

TOWN COUNCIL  
RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. The Council agenda shall be prepared by the Town Manager and transmitted to the Town Clerk in a timely fashion. Final review and approval of the agenda shall be required ~~with the final review and approval of the agenda~~ by the Council President, or, in his/her absence, the Vice President. Any two members of Council may request items be added ~~add items~~ to the agenda.
2. All questions of order shall be decided by the presiding officer with the right of appeal to the Council as a body for a vote upon the request by any member.
3. Council and staff members shall keep matters that need to be discussed in executive session confidential.
4. Motions made at any session shall be presented in written format by the Clerk if so requested by any Council member.
5. Items on the Consent Calendar of the Agenda may be voted on by a single motion. However, items may be removed for separate action by request of any Council member.
6. It shall be the policy of this Council that anyone appearing before it shall be treated with respect and common courtesy and without discrimination. This applies to the public, employees, staff, and the Council itself.
7. The Council will only vote at meetings posted as Town Council Meetings or Special Town Council Meetings.
8. Members of the Council may contact department heads directly, but the Town Manager should be informed of the contact. Contact will be for information purposes.
9. The Town Manager shall undertake special projects or commit staff resources to research special projects only after the majority vote of the Council as a whole.
10. Contact with the Town Solicitor shall be coordinated by the Town Manager and/or Council President so that he/she is aware of the questions being presented to the Solicitor. The Town Manager shall then follow through to be sure that all the Council is informed of the response or recommendation of the Solicitor. In an effort to keep the Council informed, any communication with the Town Solicitor shall be relayed by the Solicitor to the Town Manager for distribution.
11. An opportunity will be provided in each meeting to allow for Public Comment. This time will be limited to no more than thirty (30) minutes; those wishing to comment will use a sign-in sheet available at the start of the meeting, near the beginning of each regular meeting for up to 15 minutes, with each individual limited to 5 minutes, to allow for Public Comment for items not on the agenda. In accord with the RI Open Meetings Law Act, any item not on the agenda for which a collective discussion will take place may be added to the agenda for discussion only by an affirmative vote of the Council. When appropriate to an agenda item, the presiding officer may allow Public Comment on an item. ~~A public comment period of 15 minutes will be allowed at the end of the meeting, with each individual limited to 5 minutes.~~

12. Non-confidential mail or written communications received by Council members ~~that~~ relaterelated to Town business or issues ~~will~~ may be forwarded to the Town Manager's office for copying and/or email distribution to the entire Council, upon request by said Council member.

~~13. A Council Reminder List will be maintained, reviewed, and updated regularly by the Town Manager with items of concern or consideration for the Council or items requiring follow up by staff. Any Council member can request to have items added to the list at any time at a Council meeting. Council will receive a copy on a periodic basis.~~

~~14.13. When a Council member is going to be unavailable for an extended period of time, the member will advise the Town Manager.~~

~~15.14. E-mail messages will be utilized to keep all Council members updated on issues or matters of interest.~~

~~16.15. As Council members are made aware of problems or concerns within the Town, the Council member may notify the Town Manager will be notified either by e-mail or by leaving a phone message so that the matter can be addressed promptly.~~

~~17.16. Any claims or settlements of less than \$1,000 may be administered by the Town Manager. Claims settled by the Town Manager will be reported to the Council.~~

~~18.17. The Council will only consider applicants for appointment to boards and commissions if they have a letter of interest (mail or electronic) on file stating their qualifications.~~

~~19.18. The Town Council remains committed to the enforcement of all applicable laws and regulations which prohibit discrimination.~~

~~20.19. When invited to a public function as a representative of the Town, the Town may pay for the cost for the Council member or Council member and guest.~~

~~21.20. Town Council Rules and Guidelines will automatically be placed on the agenda for review every January and July.~~

~~22.21. Any request for action/study to a board or commission shall be made by a majority vote of the entire Council.~~

22. Messages and information posted to the Town website or press releases distributed to the media will require Council approval and a vote, provided said communications are ascribed to the "Town Council". All information must be presented to the entire Council before it goes to the press. This does not preclude emergency messages and information from being distributed through, or posted to, any Town website or email distribution list without Council approval if the circumstances of the emergency so require.

23. Notifications and communications posted to the Town's website shall require Council approval and a vote, provided said notification or communication is ascribed to the "Town Council." In all instances, information, notifications and communications posted to the Town's website shall be ascribed to the Town Manager or the Department Head(s) issuing said information, notification or communication.

~~24. Financial Reports will be presented monthly to the Council by the Finance Director.~~

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- 25. At any public hearing, the presiding officer may establish time limits for individual speakers and may limit the number of times an individual may speak. The purpose of the limitations is to provide all members of the public with the opportunity to be heard at the public hearing.**
- 26. When considering motions for expenditures that have not been budgeted, the Council shall indicate from which accounts funds shall be reallocated. The Town Manager shall provide a recommendation to the Council.**
- 27. Documents (ordinances, policies, resolutions or other documents and backup material) of substantial length or complexity shall be provided to Council members at least seven (7) days prior to the Council meeting at which the item will be on the agenda. If such documents have not been delivered at least seven (7) days prior to the Council meeting, then the item to which the documents relate shall not be put on the Council agenda, unless an emergency situation or other justifiable circumstances require delivery within a shorter time period.**