

**MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL  
TOWN OF FOREST HEIGHTS**

**RESOLUTION 09-05**

**ADOPTION OF RULES OF ORDER**

**INTRODUCED BY:** *Councilman George Wiggers*

**WHEREAS**, section 33–10 of the Charter of the Town of Forest Heights grants the Town Council the authority determine its own rules and order of business; and

**WHEREAS**, the efficient functioning of the Council, requires a comprehensive set of rules in the conduct of its business; and

**WHEREAS**, it is necessary to respect the rights of all members of the Council to ensure that they can fairly participate in the work of the Council and properly represent their constituencies in the development of Town resolutions, ordinances, programs and policies; and

**WHEREAS**, the promotion of democratic institutions of elected government requires that the governing body acts, and be perceived by the citizens to act, in a deliberative, non-arbitrary manner; and

**WHEREAS**, Roberts Rules of Order provides a comprehensive set of rules that have been adopted by many organizations as their rules of order; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

**Section 1. Basic Rules of Order** - The Town Council hereby adopts the latest edition Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, herein called Robert's Rules, as its basic rules and order of business with the exceptions and other changes noted in the following sections of this resolution.

**Section 2. Exceptions to the Basic Rules** - In case of any conflict between Robert's Rules specified in Section 1, and the Town Charter or between Robert's Rules and the constitution or laws of the State of Maryland, the Charter and Maryland laws will take precedence over Robert's Rules. In particular, where Robert's Rules may require a simple majority of those present to enact a resolution, the Town charter requirement of a minimum of four affirmative votes to pass a resolution shall prevail.

**Section 3. Procedures** - The presiding officer at any meeting of the Council shall be responsible for interpreting and implementing the rules of order, and shall rule on any point of order raised by a member of the body. The presiding officer may request advice from other members of the

Council or an appointed parliamentarian before making a ruling. However, any member may, on a point of order, call for a vote on the ruling and specifying an alternative ruling. A vote is to be called on the point of order and if four or more members vote in favor of the proposed alternative ruling, the presiding officer shall defer to the opinion of the four or more members for that session of the Council. Otherwise the presiding officer's ruling shall stand.

The presiding officer may impose reasonable limits to the time allotted for each member during the discussion phase of the proceedings, but if additional time is requested by the member, the presiding officer must ask for a vote to extend additional time, and if four members agree to additional time, the time shall be granted.

**Section 4 - Changes to the Rules of Order** At any time additional exceptions to Robert's Rules may be incorporated into the Town Council's rules and order of business by formally amending this resolution. However, such amendments must also be consistent with the Town Charter and laws of the State of Maryland. Amendments to any motion may be made according to the basic Robert's Rules of Order. Furthermore, the Town Council, by resolution, may introduce and adopt a new set of rules of order to replace this resolution.

**Section 5. Adoption of Resolutions and Ordinances** - Any member of the Town Council may introduce a motion on any subject during the business portion of a meeting of the Town Council at a time when no other motion is being considered, and if seconded, the Council presiding officer must guide the Council's work on that motion until it is disposed of either on a favorable or unfavorable vote of the Council, or the Council votes to table or postpone action on the motion to a future date.

**Section 6. Form of Resolutions and Ordinances** - All Resolutions, to the extent practical, should be in writing, with a copy provided to each member of the Council and the Town Clerk. However, a written statement of the resolution or ordinance must be before each member of the Council when the vote is taken.

In urgent situations, these documents may be handwritten, and then typed by the next business day. Furthermore, if amendments are made on the floor to the original documents, these changes must be written in by the Town Clerk in his or her copy of the document, and time should be allotted for each member of the Council to note the changes in their copies.

If the Resolution or Ordinance is passed by the Council, the Town Clerk shall record the yeas and nays. Finally, the Town Clerk shall put his or her copy before each member of the Council for their signature, and initials on any hand written amendments, and at least four signatures of members of the Town Council are required for any Resolution or Ordinance to be considered passed by the Town Council. Resolutions shall be incorporated into the Journal of the Forest Heights Town Council (Section 33-10 of the Town Charter). In the case of extensive or complicated amendments, the Council may vote to provide the Town Clerk time to retype the resolution or ordinance and have it ready for Council signature by close of business the following day.

The Town Clerk is authorized to correct typographical errors and insert Resolution numbers, passage dates and other information needed to maintain consistency with the Town's system of record, but no changes may be made altering the substance of the ordinance or resolution.

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon passage.

ADOPTED THIS 17<sup>th</sup> DAY OF August, 2005 BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF FOREST HEIGHTS, MARYLAND.

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Mayor

Larry M. Stoner Sr. Ward II  
Council Member

Worthington Ross, Ward III  
Council Member

George F. Wiggan, Ward I  
Council Member

Colifton L. Atkinson, Ward II  
Council Member

Myles Springs, Ward II  
Council Member

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Council Member

ATTEST: Bonita Anderson  
Town Clerk

**TOWN OF FOREST HEIGHTS  
TOWN COUNCIL  
VOTE TALLY**

DATE: August 17, 2005

MEETING/SESSION: Town Meeting

SUBJECT: Resolution 09-05 Adoption of Rules of Order

MOTION BY: Councilman Wiggers SECONDED BY: Councilman Spires

COUNCILMEMBER NAME	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
BECK, Joyce A.			✓
ATKINSON, Clifton	✓		
HOSKINS, Alice			
ROSS, Worthington	✓		
SPIRES, Myles	✓		
STONER, Larry	✓		
WIGGERS, George	✓		

NOTES: Councilwoman Hoskins absent due to illness.

Bonita Anderson  
BONITA ANDERSON, TOWN CLERK