

RULES OF PROCEDURE for Meetings of the Village of Athens
Adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 3, 2017

Regular Meetings

The Board of Trustees shall hold regular meetings on the Second and Fourth

Wednesdays of each month. Such regular meetings shall commence at 6:30 p.m. in the Village Clerk's Office at the Athens Municipal Building.

The first meeting of the month will be considered a working meeting with public input only allowed at the discretion of the **Mayor or Chair**. Department heads are required to **attend the first meeting unless excused by the Mayor**. Public input will be accepted at **the second meeting of the month**.

A list of the all scheduled meeting dates shall be provided to the media and posted at all official posting locations.

Special Meetings

Special and emergency meetings of the Board of Trustees may be **called by the Mayor** or any other Trustee upon notice to the entire Board and the media. For meetings planned at least one week in advance, notice must be given to the news media and also to the public by means of posting in one or more designated public locations, at least **seventy-two (72) hours in advance**.

For meetings scheduled less than one week in advance, notice shall be provided to the news media by telephone, in person or in writing at least 24 hours in advance and posted at a reasonable time prior to the meeting unless an emergency precludes such notice.

Quorum

A quorum **shall be required to conduct** business. **A quorum of the (5) five** member board of trustees shall be (3) three. In the absence of a quorum, a lesser number may adjourn and compel the attendance of any absent members.

Executive Sessions

Executive sessions shall be held in accordance **with the NYS Public Officers Law**

105. All executive sessions shall be commenced and concluded in a public meeting. **A motion** must be made to enter into an executive session. The person making the motion **must** specify the subject area **or areas which qualify an executive session, and the motion must be carried by a majority vote of the total membership of the body.**

Agendas

The agenda shall be prepared by the Clerk at the direction of the Mayor and be made available to the public on the village website. The Mayor or any Trustee may have **an item** placed on the agenda. When possible, items for the agenda shall be given to the Clerk at least **72 hours before the meeting**.

No item can be added to the printed agenda after 12 P.M. on the day of the meeting.

The agenda will be prepared and emailed to board members no later than 5:00 P.M. the day before the meeting.

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Items may be placed on the agenda during the meeting, upon a motion by the Mayor or a member of the Board of Trustees.

Members of the public who wish to speak at the public meeting should notify the Clerk of their intent, by 12 P.M. of the day of the meeting.

Voting

All actions taken by the Board must be presented for a vote in the form of a motion or resolution.

Any member of the Board of Trustees, as well as the Mayor, may offer a motion or resolution, upon recognition by the chair of the meeting. All resolutions and motions require a second before they can be voted upon.

Pursuant to Village Law each member of the Board shall have one vote. The Mayor may vote on any matter, but must vote in case of a tie.

A majority of the totally authorized power is necessary to pass a matter unless otherwise specified by state law.

A member must vote on every question, unless a request to abstain is voiced and

explained. An abstention is only permissible upon a conflict of interest or other reason such that would suggest an appearance of impropriety by the member. The nature of said conflict must be explained by the member seeking to abstain, and such explanation shall be made part of the record. Said member shall not participate in the discussion with regard to such matter.

Motions to close or limit debate require a majority vote.

A vote upon any question shall be taken by ayes and noes, and the names of the members present and their votes shall be entered in the minutes.

Minutes

Minutes are to be taken by the Clerk, Deputy Clerk or in their absence, by a person designated by the mayor.

Minutes shall consist of a record or summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions and any other matter formally voted upon and the vote thereon. Minutes taken at an executive session must consist of "a record or summary of the final determination" of action that was taken of any action that is taken by formal vote which shall consist of a record or summary of the final determination of such action, and the date and vote thereon; provided, however, that such summary need not include any matter which is not required to be made public by the NYS Freedom of Information Law. Votes to appropriate money cannot be taken in executive session.

Minutes shall also include the following:

Name of the Board

Date, place and time of meeting

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Notation of presence or absence of Board members and time of arrival or departure if different from the time of call to order and adjournment.

Name and title of all village officials and employees present. A record of communications presented to the Board

A record of the votes by each trustee. In addition, a roll call vote shall be taken on each motion or resolution involving the granting of authority to borrow money.

A record of reports made by Board or other village personnel Time of adjournment

Signature of Clerk, Deputy Clerk or person who took the minutes if not the Clerk

Minutes shall not contain a summary of the discussion leading to action taken or include verbatim comments unless requested by a Board member.

Minutes must be available to the public within two weeks of a meeting.

Order of Business

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance Bid Awards
Department Head Reports (Second Wednesday of the Month)
Public Agenda (Fourth Wednesday of the Month)
Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
Approval of Vouchers and Fund Transfers
Resolutions
Mayor's Report Trustee Reports Past Business
New Business
Communications Clerk's Report
Presentation of Financial Reports Adjournment

Public Comment

With the exception of a public hearing, the public shall only be allowed to speak during the public input periods of the meeting or at such other times as the Mayor or Chair shall allow. Members of the public, who wish to speak during a meeting, should notify the Clerk prior to 12 P.M. of the day of the meeting.

Speakers must be recognized by the Mayor or Chair and give their name, address, affiliation before proceeding.

Speakers shall be asked to limit in their remarks to three (3) minutes unless otherwise permitted by the Mayor or Chair. Speakers who have been placed on the agenda will be given preference. Speakers whose comments concern agenda items will be given the next level of priority. Speakers will not be allowed to re-allocate unused time.

The length of the public input period shall left to the discretion of the Mayor, but the time allotted will not be so lengthy as to interrupt or considerably delay the normal course of the meeting.

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Speakers shall comment in a respectful manner and observe commonly accepted rules of courtesy, decorum, dignity, decency and appropriate language.

Following public comment, Board members shall be afforded the opportunity to respond to the comments of any speaker.

(Also see Meeting Rules of Procedure and Conduct for the General Public)

Public Hearings

From time to time the Village will hold public hearings on issues to inform the public. Five days must elapse between the publication of the notice and the public hearing itself. At such hearings, the public will be asked to write their names and addresses on a sign-in sheet and indicate any desire to comment during the hearing. Speakers will then be allowed to speak in the order listed on the sign-in sheet. Speakers are asked to limit their remarks to three (3) minutes unless otherwise permitted by the Mayor or Chair. Speakers shall comment only on the topic of the public hearing and act in a respectful manner while observing commonly accepted rules of courtesy, decorum, dignity, decency and appropriate language.

Guidelines for Use of Recording Equipment

All members of the public and all public officials are allowed to tape or video record public meetings. Recording is not allowed during executive sessions.

The recording must be done in a manner which does not interfere with the meeting.

The Mayor may make the determination that the recording is being done in an intrusive manner, taking into consideration, but not limited to, brightness of lights, distance from the Village Board, size of the equipment, the amount of noise generated by the activity and the ability of the public to still participate in the meeting.

If the Mayor determines that the recording is interfering with the meeting, the Mayor may request that individuals to alter their behavior to eliminated the interference. If the Mayor's request is not complied with, the Mayor may have the individual removed from the meeting room.

The Board has the authority to adopt reasonable rules governing the use of cameras and recording devices during open meetings and those rules must be written, conspicuously posted and provided to those in attendance upon request.

Change of Rules

These rules shall be in effect after approval by a majority of the Board of Trustees at the Organizational Meeting of each year and shall remain in effect until adoption at the start of the next Village Year. Changes to the rules may be carried out on an interim basis after approval by a super majority of the Board of Trustees.

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Meeting Rules of Procedure and Conduct for the General Public

The following rules are not meant to discourage debate and comment, but merely to set reasonable guidelines for that exercise of democracy.

1. With the exception of a public hearing, the public shall only be allowed to speak during the public participation periods of the meeting or at such other times as the Mayor or Chair shall allow. Members of the public, who wish to speak during a meeting, should notify the Clerk prior to 12 P.M. of the day of the meeting.
2. Speakers must be recognized by the Mayor or Chair and give their name, address, affiliation and a brief description of the nature of their business before proceeding.
3. Speakers are asked to limit in their remarks to three (3) minutes unless otherwise permitted by the Mayor or Chair. Speakers who have been placed on the agenda will be given preference. Speakers whose comments concern agenda items will be given the next level of priority. Speakers will not be allowed to re-allocate unused time.
4. The length of the public participation periods is left to the discretion of the Mayor or Chair, but the time allotted will not be so lengthy as to interrupt or considerably delay the normal course of the meeting.
5. Speakers shall comment in a respectful manner and observe commonly accepted rules of courtesy, decorum, dignity, decency and appropriate language. No member of the public shall engage in any demonstration, booing, hand clapping or otherwise disrupt the formality of a Board of Trustees meeting. Any person who disrupts the orderly business and conduct of the meeting may be asked to leave.
6. Any person wishing to speak more than once may, at the Mayor's discretion, be recognized again, but not until all others who wish to speak on a particular subject have been heard. Persons who have not signed up may be allowed to speak at the discretion of the mayor at the end of the public input period.
7. Any persons speaking to the Board shall address their remarks to the Board and not to other members of the public in the form of a debate.
8. No such person has the right to demand an answer to a specific question from a member of the Board. All such questions shall be directed to the Mayor who may answer them, refer to a specific Board/ staff member or the Village Attorney or hold the matter over for further action at a later time. Following public comment, Board members shall be afforded the opportunity to respond to the comments of any speaker.
9. **All cell phones and beepers shall be turned off while the meeting is in progress.