

Council:

Mayor – Toby P. Bradberry

Post 1 – Eric Carlson

Post 2 – Jason Presley

Post 3 – Ann Evans

Post 4 – Paul Dotterweich

Post 5 – Violet Dawe

Town of North High Shoals

Small Town, Big Heart

108 Jefferson Road
P.O. Box 129
High Shoals, Georgia 30645
(706) 769-4289

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS

- I. **Location & Time:** The Town Council (henceforth defined as the Mayor and five council members) shall hold regular meetings in the Town Hall, or other designated locations deemed appropriate by the Town Council, at 7:30 p.m. on the third Monday of each month, unless another date is designated in advance by majority vote of the Town Council.
- II. **Presiding Officer and Quorum:** The presiding officer (Mayor or Mayor pro tempore when acting as Mayor, in which case the Mayor pro tempore shall not be deemed acting as a council member) and three council members shall constitute a quorum and shall be authorized to transact the business of the Town.
- III. **Agenda:** The agenda for regular meetings will be finalized 7 days before the regularly scheduled meeting, and made available for council members and the general public at a reasonable time after that deadline.
Any citizen of the Town may request items to be placed on the Agenda by the 7-day deadline. They can do so by contacting the Mayor, Clerk, or a council member directly. The Mayor or council member receiving agenda items shall present the items to the designated council member (or clerk) who will prepare the agenda.
Unexpected or urgent matters may be added at the start of the meeting by unanimous vote of the council. Additionally, the council may elect to adjust the order of the agenda to accommodate the schedules of people involved in agenda items. This should be done by unanimous vote of the council.
When available, any supporting documents for listed agenda items shall be provided to the Town Council one week prior to the regularly scheduled meeting and be available for viewing by the public at the town hall or by calling any council member.
- IV. **Open Meetings:** All meetings of the Town Council, including regular meetings, work sessions, informational meetings, and special meetings and emergency meetings, shall comply with the provisions of Georgia Sunshine Laws. Minutes (and audio recording when possible) shall be kept of all meetings in which the Town Council conducts the official business of the town.
- V. **Conduct of Meetings:**
 - a. **Presiding Officer.** The presiding officer shall take the chair at the hour designated for the meeting of the Town Council, and shall promptly call the members to order. Three members of the Town Council and the mayor or mayor pro tem shall constitute a quorum. The start of a meeting may be delayed for a reasonable amount of time pending arrival of a third Town Council person needed to constitute a quorum.
 - b. **Order of Events:**
 - i. **First Order:** Consideration of the agenda; draft minutes of the previous month's meeting(s), and current financial statement

- ii. **Second Order:** Statements by the public on non-agenda items. Any person addressing the Town Council shall, be subject to the same rules and shall be entitled to the same privileges of order applicable to members of the Town Council. Comments made shall only address items that are not on the agenda, and shall be limited to 2 minutes in length. The town council, by unanimous vote, may decide to increase this time as occasion arises.
- iii. **Third Order:** Old business or continuing topics.
- iv. **Fourth Order:** New business.
- v. **Fifth (Final) Order:** Presiding officer and council members updates and requests for future meetings and agendas items.

c. **Decorum and Order:**

- i. **Order:** The presiding officer shall preserve decorum and order at all regular and special meetings of the council. The presiding officer shall rule on all points of order, subject to a contemporaneous appeal by any member of the Town Council. No other business shall be in order until such an appeal shall have been decided by a majority vote of the council members present.
- ii. **Motions:** After a motion has been made, no other motion is in order until a vote on the motion, withdrawal of the motion, or until the presiding officer has declared, after a reasonable opportunity has been given for a second, that the motion has not been seconded.
When a motion has been made and seconded, the presiding officer shall state the question coming before the Town Council. After a question has been stated by the presiding officer, it is before the presiding officer and council for consideration and discussion and before the council for action.
- iii. **Speaking by Council Members:** All resolutions, reports of committees, communications to the presiding officer and Town Council, amendments, and all motions may be debated before voting. Debate should be limited to the merits of the immediately pending question. A council member wishing to speak shall address the presiding officer. After being recognized to speak, a member shall not be interrupted except by a call to order, for the correction of a mistake, or to voluntarily yield to another member. Each member shall confine their remarks to the question under debate. No member shall speak more than once on the same question until all other members wishing to speak on the question have done so. Meetings shall be conducted in an orderly manner.
- iv. **Citizen Comments:** Citizens wishing to address items on the agenda are asked to wait until the item is considered by the Town Council to speak their concerns. After all Town Council members have been given a chance to speak on an agenda item, public input will be considered. Speakers should address their remarks to the presiding officer and be courteous in their language and deportment to all present. All council members may respond to citizen's comments after being recognized by the presiding officer.
- v. **Voting:** When the debate appears to have closed, the presiding officer shall ask, "Are you ready for the question?" If no one disagrees, the presiding officer shall restate the question, then proceed to take the vote on the question, first calling for the affirmative by show of hands, and then for the negative vote by show of hands. The vote should always be announced.
If the vote passes but there were negative votes or abstentions, the negative voters and abstainers should be identified.

The affirmative vote of a majority of council members voting shall be required for the adoption of any ordinance, resolution, or motion. An abstention, meaning a decision (by the individual entitled to vote) to voluntarily refrain from the vote, shall not be counted as a negative or a positive vote. The basis for abstention is a firm moral or ethical conviction. Town Council members may recuse themselves from a vote for conflict of interests as defined by Georgia law.

As soon as the result of the vote is announced, the presiding officer shall state the next business in order.

- vi. **Decisions:** The presiding officer shall announce the decision of the Town Council on all subjects and decide all questions of order, subject to an appeal to the Town Council, in which event a majority vote of the council shall govern and determine such questions of order.
The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised, may be used by the presiding officer and Town Council at their discretion as a guide, but shall not govern the conduct of council meetings.
- vii. **Summary:** Within 3 business days after a council meeting, the clerk or designated individual shall prepare a short summary. The summary should consist of agenda items discussed, motions made, and votes taken. This summary shall be placed on the town's web site. At this time, the audio recording of the meeting, if available, shall be uploaded to the town's web site.
- viii. **Meeting Minutes:** The first draft minutes shall be emailed to council one (1) week prior to the following month's council meeting, and corrective copies provided to the council before the meeting as they are made available.

VI. **Work Sessions:** A work session is a meeting of the Town Council that may include other officials, governing bodies, agencies, or groups. The primary purpose of a work session is to obtain information and exchange ideas; no formal action shall be taken. Work sessions are open to the public. The public may participate at the discretion of the town council.

VII. **Special Meetings:** Special meetings or emergency meetings of the Town Council shall be called by the presiding officer, or a duly authorized assistant, at the request of a member of the town council with the approval by a majority of the Town Council. Notice of a special meeting or emergency meeting shall be personally served on each member as far in advance of the meeting as practicable (but not less than 24-hours) and follow all provisions of the Georgia Sunshine Laws.

At all special meetings or emergency meetings, the order of business shall be the special or emergency business for which the meeting was convened. Such business shall be exclusively considered until it is finally acted upon or until consideration is discussed and concluded. No other business shall be considered or acted upon.

VIII. **Renewal:** These rules shall be reviewed and voted on at least once per year. January shall be the official review & adoption month.

These Rules of Order are hereby accepted for the 2017 year.

TOWN OF NORTH HIGH SHOALS

(Signed version available at Town Hall)