



## **RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE, GOVERNING THE VILLAGE COUNCIL OF GOLF MANOR**

These Rules of Order shall govern the procedure of the Village Council of Golf Manor, and the conduct of its Members. These Rules are a supplement to the Charter and do not replace the Charter of the Village.

### **RULES**

At the first meeting of a newly elected Council, the Council shall adopt Rules to govern Council, which Rules shall be adopted by motion and a majority vote of the Members of Council. Such Rules shall remain in effect until modified by Council or a new Council is voted into office. Such Rules shall include those matters deemed necessary to facilitate the business of the Village.

### **MEETINGS OF COUNCIL**

The Charter mandates that Council will establish a meeting schedule at the first Council meeting of the calendar year and will hold no less than one regular meeting each calendar month. As determined by Ordinance, all meetings shall be held at Village Hall, 6450 Wiehe Road, Golf Manor, Ohio, and begin at 7:00 p.m. Council may immediately proceed to its regularly scheduled meeting immediately following a public hearing or scheduled Committee meeting to precede a Council meeting if acknowledged by motion announced at a previous open meeting.

**Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by the mayor or by any three Members of Council by written notice served personally upon each Member or left at his residence at least twelve hours in advance of the time of such special meeting.

**Open Meetings.** All meetings of the Council and its committees, Board and commissions shall be open to the public, except that Executive Sessions for such meeting shall be allowed consistent with the provisions of the Ohio Revised Code, which addresses public meetings and executive sessions for public bodies.

**Minutes.** All Council and Committee meetings of the Village Council shall be recorded by the Village's Recording Clerk through a journal of formal Minutes. Minutes of such meetings shall reflect the type of meeting undertaken, the date and place thereof, the attendance of officials, and a complete account of procedural matters. Minutes should contain sufficient facts and information to permit the public to understand and appreciate the rationale behind the relevant public body's decision.

The Recording Clerk will provide the Minutes of meetings to all Village Council Members 48 hours in advance of the Council Meetings or Committee Meetings via email so that the Members have time to review the Minutes before the Council or Committee meetings take place. Minutes, once reviewed and determined to be accurate and complete, should be approved at the meeting at which they are presented.

Village Council and Committee Minutes will be made available to the public at the time they are circulated among Council Members or Committee members for their review and comment.

## MEETING PROCEDURES

**Quorum.** The Charter at Section 4.03 provides that a majority of the Members of Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting, but a lesser number may adjourn the meeting from time to time and compel the attendance of absent Members in such manner and under such penalties as may be prescribed by the Rules of Council. Once a meeting has been canceled due to lack of a quorum, members shall refrain from conducting any Village business in that scheduled chamber during time period of the scheduled meeting.

**Robert's Rules of Order.** All Village Council and Committee meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order except as otherwise provided by state law, the municipal code or by Village Council adopted policy.

## VILLAGE COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Council shall be organized into committees to support the mission of Village government. The committees shall focus on matters important to the Village through in-depth research and discussion and make recommendations for policy and action to the full Council. There shall be the following Standing Committees: Executive, Finance, and Economic Development/Community Engagement. Council and/or the mayor may establish such additional committees from time to time as needed to support the mission of the Village. The mayor shall appoint the Members of each committee and the Chair. From time to time the mayor may appoint residents who are not Members of Council to a committee. Such resident members may participate in discussion, but only Council Members may take official action.

Each committee prioritizes its business by formal motion unless the full Council refers a matter to committee with a directed schedule.

## VILLAGE COUNCIL BEHAVIOR AND DECORUM

**Village Council Member Attendance.** An excused absence is one due to the death of a family member, illness of the Village Council Member or a member of his or her family, a business conflict, or a vacation. If reasonably possible, a Village Council Member shall notify the Mayor, Committee Chair, the Village Administrator, or the Recording Clerk in advance of the fact that he or she will be unable to attend a Village Council meeting and the reason for his or her absences. Council members need to clearly communicate their potential absence with each other in order to ensure a quorum is present to conduct scheduled meetings. The record of the meeting will state the fact that the Village Council Member is absent from the meeting and the reason for the absence. The Village Council may at that point vote to excuse the Village Council Member from the meeting. Unexcused absences from any three (3) consecutive meetings of the Village Council may be caused to suspend such Member's monthly compensation and begin the process for removal from office.

**Conflict of Interest/Abstentions.** In the event that any matter before the Village Council presents a conflict of interest for a Member of Village Council, such Member shall state his conflict and intent to abstain from

discussion on the subject matter and shall not participate in any discussion or vote of Village Council or attempt to influence any other Member of Village Council with regard to the matter.

**Village Council Behavior/Decorum.** Meetings are to be conducted in a business-like manner with proper decorum exhibited by all Members. No Member shall delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the Village Council or disturb any Member while speaking or refuse to obey the orders of the mayor as presiding officer of the Village Council. The mayor shall be responsible for preserving meeting decorum at all times.

**Confidentiality.** Village Council Members may from time to time, become privy to confidential information allowable by law which shall remain confidential. No Village Council Member shall disclose or use, without appropriate authorization by the majority of Village Council Members, any information acquired in the course of his or her official duties which has been clearly designated by the majority of Village Council Members to him or her as confidential. Such confidential designation is warranted whenever the status of the proceedings, the circumstances under which the information was received, or the nature of the information necessitates that its confidentiality is necessary to the proper conduct of governmental business.

Village Council may, during a regular, special or committee meeting, move into executive session for the purposes and in the manner described by state law. No Member or other person in attendance shall divulge the nature of discussions or any information obtained during any such executive session, or any information received in any confidential communication whether or not same was obtained during the course of any such meeting.

