy of any person seeking public office, including the candidacy of the person addressing the Board.

Matters within the attorney-client privilege, including anticipated or pending litigation, any pending bid protests, any protected property acquisition procedures, personnel matters, to include investigations, matters involving quasi-judicial hearings or due process considerations, or matters which are made confidential by law as determined by the County Attorney.

Public comment is not intended to require the Board to answer any impromptu questions. Speakers will address all comments to the Chair and not one individual Commissioner. After receiving permission from the Chair, a member of the Board may ask the speaker a question. Discussions between speakers and members of the audience will not be allowed.

Time limits: Individuals who wish to participate by speaking will have three (3) minutes to make their remarks. During the consideration of an item on the agenda, a representative of a group or organization may address the Board in lieu of all or a number of the members of the group or organization addressing the Board. The representative of the group or organization shall identify the group or organization they are speaking on behalf of and may be allowed additional time to speak, if specifically requested by the representative and granted by the Chair. In no event shall the additional time exceed ten (10) minutes unless extended by a vote of the Board. If the group or organization's representative speaks on an item, then no other member of the group or organization's governing body may address the Board on the agenda item. No person shall be allowed more than fifteen (15) cumulative minutes of public comment during one meeting.

Procedures: No person shall, by speech or otherwise, delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the Board or disturb any person having the floor. Back-up or written materials, if any, should be submitted to the Clerk of Courts for distribution to the Board and insertion into the public record.

For those matters in which citizen's input is heard by the Commission, the Chair shall close the citizen's input portion of the meeting upon the conclusion of the last speaker's comments. No additional citizen's input shall be allowed, except in specific response to questions by members of the Commission or if an extension of time for public comment is approved by the Chair.

For public safety purposes, no signs or placards mounted on sticks, posts, poles or similar structures shall be allowed in County Commission meeting rooms. Other signs, placards, banners, shall not disrupt meetings or interfere with others' visual rights.

Any applause shall be held until the end of the Public Comment period. Clapping, applauding, heckling or verbal outbursts in support or opposition to a speaker or his or her remarks shall be discouraged. Persons exiting the Commission Chamber shall do so quietly.

Consequences: Any person who doesn't comply with these rules for public participation shall be cautioned by the Chair and given the opportunity to conclude remarks on the subject in a decorous manner and within the designated time limit. Any person failing to comply as cautioned will be requested by the Chair to relinquish the podium and if they do not do so, they may be barred from making any additional comments during the meeting by the Chair, unless permission to continue or again address the Board is granted by the majority of the Commissioners present, and may be subject to removal from the Commission Chambers or other meeting room.

IV. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**:

Any meetings held by the Board in addition to regularly scheduled board meetings shall be governed by these procedures; however, at the Board's discretion, public comment time allotments may be relaxed for public workshops and will be announced by the Board at the meeting.

Nothing contained herein shall be construed to restrict the authority of the Walton County Board of County Commissioners.

2. **Severability.** If any provision or portion of this Resolution is declared by any court of competent jurisdiction to be void, unconstitutional, or unenforceable, then all remaining provisions and portions of this Resolution shall remain in full force and effect.

3. **Effective Date and Recordation.** This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption by the Board of County Commissioners and shall be recorded in the Official Records of Walton County, Florida.

RESOLVED AND PASSED this 24 day of Nov, 2025.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SEAL WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA

Donna Johns

Donna Johns, Chair
Walton County Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

Crystal Sconiers

Crystal Sconiers, Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller