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# **KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION RULES**



Revised May 19, 2025

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## **RULE I. BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

### **SECTION A. CONVENING THE COMMISSION:**

The Commission shall meet in the City-County Building on the third Monday of each month at 5:00 p.m. to consider its Zoning Agenda and the fourth Monday of each month at 5:00 p.m. to consider its Legislative Agenda. An optional agenda review meeting will be held on the third Monday of each month at 3:00 p.m. and will not require a quorum and no votes will be taken. In the event a meeting falls on a legal holiday, the Chair shall convene the Commission on a date and time set by the Chair. These regular meetings of the Commission in November and December shall be scheduled one week prior in November and December. In the event of inclement weather and the county offices in the City-County Building are closed, the meetings shall be postponed at the direction of the Chair.

### **SECTION B. ORDER OF BUSINESS:**

1. The Order of Business on the Legislative Agenda shall be as follows:

- I. Call to Order/Roll Call (5:00 p.m.)
- A. Devotional
- B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
- C. Amendments to the Agenda
- D. Education Consent Calendar
- E. General Government Consent Calendar
- F. Honorary Resolutions
- G. Presentations
- H. Public Forum – Agenda Items Only
- I. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
- J. Drives and Roads
- K. Line Item Transfers
- L. Budget Amendments
- M. Notary Public Applications
- N. Spread of Record
- O. General Government Resolutions (non-consent)
- P. Ordinances on First Reading
- Q. Ordinances on Second Reading
- R. Public Forum – Open Topics
- S. Other Business
- T. Adjournment

2. The Order of Business on the Zoning Agenda shall be as follows:

- I. Call to Order/Roll Call (5:00 p.m.)
- A. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

- B. Amendments to the Agenda
- C. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
- D. Public Forum – Agenda Items Only
- E. Zoning Requests
- F. Zoning Appeals
- G. Amendments to the Knox County Zoning Ordinance
- H. Public Forum – Open Topics
- I. Other Business
- J. Adjournment

**SECTION C. GAINING THE FLOOR:**

The sponsor of a resolution or discussion item shall be entitled to speak first. The Chair shall recognize each Commissioner wishing to speak and shall make every effort to recognize Commissioners in the order of their request. The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair in keeping track of the order of those wishing to speak.

**SECTION D. SPEAKING:**

A member recognized by the Chair shall confine his or her remarks to the question under debate. The sponsor of a resolution may speak as often as the situation requires. No other member shall speak longer than five minutes on the same subject in the first speech and three minutes in any succeeding speech.

**SECTION E. CONSENT TO YIELD:**

A speaker shall not be interrupted, except for a question. The speaker may decline to yield, but shall respond to questions at the end of the presentation.

**SECTION F. POINTS OF ORDER:**

If any member violates the Rules of the Commission, the Chair shall call the member to order. A point of order may be raised as provided by Robert's Rules of Order (current edition).

**SECTION G. APPEAL ON RULING:**

Any member may appeal any ruling of the Chair. A majority vote of the members present shall decide the appeal, as provided by Robert's Rules of Order (current edition).

**SECTION H. REFUSAL TO BE IN ORDER:**

If any person refuses to remain orderly, the Chair shall call that person to order. If such person refuses to come to order, the Chair shall have the right to order the person's removal from the meeting. This person may return only after approval of the Chair, or a majority vote of Commissioners present. This section also applies to members of the general public.

**SECTION I.**            **COMMITTEE REFERRALS:**

Any matter requiring consideration or study by a committee shall be referred to the appropriate committee by the Commission Chair or by majority vote of the Commission.

**SECTION J.**            **MOTIONS:**

Motions may be made only by Commissioners in accordance with the following:

1.     **Debating Motions:**        No motion shall be debated until seconded and stated by the Chair.
2.     **Motions in Writing:**        When a motion is made and seconded, it shall be reduced to writing if desired by the Chair or any member.
3.     **Motions During Vote:**        After the Chair begins a voice or roll call vote, no other motion shall be in order until the result of the vote is declared by the Chair.
4.     **Requiring Roll Call:**        Any motion may be put to the Commission for a voice vote by the Chair. Upon unanimous consent of the Commission, a voice vote may be recorded as a roll call vote.
5.     **Friendly Amendments:**        A Friendly Amendment to a motion under debate that is perceived by all parties an enhancement to the original motion is permissible when approved by the Chair and consented to by the movers of the motion.
6.     **Withdrawal of Motions:**        A motion that has been seconded may be withdrawn by the maker of the motion. In the event a member objects to the withdrawal, or the person who seconded the motion refuses to withdraw his or her second, then the motion becomes the property of the body and can only be withdrawn by a motion to permit withdrawal which requires a second and a majority vote of the body.

**SECTION K.**            **MEMBER MAY CHANGE VOTE:**

Any member may change a vote before the result of a role call is declared by the Chair. It shall be the duty of the Chair at the end of each roll call to inquire if those who passed or were absent when the roll was called now wish to vote or if a Commissioner wishes to change a vote. The result shall be declared by the Chair.

**SECTION L.**            **RECONSIDERATION OF A MOTION:**

After a question has been put to a vote, any member of the prevailing side may move with another member of the prevailing side to second a reconsideration at any time prior to adjournment. An affirmative majority vote of the members present shall be required for reconsideration in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order (current edition).

**SECTION M. ELECTIONS OR APPOINTMENTS:**

In all proceedings of the Commission to either fill vacancies in elective offices or appoint committee members, board members, or appointed officers of the county where the Commission is authorized to make such appointment, the appropriate procedure set forth below shall be followed. Before any vacancy is filled by the Commission, the Commission shall issue a public notice to receive resumes from candidates seeking appointment to the vacancy at least seven (7) calendar days prior to a meeting to fill a vacancy and there shall be a public hearing for any elected official vacancy. County officials shall reside in the district from which elected or appointed as provided by Section 9.10 of the Knox County Charter. Members appointed to boards and committees shall also be residents of Knox County at the time of their appointment and at all times while serving pursuant to Section 2.02.I of the Knox County Charter. Any applicant shall not serve on any committee or board that has a family member as defined by spouse, parent, grandparent, siblings, in-laws, or children.

1. The procedure for filling vacancies in elective offices shall be as follows in accordance with Tenn. Code Ann. § 5-5-111 and Knox County Charter Sections 2.03.E., 2.03.F. and 9.08.G.:

a. Before the Commission votes or considers any motion or resolution regarding the office to be filled, the Chair shall allow registered voters of the county an opportunity to submit names and qualifications to the Commission for consideration. The names and qualifications may be submitted in writing to the Chair prior to the meeting or may be submitted in person at the meeting. In order for a name to be considered, a member of the Commission must subsequently nominate the person. Members of the county legislative body may also nominate a candidate or candidates to fill the office or vacancy without the name being submitted by a voter.

b. Each member of the Commission shall have an opportunity by roll call to nominate a candidate or candidates to fill the office or vacancy. Nominations do not require a second. If the person nominated is not present at the meeting, the person making the nomination shall submit a signed statement from the nominee that the nominee is willing to serve in the office if appointed.

c. If a Commission member's name is placed in nomination, the Chair of the Commission shall, prior to the first vote, require that member to either accept or decline the nomination. A refusal to either accept or decline shall disqualify that member for nomination. Should a member of the Commission accept a nomination, the member shall be prohibited from voting on the appointment or any motions or resolutions relative to making the appointment until the vacancy is filled. A Commission member accepting



nomination shall also recuse him/herself from the discussion on the matter in accordance with the Knox County Charter and leave the dais and sit in the audience until the vacancy is filled. For the purposes of determining a majority, the membership of the Commission shall be reduced to reflect any member or members prohibited from voting on the appointment. If a member of the Commission is subsequently appointed to fill the vacancy, the member shall immediately resign from the Commission upon accepting the appointment. If the member does not receive the appointment, the member shall not be required to resign and may continue the member's duties on the Commission upon the conclusion of the vote on the appointment. No vote shall be recorded in favor of any member of the Commission who has either declined nomination or been otherwise disqualified.

- d. Nominators may speak about their nominee; nominees may speak about themselves.
- e. After nominations are ended, nominations shall be closed by motion and vote.
- f. The Chair will then call for discussion by commissioners regarding all the nominees.
- g. After each commissioner is afforded ample opportunity to express his/her views and responding views, the Chair will ask if all commissioners are ready for a vote. If any commissioner wants further discussion, further discussion shall be permitted.
- h. When discussion is complete, voting will commence. By roll call vote each commissioner may vote in favor of one (1) nominee by name and the nominee with the least number of votes is disqualified.
- i. After each vote, the chair will invite further discussion by commissioners regarding the remaining nominees.
- j. If there is a tie vote, the Chair will invite the nominators and remaining nominees to speak again, and the Chair will invite further discussion by commissioners.
- k. Voting will resume until a nominee receives the votes of a majority of the members of the Commission eligible to vote on the appointment.

1. If the official appointed is a Knox County Commissioner, then he or she shall not take the oath of office until after any other appointments of an elective office on the same agenda have been considered.
2. The procedure for appointing committee members, board members, the county internal auditor, or other appointed officers shall be as follows:
  - a. Each member of the Commission shall have an opportunity by roll call to nominate a person or persons to serve in each vacant position. Nominations do not require a second. The application of a nominee for a vacant position shall represent the nominee's willingness to serve in the position if appointed. The Commission Chair shall also allow registered voters of the County an opportunity to submit names to the Commission for consideration. The names may be submitted in writing to the Chair prior to the meeting or may be submitted in person at the meeting. In order for a name to be considered, a member of the Commission must subsequently nominate the person.
  - b. Nominators may speak about their nominees; nominees may speak about themselves.
  - c. After nominations are ended, nominations shall be closed by motion and vote.
  - d. The Chair will then call for discussions by commissioners regarding all the nominees.
  - e. After each commissioner is afforded ample opportunity to express his/her views and responding views, the Chair will ask if all commissioners are ready for a vote. If any commissioner wants further discussion, further discussion shall be permitted.
  - f. When discussion is complete, voting will commence. By roll call vote each commissioner may vote in favor of one (1) nominee by name and the nominee with the least number of votes is disqualified.
  - g. After each vote, the chair will invite further discussion by commissioners regarding the remaining nominees.
  - h. If there is a tie vote, the Chair will invite the nominators and remaining nominees to speak again, and the Chair will invite further discussion by commissioners.

- i. Voting will resume until a nominee receives a majority of the votes of the membership of the Commission.

**SECTION N.**      **AGENDA:**

1. Commission members, officials, and others requesting matters to be placed on the Legislative or Zoning agendas shall submit such requests electronically on Agenda Quick by 12:00 noon on the first Monday of every month. Any matter requested to be added to an agenda that meets the deadline shall be placed on that month's agenda of a regular meeting of the Commission. The sponsor of any matter may withdraw same without Commission approval prior to the final agenda being set.
2. All requests for line item transfers between accounts shall be submitted to the Commission electronically on Agenda Quick by 12:00 noon on the second Monday of every month.
3. Any request for matters to be placed on an agenda after the deadline shall be approved by the Chair of the Commission or said request will be considered at the next regular meeting.
4. Matters may be added to the agenda(s) for all meetings except a special session of the Commission by an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the membership of the Commission or two-thirds (2/3) of a quorum of a committee, as applicable. However, any regular agenda item or similar subject matter that has been acted on by the Commission during its Legislative Agenda may not be placed on the Commission Legislative Agenda for a period of ninety (90) days without the consenting vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Commission. The only exception to this rule will be a vote on the budget and/or the vote on the tax rate, which would require a majority vote.
5. A preliminary copy of the Legislative Agenda including proposed resolutions and attachments shall be available to each Commissioner by 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday before the third Monday of the month. The final Legislative Agenda shall be distributed to each Commissioner by 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday before the Legislative Agenda meeting. The final Zoning Agenda shall be distributed to each Commissioner by 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday before the Zoning Agenda meeting.
6. All matters affecting the zoning of real property, including amendments to the Knox County Zoning Ordinance, regardless of whether such action is to be taken by resolution or ordinance, shall be considered as a matter under zonings.

7. The devotional shall be delivered in accordance with the policy effectuated by Resolution R-12-7-904 of the Knox County Commission, or as amended. Devotionals, whether delivered by a Commissioner, or his/her designee, shall be limited to five (5) minutes in length.

8. An applicant on a zoning agenda shall be granted one (1) automatic deferral if the deferral request is received in the Commission Office by 4:00 p.m. (EST) on the Wednesday in advance of the zoning meeting. A deferred zoning request shall appear on the Commission zoning agenda with an appropriate notation indicating deferral of the item.

9. If no action is taken on an agenda item not otherwise provided for herein, then that agenda item shall proceed to the next meeting agenda as provided by Robert's Rules of Order, (current edition).

### **SECTION O. PUBLIC FORUM:**

The Commission desires to hear from individuals and/or groups on matters important to local government. As a normal practice, time is set aside at each Commission meeting for Public Forum, during which individuals or groups may request to speak to the Commissioners. The Commission provides the public the opportunity at meetings to address an agenda item during the Commission's discussion or consideration of the item. Citizens are also provided additional opportunities to address an agenda item or express an opinion on any matter during Public Forum. At the regularly scheduled Commission meetings for the Legislative Agenda and Zoning Agenda, Public Forum at the beginning is for agenda items only and Public Forum at the end is open to any topic as shown in Rule I, Section B.

The Commission's public forum is primarily designated for Knox County citizens and property owners. Those who live outside of Knox County may speak to Commissioners at the discretion of the Chair. Individuals or groups seeking to address the Commission during Public Forum should register by contacting the Commission Office via telephone or e-mail no later than 4:00 p.m. on the day prior to the scheduled meeting or by speaking with the Commission Vice Chair or the Commission Office Manager in person prior to the start of the meeting. Information required for Public Forum registration will include name, contact information, address, and topic. The Chair or a Commissioner may also recognize individuals who have not arranged to speak beforehand if they determine that such is in the public interest. A majority vote of members present can overrule the decision of the Chair or a Commissioner. Public Forum speakers shall address remarks to the entire Commission and not individual members. Each person who is signed up to speak on an agenda item shall be given the option by the Chair to speak either at public forum or during the Commission's discussion of the agenda item. Each person speaking shall state his or her name and county of residence and have up to three (3) to five (5) minutes to make remarks at the discretion of the Chair unless objected by a Commissioner. Employees of Knox County shall state their

first and last name, title and department name. Members of the Commission and the Knox County staff members may have the privilege of asking questions of any person who addresses the Commission.

The Commission respects and appreciates the good intentions that bring citizens to speak at Public Forum. The Commission asks that speakers show their respect for the Commission, the staff and other citizens by speaking in a manner that is civil and courteous. The Chair or Vice Chair shall have the authority to terminate the remarks of any individual who is disruptive, degrading and/or insulting or who does not adhere to Public Forum rules. Individuals seeking additional information about Public Forum or any item on a meeting agenda shall direct inquiries to the office of the County Commission.

**SECTION P.**            **CONSENT CALENDAR:**

All resolutions added to the Legislative Agenda that are sponsored by Knox County Schools shall be placed on the Education Consent Calendar. The Commission Chair shall propose the General Government Consent Calendar on the Commission Forum by the Friday before the third Monday of the month. Commissioners shall have the opportunity via the Commission Forum to pull any General Government Resolution from the proposed General Government Consent Calendar by noon on the Wednesday before the Legislative Agenda meeting. All General Government Resolutions not pulled from the General Government Consent Calendar will be listed on the General Government Consent Calendar for the final Legislative Agenda.

All items on the Education Consent Calendar and General Government Consent Calendar shall be approved upon a single motion and vote of the Commission. Passage of such motion shall be considered as any other motion before the Commission. Adoption of such a motion shall be considered approval of each item individually, and no later objection may be made for failure to take action by individual motion. The resolution numbers and captions of all items on the Education Consent Calendar and the General Government Consent Calendar shall not be read into the record prior to the vote on said Consent Calendars. Any member of the Commission may require any matter be considered individually by making objection to the motion to collectively consider all consent items prior to the recording of the vote by the Clerk and the result of the vote is declared by the Chair.

**SECTION Q.**            **SUSPENDING THE RULES:**

The rules may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the membership of the Commission.

**SECTION R.**            **AMENDING THE RULES:**

Rules may be amended by Resolution of the Commission upon report of the Rules Committee.

**SECTION S.**            **ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER:**

All matters not covered herein shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, (current edition).

**SECTION T.**            **COMMISSION OFFICE USE:**

The Commission Office shall be used for Commission business only.

**SECTION U.**            **SPECIAL MEETINGS:**

Special meetings of the Commission may be called by the Mayor or by petition or vote of a majority of the members of the Commission in accordance with the following:

- (a) The Mayor has the power to convene the Commission in special session when, in the Mayor's opinion, the public necessities require it.
- (b) Upon written application to the Chair of the Commission by the Mayor or upon petition or vote of a majority of the members of the Commission, it shall be mandatory for the Chair to call a special session of the Commission. A petition of a majority of the members of the Commission shall be obtained through the online Knox County Commission Forum. The Commission Office shall be requested to notify each member of the Commission of the petition request posted on the Knox County Commission Forum. If a majority of the members of Commission do not approve the petition within five (5) days (120 hours), the petition fails.
- (c) The convening date of the Commission shall not be more than thirty (30) days nor less than five (5) days from the time of the filing with the Chair.
- (d) The notice shall be made by publication in some newspaper published in the county at least five (5) days before the time of the convening of the Commission, which notice shall specify the objects and purposes for which the special session is called, and no other business but that embraced in the notice shall be transacted during the sitting of the special session.

**SECTION V.**            **EMERGENCY MEETINGS:**

The Mayor or the Chair of the Commission shall be authorized to call a special session of the Commission for emergency purposes when, in the opinion of the Mayor or Chair of Commission, the public necessities require it. The call shall be made by publication of a notice in a newspaper published in the county, and by personal notification to the members of the Commission at least forty-eight (48) hours before the time of the convening of the Commission. The notice shall specify the objects and purposes for which such emergency special session is called, and no other business but that embraced in such notice shall be transacted during such emergency special session. The forty-eight (48) hour notice requirement may be waived in a declared state of emergency or in matters of great public

importance where time is of the essence, as determined by the Mayor and the Chair of the Commission.

**SECTION W. KNOX COUNTY CODE OF ETHICS:**

Members of the Commission adhere to the Knox County Code of Ethics policy. See the policy for these standards of ethical conduct. The policy is available on the Knox County homepage at [https://www.knoxcounty.org/ethics\\_committee/](https://www.knoxcounty.org/ethics_committee/)

**RULE II. CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

**SECTION A. CALL TO ORDER:**

Meetings shall be called to order by the Chair. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall preside. In the absence of the Vice Chair, the Commission shall be called to order by the Clerk and shall subsequently elect one of its members to preside until the Chair or Vice Chair returns.

**SECTION B. THE QUESTION:**

The Chair shall clearly state the question before a vote is taken. A member may ask for clarification of the question before the result of a vote is declared by the Chair.

**SECTION C. DISCRETION TO MOVE ITEMS:**

After the agenda has been set, the Chair may, without objection, move items on the agenda for efficiency. If there is an objection, a vote shall be taken.

**SECTION D. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIR:**

The Commission Chair is responsible for the following:

1. Administrative Duties. The Chair will work with the legislative body and staff to set the annual legislative calendar, organize the annual State Delegation meeting, coordinate special-called meetings, review the agenda, and create/coordinate special committees on topics that are outside the purview of standing committees.
2. Questions of Order. The Chair will preside over the meetings in accordance with Commission Rules.
3. Commission Office. The Chair shall serve as the manager of the Commission staff and administer such duties as time-off requests, public notices, personnel actions/reviews, and oversee the Commission Office operating budget.
4. Representation. The Chair shall represent the Commission as a board member for the following organizations (or establish a designee representative): Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), Joint Economic and Community Development Board of Knox County, Knox County Investment Committee, Tennessee County Commissioners Association (TCCA), and Knox Education Foundation.

5. When speaking publicly, if the Chair's views on an issue are at odds with the position of the Commission as expressed in a vote on said issue, the Chair shall state in his/her public comments that his/her position on the issue is at odds with the official position of the Commission. A violation of this rule may be punished by censure or loss of committee assignments (if not ex-officio) by motion and approval by a 2/3 vote of the Commission. Such vote shall be taken by roll call.

**SECTION E. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VICE CHAIR:**

The Commission Vice Chair is responsible for the following:

1. All duties as outlined in Rule II, Section D in the absence of or assignment by the Chair.
2. Support Public Forum as outlined in Rule I, Section O of the Commission Rules.
3. Assist the Chair in keeping track of the order of those wishing to speak.

**RULE III. COUNTY CLERK**

**SECTION A. MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION:**

The County Clerk shall prepare the minutes of each meeting and distribute them to each Commissioner no later than the Thursday before the meeting. Minutes of each meeting shall be approved by the Commission. Subsequent to the minutes being approved by Commission, the minutes shall be made available on the Knox County Commission's website and provided to the general public upon request.

**SECTION B. ROLL CALL VOTE:**

The Chair shall require the Clerk to call the roll and record the vote as deemed necessary by the Chair or required by the Knox County Charter or Code. The Chair shall alternate districts where roll call begins. Roll call of commission seats does not need to be in numerical order.

**SECTION C. VETO MESSAGE:**

The Clerk shall send notice of an Executive veto in accordance with the provisions of the Knox County Charter. Upon the request of a Commissioner, the Law Director shall prepare a resolution for consideration by the Commission authorizing a veto override.

**RULE IV. COUNTY LAW DIRECTOR**

**SECTION A. COUNTY LAW DIRECTOR:**

The County Law Director or his designee shall attend meetings to advise on matters of the law. The Law Director or his designee shall also attend committee meetings when called upon by the Chair of a Standing or other Committee established by the Commission or a written request signed by a majority of that Committee.



## **RULE V. COMMITTEES AND BOARDS**

### **SECTION A. OFFICERS ELECTION:**

Upon the establishment or appointment of a committee, the members of the committee shall convene and elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and a Secretary from its membership. The Rules of Commission shall apply for the committee's operation. The Committee may adopt rules for its operation not covered under the Rules of the Commission. If a committee has not organized as required within a reasonable amount of time of its establishment or appointment, the Chair shall call the committee into session and serve as a temporary Chair until the committee elects a Chair.

### **SECTION B. COMMITTEE MEETINGS OPEN TO COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP:**

All committee meetings shall be open. Only duly elected members of the committee in session may vote, make motions and count as forming a quorum. A majority of the committee is needed to form a quorum in order to vote on issues to recommend to the full Commission.

A committee without a quorum may have discussions of issues. Commissioners who are not members of the committee may participate in the committee meeting.

### **SECTION C. AUTHORITY OF COMMITTEES:**

The role and jurisdiction of a committee is to investigate and study matters, provide information and present recommendations to the Commission as generally described in the title of the committee and as more specifically defined in the subject areas listed under the title. Should any question arise as to the jurisdiction of any committee, it shall be referred to the Chair for determination. This determination is subject to an appeal to the Commission at its regular meeting.

### **SECTION D. REPORTING PROCEDURE:**

The procedure for reporting the findings of a committee shall be as follows:

1. The Committee Chair or the member designated shall report and move any action recommended by the committee.
2. Upon completion of a report the speaker shall yield to questions.
3. If no committee action is moved by the Committee Chair, motions from the Commission for action or to receive the report are appropriate, and, if made and seconded, may then be discussed and acted upon.

### **SECTION E. DUTIES OF COMMITTEE AND SUBCOMMITTEE OFFICERS:**

The Committee Chair's responsibility is to call meetings of the committee, prepare the agenda, serve as the presiding officer, and serve as spokesman of the Committee before

Commission. The Committee Chair shall ensure that the notice requirements are met for all meetings of the Committee. If a workshop is held by a committee, the Chair of that committee shall preside and the Rules of the Commission shall apply. The Chair should understand and make the committee aware of its areas of jurisdiction. The Vice Chair is to assume the role and responsibilities of the Chair in his or her absence. Should the Chair's seat be vacated, a new Chair shall be elected. The Secretary shall be responsible for the taking of minutes and filing same with the Commission office.

**SECTION F.**            **COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES:**

The minutes of all committee meetings shall contain the day, time, place the committee convenes, the members present, a summary of matters considered, a record of the voting on any matters voted upon by the committee, and the time of adjournment. For any Committee that the County Clerk does not prepare the minutes, the Secretary shall be responsible for the taking of minutes and filing same with the Commission Office. The meeting minutes of a Standing Committee may be approved by signature of the Chair of that Standing Committee.

**SECTION G.**            **VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES:**

If for any reason one or more members of a committee vacate their positions, the Commission shall fill those vacancies in the same manner as the original members. In the event a Commissioner who is serving on a committee in his or her capacity as a member of the Commission ceases to be a member of the Commission, then his or her seat on the committee shall be declared vacant and the vacancy shall be filled with a sitting member of the Commission in the same manner and by the same authority as the original appointment.

**SECTION H.**            **SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

The Chair may from time to time appoint a Special Committee, Task Force, or Ad Hoc Committee as the circumstances require, but such a Special Committee, Task Force, or Ad Hoc Committee shall be disbanded when it completes its assigned work and in no case shall it exist longer than one year unless extended by Resolution of the Commission. No Special Committee, Task Force, or Ad Hoc Committee shall be appointed for any purpose when there is a Standing Committee on the same subject.

**SECTION I.**            **RULES COMMITTEE:**

The committee on Rules, which shall be comprised of five members, shall be appointed annually by resolution of the Full Commission following the reorganization of the Commission. The Rules Committee shall convene no less than annually to review the Commission Rules and report its recommendations to the Commission. All proposed amendments or additions to the Commission Rules shall be reviewed by the Rules Committee for recommendation prior to being considered by the Full Commission.

**SECTION J.**            **TELECOM COMMITTEE:**

There shall be a Telecom Committee comprised of all eleven (11) members of the Commission.

**SECTION K.**            **BEER BOARD:**

The Beer Board shall regulate the sale of beer in Knox County. The Beer Board shall convene at 4:00 p.m. on the fourth Monday of the month, unless otherwise noticed, for said purpose. The Beer Board shall be composed of seven (7) Commissioners, including at least one (1) At-Large Commissioner, who are appointed annually by resolution of the Full Commission following the reorganization of the Commission.

The Commission acknowledges that Beer Board decisions affect the health and welfare of the community as it relates to public safety. To balance these concerns, attendance at the Beer Board meeting by the applicant and any other interested persons is strongly encouraged. If the applicant is not present, personally or by representation, when the beer application is first read, the item shall automatically be placed at the end of the agenda. If the applicant is not present when the item is reached again, the item shall be placed on the Beer Board agenda for the following month. The item shall be placed on the agenda for the following month for the applicant's failure to attend only once automatically. If the applicant fails to attend the subsequent Beer Board meeting, the application shall be deemed withdrawn, unless the Beer Board votes otherwise. The applicant shall be notified by the County Clerk's Office of any actions taken by the Beer Board.

The Order of Business at Beer Board meetings shall be as follows:

1. Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Swearing in of Individuals who Plan to Testify
5. Consideration of Applications for Beer Permits – Attorney to ask applicants the following questions:
  - a) Are you a resident of the state of Tennessee?
  - b) Is the information on the application current and accurate?
  - c) Do you understand that you shall make no beer sales to minors?
  - d) Has beer ever been sold at this location before?
  - e) Is there an outstanding license at this location?
  - f) Have you or any of your employees at this location been convicted of any violation of the laws against possession, sale, manufacture or transportation of intoxicating - liquor or a crime involving moral turpitude within the past ten (10) years?
  - g) Is this an application for "on," "on and off," or "off" premises sale of beer?
  - h) Do you own the premises?

- i) If not, what is your relationship to the property owner?
- j) Does anyone else have an interest in the business?
- k) Who will operate the business?
- l) Are you familiar with the Knox County and state of Tennessee beer laws and regulations; and do you agree to conduct your business in conformity with them?
- m) Have you completed a server-training program?
- n) The attorney will then ask for reports from:
  - The Health Department
  - The Sheriff's Office
  - The Knox County Codes
  - The Knox County Fire Marshall
- 6. The attorney then turns the meeting over to the Chairperson and discussion and vote is taken on the application. All votes shall be by roll call.
- 7. Consideration of Suspension/Revocation of Beer Permit
  - (a) Attorney asks Sheriff to itemize allegations of violation
  - (b) Attorney asks the alleged violator if he/she admits or denies the allegation and allows that person to say anything he or she desires to tell the Board.
  - (c) The attorney turns the meeting back over to the Chairperson and discussion is commenced by the board followed with a motion and vote for civil penalties. All votes shall be by roll call.
- 8. Penalties levied per the Knox County Beer Ordinance.
  - (a) First Offense: violator's choice of \$1,000.00 civil penalty or 30 day suspension of license.
  - (b) Second Offense: violator's choice of \$1,500.00 civil penalty or 60 day suspension of license.
  - (c) Third Offense: violator's choice of \$2,000.00 civil penalty or 90 day suspension of license.
  - (d) Fourth Offense: Revocation of License.
- 9. Adjournment

**SECTION L.            FAILURE OF COMMITTEE TO MEET:**

If the Chair of a committee fails to call a meeting, the Commission Chair or a majority of the committee may do so.

**SECTION M.            COMMITTEE AS A WHOLE:**

The Commission may, by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present, resolve itself into a committee as a whole. All workshops conducted by the Commission as a committee as a whole shall be conducted by the Chair and the Rules of the Commission shall apply.

**SECTION N.**      **STANDING COMMITTEES:**

All Standing Committees shall be appointed annually by resolution of the Full Commission following the reorganization of the Commission. Any board or committee on which only commissioners serve shall be considered a standing committee.

Every Commissioner shall serve on one standing committee, unless he or she waives such right in writing to the Chair prior to reorganization. No Commissioner shall serve as Chair of more than two Standing Committees. The Chair of Commission shall not serve as an officer of any standing committee. Standing committees shall only elect the officer positions of chair and vice chair. Any vacancy on a standing committee that is not composed of the entire membership of the Commission shall be filled by resolution of the Commission.

All Standing Committees of the Commission shall meet at least one (1) time per year. Committee Chairs shall submit at least one (1) written report to the Commission Chair summarizing the work of the Committee over the past year. This annual Committee report shall be turned into the Chair and Commission Office no later than August 1<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year and made available to the public by the Commission Office upon request.

**SECTION O.**      **SUBCOMMITTEES:**

Each standing committee may, from its membership, select subcommittees to make studies and recommendations to the committee on any specific matter which falls within its authority. Furthermore, it may select interested citizens who wish to help in the study of a given matter (and, with the approval of the Commission, ask them to work as a part of the subcommittee). The Standing Committee, not its subcommittee, shall have final responsibility for all recommendations.

**SECTION P.**      **MAJORITY VOTES REQUIRED IN COMMITTEES:**

When any Knox County board or committee, which is governed by these rules, is voting on a matter that requires no further County Commission action, the issue shall pass only upon receiving an affirmative vote of a majority of the membership of the committee. All other votes by committees shall be in accord with Robert's Rules of Order, (current edition).

**SECTION Q.**      **OTHER COMMITTEES:**

As also provided by Section 2.02.I of the Knox County Charter, the Commission may appoint members to those boards and commissions it deems necessary in the furtherance of its duties and responsibilities.

**SECTION R.**      **NOTICE OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS:**

Each member of the commission and the general public shall be given at least five (5) days advance notice of the time and place of all committee meetings, including standing committee meetings. Committee meeting notices shall be provided in accordance with the requirements set forth in Sec. 2-7 of the Knox County Code.

**SECTION S. COMMISSIONERS NOT SERVING ON COMMITTEES WITH FAMILY MEMBERS:**

A Commissioner shall not serve on any committee or board that has a family member as defined by spouse, parent, grandparent, siblings, in-laws, or children.

**SECTION T. KNOX COUNTY CODE OF ETHICS:**

Members of County committees and boards adhere to the Knox County Code of Ethics policy. See the policy for these standards of ethical conduct. The policy is available on the Knox County homepage at [https://www.knoxcounty.org/ethics\\_committee/](https://www.knoxcounty.org/ethics_committee/)

**SECTION U. ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

1. The purpose of this Attendance Policy is to ensure that county board and committee members contribute their expertise and judgment to ensure that each body does the best work possible in the pursuit of its mission and goals.
2. All board members and committee members will receive a copy of this official policy. The policy will be reviewed periodically by the Knox County Commission Rules Committee and maintained by the Chair of each board and committee.
3. Attendance record keeping will be the responsibility of a member of the board or committee either designated by the Chair or by majority vote according to the board or committee bylaws or rules.
4. Board members are expected to attend all board meetings and committee members are expected to attend all committee meetings.
5. It is recognized that board members and committee members may be unable to attend some meetings due to conflicts with other commitments or unforeseen circumstances.
6. Each board member and committee member is required to inform the chair of the board or committee in anticipation of an absence, including the reason of the absence. The Chair has the discretion to determine if an absence is excused or unexcused.
7. Where a board member or committee member fails to attend at least 75% of the meetings in a 12-month period, the Chair shall call and discuss the attendance with the individual and may ask them to resign if the member is unable to rearrange their schedule to accommodate regularly scheduled board or committee meetings. If the Chair is unable to reach the board or committee member, then the member is deemed to have resigned and the position declared vacant. The Chair will request a letter of resignation from the member within the next two weeks. Upon receipt of the resignation letter, the Chair will promptly inform the appointing authority of the vacancy. The appointing authority shall accept the resignation and fill the vacancy in a timely manner.

Monthly meetings – 3 unexcused absences are considered cause for action by the Chair

Bimonthly meetings – 2 unexcused absences are considered cause for action by the Chair

Quarterly meetings – 1 unexcused absence is considered cause for action by the Chair

Biannually – 1 unexcused absence is considered cause for action by the Chair

8. A member's record of attendance shall be considered with respect to renewal of a board term or future assignment to a committee.

## **RULE VI. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **SECTION A. RULES FOR THE NEWS MEDIA:**

All news media shall be eligible to attend, report, or broadcast meetings of the Commission subject to the following rules:

1. Personnel and equipment shall not interfere with orderly procedure of the meeting.
2. No equipment shall be placed on the stage in front of the Commissioners or in such a location as to interfere with the Commissioners' view of the speaker's platform.

### **SECTION B. CONFLICT OF THESE RULES WITH LAW:**

If any part of these rules conflict with state or federal law, that part in conflict shall be null and void.

### **SECTION C. ROAD AND RIGHT OF WAY CLOSURE:**

Before a road closure shall be considered by the Commission and placed on its agenda, the following requirements must be met:

If the request for closure is submitted by Knox County Engineering and Public Works:

1. Letters shall be mailed to all property owners adjacent to the proposed closure area notifying them of the proposed closure, the County Commission meetings, and their options to provide input in support or opposition to the closure.

If a request for closure is submitted by a citizen applicant:

1. The Department of Engineering and Public Works must receive a written request for closure. The request must include: the name, length, and width of the road or right-of-way that is desired to be closed, the reason for the request, the location of the road in relation to any existing roads with which it intersects, the name(s) and contact information for the person(s) requesting the closure and who will act as the representative, a statement of whom the proposed closure area is to be transferred, and a Canvass form signed by all the owners and holders of property abutting the proposed closure area indicating if they agree or disagree with the closure. Written requests should be submitted to: [rowclosures@knoxcounty.org](mailto:rowclosures@knoxcounty.org) or Attn: Senior

Director, Knox County Engineering and Public Works, 205 W Baxter Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917.

2. The Director of Engineering and Public Works will review the request to determine if Engineering and Public Works will sponsor the closure. If Engineering and Public Works does not support the closure, the applicant will be notified of the decision, and the applicant may instead seek sponsorship from a Commissioner. If no support for the request is gained from EPW or a Knox County Commissioner, the request will not advance.
3. Knox County Engineering and Public Works will mail letters to the applicant and all abutting property owners stating the dates and times that the request will be presented at the Agenda Review and County Commission meetings. All utility districts and other governmental units serving the area shall also receive notification of the proposed closure.

After Approval by County Commission:

If Knox County Commission approves the closure, the applicant(s) must provide Knox County Engineering and Public Works with a survey showing the boundaries of the right-of-way to be abandoned and the boundaries of the lot(s) of the person(s) to whom the right-of-way is to be transferred as they will exist as a result of the road and/or right-of-way closure. A metes and bounds paragraph description of the closed area is also required. Knox County Engineering and Public Works will review the documentation and submit it to the Knox County Law Director's Office for preparation of the Quit Claim Deed. The applicant(s) will be notified when the deed has been executed with the Mayor's Office. It is the responsibility of the applicant(s) to retrieve the deed and record it at the Register of Deeds Office.

Road and Right-of-Way closures shall be approved at one (1) Commission meeting before being final.

For lot lines to be updated, a Final Plat in compliance with the Knoxville-Knox County Subdivision Regulations must be prepared by a registered land surveyor and submitted to Knoxville-Knox County Planning for review. Upon approval it can be recorded with the Register of Deeds.

**SECTION D. OUTSIDE CONFERENCES AND TRAVEL:**

The Chair of Commission and other members of the Commission, as designated by the Chair, may attend outside conferences and travel with the expenses coming from the Commission budget and shall not exceed that budget. All Commission expenses for conferences and travel shall be spread of record at a regular Commission meeting.



**SECTION E.**      **HONORARY RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**Honorary Resolutions:**

Honorary resolutions must honor an individual or organization/agency and shall be approved by vote of the Commission. All honorary resolutions shall be meaningful and noteworthy to the community and/or the individual receiving recognition by the Commission. Honorary resolutions are used for congratulatory or honorary purposes for a significant achievement of an individual or organization/agency. It shall be the responsibility of any Commissioner requesting an Honorary or Memorial Resolution to provide the Commission Office and the Law Director with such information as is necessary for the drafting of the requested resolution.

**Proclamations:**

Proclamations are individual declarations of Commissioners on topics of importance to individual Commissioners and do not necessarily express the views of the Commission as a whole. Proclamations are not brought before the Commission body publicly unless added to the Commission agenda as an announcement during other business and do not require a vote of the Commission.

**Discussion Items:**

Discussion items on an agenda may be any topic that a Commissioner believes is important for the Commission to discuss but do not require a vote of the Commission and do not necessarily express the views of the Commission as a whole.

**Ordinance:**

A rule established by authority; a permanent rule of action; a law or statute.

**Resolution:**

The determination or decision, in regard to its opinion or intention, of a deliberative or legislative body usually employed to denote the adoption of a motion, the subject matter of which would not properly constitute a statute.

**SECTION F.**      **COMMISSIONER CALLED MEETING:**

Any County Commissioner desirous of meeting with fellow Commissioners at a time and place other than regularly scheduled/noticed public meetings shall ensure such meeting is publicly noticed through the Commission Office, or by appropriate intranet process that serves to put the media and general public on notice, at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to such meeting, except in a declared state of emergency or in matters of great public importance where time is of the essence. The notice of such meetings shall state with specificity the topics to be discussed and, once noticed, no other topics may be discussed. All meetings shall be open to the public, shall contain a written agenda, and minutes must be kept and made available for inspection by members of the general public.

**SECTION G. CHARTER AMENDMENTS:**

Any charter amendment to be considered by the Knox County Commission, whether it derived from a citizen group or a Knox County Commissioner, shall be reviewed by the Knox County Law Director before being considered on first reading. If the ordinance proposing a charter amendment is passed on first reading, a minimum of two public hearings shall be required before the charter amendment is considered on second reading.

**SECTION H. REORGANIZATION MEETING ORDER OF PROCEDURE:**

The annual reorganization meeting of the Knox County Commission, in regard to the election of the Commission Chair, the Commission Vice Chair, and the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Standing Committees, shall be held on September 1<sup>st</sup> or the next business day thereafter and conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Knox County Charter and as follows:

1. Reorganization meeting of the Knox County Commission called to order by the Clerk.
2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair pursuant to the Knox County Charter shall be conducted as set forth below. No Commissioner shall be eligible to be elected to serve as Chair of the Commission for more than two (2) terms per term as Commissioner.

Each member of the Commission shall have an opportunity by roll call to nominate a Commissioner to serve as Chair and Vice Chair by separate ballot. The Knox County Clerk shall preside over the meeting until a Chair is elected, at which time the Chair shall preside. Pursuant to the Knox County Charter, nominations may be made by members of the Commission only. Nominations do not require a second. If a Commissioner nominated is not present at the meeting, a statement from the nominee that the nominee is willing to serve as Chair or Vice Chair, if elected, shall be submitted. Each Commissioner nominated shall, prior to the first vote, either accept or decline the nomination. A refusal to either accept or decline shall disqualify that member for nomination. No vote shall be recorded in favor of any member of the Commission who has declined nomination. Nominators may speak about their nominees; nominees may speak about themselves. After nominations are ended, nominations shall be closed by motion and vote. The Clerk or Chair, as the case may be, will then call for discussion by commissioners regarding all the nominees. After each Commissioner is afforded ample opportunity to express his/her views and responding views, the Clerk or Chair will ask if all Commissioners are ready for a vote. If any Commissioner wants further discussion, further discussion shall be permitted.

When discussion is complete, voting will commence. By roll call vote each Commissioner may vote in favor of one (1) nominee by name and the nominee with the least number of votes is disqualified. After each vote, the Clerk or Chair will invite further discussion by Commissioners regarding the remaining nominees. If there is a tie vote, the Clerk or Chair will invite the nominators and remaining nominees to speak again, and the Clerk or Chair will invite further discussion by Commissioners. Voting will resume until a nominee receives a majority of the votes of the membership of the Commission.

3. Following election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission, the Commission shall consider and approve a resolution appointing commissioners to standing committees in accordance with the section in the Commission Rules regarding standing committees. Commissioners shall have an opportunity to volunteer to serve on those standing committees as may be of interest. Vacancies not filled by volunteers shall be filled by nominations from the floor.
4. The Chair shall recess the full Commission and convene a meeting of each Standing Committee separately, one at a time, as follows:
  - a. The Chair of the Commission shall convene the Standing Committee and open the floor for nominations for the position of Chair of the Standing Committee and from those nominees the Standing Committee will elect a Chair. If a Commissioner nominated is not present at the meeting, a statement from the Commissioner that the Commissioner is willing to serve as an officer shall be submitted.
  - b. Once a Chair is chosen that person will then preside over the meeting of the Standing Committee and open the floor for nominations for the position of Vice Chair.
  - c. The Chair of the Standing Committee will then adjourn the meeting of the Standing Committee following the approval of the minutes of the previous meetings, if necessary, and to schedule any future meeting as needed.
5. The Chair of the Commission shall then reconvene the full commission pursuant to any other pending business and adjournment.

**SECTION I. DISCRETIONARY FUNDS:**

If discretionary funds for use by Commissioners are included in the adopted budget of any given fiscal year beginning July 1, an outgoing Commissioner with a term ending August 31 shall not use more than a two-month pro-rated portion of the amount designated for his/her commission seat for that fiscal year.

**SECTION J. CIVILITY CODE:**

The Commission expects Commissioners, employees, and all other members of the community to adhere to the following Civility Code at public meetings:

1. Treat one another with courtesy and respect at all times.
2. Be cooperative, to the greatest extent possible, toward one another and in making decisions based on what is in the best interest of Knox County.
3. Refrain from behavior that threatens or attempts to disrupt public meetings; physically harms someone; intentionally causes damage; employs loud or offensive language, gestures, or profanity; or inappropriately shows a display of temper.

**SECTION K. ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENCE:**

Any correspondence delivered to the Commission Office or to the Commission email address or otherwise that is anonymous will not automatically be distributed to Commission members but will be forwarded to the Commission Chair for consideration.

**RULE VII. REZONING REQUESTS AND APPEALS**

**SECTION A. ZONING ORDINANCES:**

Pursuant to the County Zoning Ordinance, before the enactment of any amendment to the zoning ordinance, the Commission shall hold a public hearing thereon, at least fifteen (15) days notice of the time and place of which shall be published once in a daily newspaper of general circulation in the County.

**SECTION B. TIME LIMITS:**

The applicant for zoning and members of the public wishing to speak to the zoning shall be given a maximum of five (5) minutes to present their case and three (3) minutes for rebuttal. The Chair shall have the discretion to grant an extension pursuant to the approval of the Commission by voice vote. If an extension is granted, each will be given an equal specified amount of time. (Time will be kept by the Clerk.)

**SECTION C. WITNESSES OR CITIZENS APPEARING BEFORE THE COMMISSION:**

Any person testifying on a matter shall be sworn in by the Law Director or their designee before giving testimony. Each witness or citizen shall state their name and residential address or business address before giving testimony. No witness shall be permitted to testify on the same matter more than once, except by permission at the Chair's discretion. This shall not preclude attorneys or others representing applicants or opponents from asking questions of witnesses.

**SECTION D. ORDER OF PROCEDURE:**

1. All parties sworn in by the Law Director.
2. Matter called by Clerk.
3. Chair asks if the applicant is present and invites them to the podium.
4. Chair asks if there is any community input in attendance, and if so, invites them to the podium.
5. Knoxville/Knox County Planning staff representative reports Planning Commission's recommendation.
6. Applicant or appellant states name and address and presents relevant testimony.
7. Community Input speaker(s) states name and presents relevant testimony regarding the requested action.
8. Applicant rebuts presented testimony and states any compromise or conditions they are willing to accept. No new matters may be introduced. Opposition may agree to any offered compromise. Neither should exceed fifteen (15) minutes.
9. County Commissioners may ask questions of any speakers.
10. An affirmative action on the request shall be made by a Commissioner along with a second, followed by Commission deliberations which shall not be interrupted from the audience.

**SECTION E. REAPPLICATION AFTER DENIAL:**

Following denial by the Commission, no rezoning request or appeal may be resubmitted for a period of at least twelve (12) months. Provided, however, a petition for a different zoning shall be considered.

**SECTION F. RECONSIDERATION AFTER DECISION:**

Once a decision has been made by Commission, the matter will not be reconsidered until it has been back before Knoxville/Knox County Planning Commission.

**SECTION G. APPLICATION POSTPONEMENTS AND WITHDRAWS:**

Zoning applicants must make postponement and withdrawal requests no later than 4:00pm (EST) on the Wednesday in advance of the Zoning Agenda meeting. Requests must be made in writing to the Chair and sent via email. Any postponement request must include a specific date they wish the matter to be postponed, with a maximum of 120 days.

For any applicant who asks for a withdrawal at the Commission Zoning Agenda meeting, the matter shall be considered a denial.

**SECTION H. APPLICANT ATTENDANCE REQUIRED FOR ACTION:**

The Commission acknowledges that land use decisions effect property rights, public health, safety, infrastructure needs, growth, and the general welfare. To balance these concerns, attendance at the Zoning Agenda meeting by the applicant and any other interested persons is strongly encouraged.

If the applicant is not present, personally or by representation, when the rezoning or plan amendment is first read, the item shall automatically be placed at the end of the agenda. If the applicant is not present when the item is reached again, the item shall be placed on the Zoning Agenda for the following month.

The item shall be placed on the agenda for the following month for the applicant's failure to attend only once automatically. If the applicant fails to attend the subsequent Zoning Agenda meeting, the application shall be deemed withdrawn, unless the Commission votes otherwise. The applicant shall be notified by Knoxville/Knox County Planning staff of any actions taken by the Commission.

**SECTION I.      APPEALS:**

The Commission will consider zoning appeals after an applicant has explored all options with the Knoxville/Knox County Planning Commission. Any appeal that requires a Sector Plan to be in conformity must be presented to the Commission with both the Zoning and Sector Plan Appeal together.

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