**Direction of Work through Mayor.** Village Council Members recognize that the mayor shall direct and coordinate the day-to-day activities of the employees of the Village through the Village Administrator, including the management of time for such employees. No Village Council Member shall reprimand, give orders to, or otherwise direct the activities of any Village employee.

A complaint made directly to a Member of Village Council by a citizen shall be forwarded to the mayor for investigation by a phone call, appropriate letter, memorandum, or email from the said Village Council Member. The mayor shall investigate such complaint through the Village Administrator with the response of the Mayor or Village Administrator to any such complaint and the disposition thereof, shall be in writing and shall be directed to all Members of Village Council.

**Rules of Debate.** The mayor or such other Member of the Village Council as may be presiding shall recognize Members and other persons who wish to address Village Council. Such person shall confine himself or herself to the question under debate, avoiding all personalities, refraining from impugning the motive of any other Member's argument or vote and abstaining from the use of indecorous language.

- A. A Member of Village Council shall not speak until recognized by the mayor.
- B. A Member once recognized shall not be interrupted when speaking unless it is to be called to order, or as herein otherwise provided.
- C. No Member of Village Council shall be permitted to speak longer than five (5) minutes on any motion without permission of the mayor, who may grant said Member additional time without exception from Village Council.
- D. No Member of Village Council shall be permitted to speak more than twice on any one motion until every Member desiring to speak on that motion shall have had an opportunity to do so.

- E. Any Member of Village Council granted the floor may yield to another Member of Village Council.
- F. No person (Member of Village Council or public) shall utilize the privilege of the Floor before Village Council as a means for filibuster, prolonged speechmaking, delaying legislative action and/or obstructionist tactics. If such person engages in said behavior, he/she may be called to order by the mayor and subject to discipline by the Village Council.
- G. Guests and residents addressing council, or any committee shall limit their comments to three (3) minutes unless an exception is approved in advance or by motion of the Members. Guests and residents may be asked to further limit their comments if repetitive or argumentative. Guests and residents should only speak from the lectern when recognized by the mayor. Guests and residents who wish to speak before Council or a committee must register in advance of the meeting by 4:30 pm of the business day prior to the meeting. They must advise their name, address, contact information, and topic. Their comments must be limited to the registered topic.

**Discipline.** Any Member of Village Council may be subject to discipline by the remainder of Village Council for disorderly conduct, violation of its rules, or absence without valid excuse for more than three (3) consecutive meetings. Discipline may be in the form of a public or private reprimand or action under the Charter and by law to remove a member.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

**Mail.** All general mail will be opened, and date stamped and made available to Village Council Members at the Village offices during regular business hours or available in Council chambers at regularly scheduled Council meetings.

**Electronic Communication.** Each Member of Council has been assigned a Village email address that is required to be used for all official Village business. Support is made available to Council Members who need assistance in setting up their email account or in troubleshooting problems with email. No official Village business may be conducted by elected officials or Village employees through personal, non-Village email accounts. Employees will not respond to personal account email messages that are being used for Village business.

**Phone Communication.** Each Member of Council has been assigned a Village voicemail box. You will be notified via your email account when a message has been left in your voicemail box. You will have the ability to listen to any messages from your email account.

### **USE OF LEGAL COUNSEL**

The Village has a pre-negotiated contract with legal counsel for an annual set fee to conduct business during the fiscal year. That fee is established with the projection of the amount of work to be accomplished in pre-work, follow-up, and representation at Council meetings, Mayor's Court and other appropriate meetings affecting the business of the Village. Any additional legal counsel outside that contract is billed to the Village at an hourly rate.

Most communications with legal counsel shall be coordinated through the Village Administrator, the Mayor, Department Heads, and upon exception, by committee Chairs with approval from the Village Administrator.

Other Council Members may utilize the advice of legal counsel on exception with specific approval of the Mayor or Village Administrator but must be aware of the additional cost incurred by the Village for consultation outside the negotiated contract. Appointed Boards or committee Chairs needing legal advice are required to coordinate their use of counsel through the Village Administrator.

### **ETHICS**

Elected or appointed Members of Council must be sensitive to their ethical responsibilities and adhere to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. Various Ohio statutes, including those set forth in Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Chapter 102, address this subject. It is imperative that all Village officials, elected or appointed, avoid even the suggestion or appearance of undue influence or conflict of interest in carrying out their duties.

### **SUNSHINE LAWS & RECORDS RETENTION**

The Village acknowledges responsibility to preserve information relating to records retention for public requests for information, litigation, audits and investigations. The public records policy of the Village aligns with the Ohio Attorney General's Office guidelines for public employees in making available the materials to which the public is entitled by law. The policy appears in full in the Ohio Attorney General's Policies and Procedures Manual. Also, a copy of the most recent edition of the Ohio Sunshine Laws: An Open Government Resource Manual, which explains open records laws, is available free at [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/YellowBook](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/YellowBook).

Failure on the part of elected and appointed officials to follow this policy can result in possible civil and criminal sanctions against the Village and its officials and possible legal impacts. Ensure that you are aware of rules regarding public meetings and gathering to discuss public business in non-public forums including email messages, text messages, written communications, and any electronic/social media platforms.

### **ADOPTION, AMENDMENT AND SUSPENSION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**Adoption.** These rules shall be in full force and effect from and after their adoption by a majority vote of the Village Council.

**Amendment.** These rules may be amended, or new rules adopted by a majority vote of the legislative authority.

**Suspension.** Any provision of these rules, susceptible to suspension, may be suspended at any meeting of the Village Council by a majority of the legislative authority, except when a greater number is required by law or by these rules. The vote on any suspensions shall be taken by yeas and nays and entered upon the journals.