

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS  
MEETING CONDUCT POLICY-AS AMENDED**

**Resolution 2011-31**

**AUTHORITY**

This policy is adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Charter Township of Van Buren pursuant to provisions of the Michigan Compiled Laws, 42.1 et seq. 1947, Act. 359 as amended, known as the Charter Township Act.

**MEETINGS**

The Board of Trustees shall duly adopt an annual meeting schedule prior to the start of the next calendar year. The Board of Trustees will generally meet on the first and third Tuesdays of each month, unless otherwise noticed, at 7:30 p.m. Work Study Sessions will generally be held, unless otherwise noticed, at 4:00 p.m. on the Mondays prior to the first and third Tuesdays of each month. Meetings of the Board will generally be held in the Board Room at Township Hall, 46425 Tyler Road, Van Buren Township, Michigan. Any change in meeting location will be duly noticed in accordance with state statute.

As a general rule, meetings shall not be held on legal holidays.

Actions, resolutions or other commitments on specific proposals shall be taken in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.261 et seq.

**SPECIAL MEETINGS**

Special Meetings may be called by the Township Supervisor or any two members of the Board of Trustees. Notice shall be given to Board members at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting and the Township Clerk shall cause to be posted notice of said meeting at least eighteen (18) hours in advance. The Clerk shall notice said special meeting including the time, place and purpose of the meeting, by posting said notice on public bulletin boards located within Township Hall, on the township's governmental access television channel and the township's website.

**CLOSED MEETINGS**

The Board of Trustees may meet in closed session, a meeting closed to the public, upon the motion of any Board member, concurrence of that motion and an affirmative roll call vote of at minimum five (5) (or 2/3) members of the Township Board. Closed sessions may only be held in compliance with the Open Meetings Act:

### **EMERGENCY MEETINGS**

An emergency meeting shall be held only upon the consent of two-thirds of the Board of Trustees and only if a delay in scheduling a special meeting would pose severe or imminent danger to the health, safety or welfare of the public.

### **QUORUM**

Four (4) members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings of the Township Board with the exception of the requirement for five (5) Board members to vote in the affirmative to move into Closed Session. A Board member shall notify the Township Supervisor as soon as possible when the member is unable to attend a Board meeting.

### **MEETING MINUTES**

The Township Clerk is responsible for the preparation and recordkeeping of all minutes of meetings of the Township Board. Minutes of closed meetings shall be maintained separately for a period of one year and one day after which time they shall be destroyed, and shall not be disclosed to the public except upon court order. It is expressly understood the purpose for preparing and maintaining meeting minutes is to properly record the official actions of the Township Board. Only those comments made during Public Hearings or under the "Audience/Non-Agenda Items" portion of a Board meeting will be recorded in the meeting minutes and may be edited by the Township Clerk in the interest of brevity and conciseness. Copies of the meeting minutes prepared by the Clerk, but not approved by the Board, shall be available for public inspection not more than eight (8) business days of the meeting. Minutes approved by the Board shall be available within five (5) business days of the meeting in which they were approved. The Township Clerk shall publish and maintain said meeting minutes as legally required.

### **PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETINGS**

The Township Clerk shall provide proper notice for all meetings and meeting cancellations of the Township Board. All notices shall include the day, time and place of said meetings. Special and closed meeting notices shall also include the purpose for said meeting. Should a Board of Trustees meeting be cancelled, the reason for said cancellation shall be included in the notice. Notices shall be placed upon the public bulletin board located near the Clerk's Office at Township Hall, on the township's governmental access television channel and on the township's website [www.vanburen-mi.org](http://www.vanburen-mi.org). The Township Clerk shall, upon request, provide notice to the local media and upon request to other newspaper, radio or television media located in the State. Other interested individuals or parties may also be provided notice of meetings, changes in the meeting schedule or special meetings upon written request and agreement to pay the Township for printing and postage expenses. The Township Clerk shall mail all such notices pursuant to this rule by first class mail. Upon request, notices may be faxed or emailed.

## **AGENDAS & MEETING MATERIALS**

The Township Supervisor shall review and approve all items to be placed upon the agenda of the Board of Trustees. Upon written request, any two or more Board members may also place items upon the agenda for Board consideration. The Township Clerk shall prepare the agendas for all meetings and shall distribute agendas and meeting materials. The following provisions govern the items to be included on a Township Board agenda:

1. Regular Meetings: all agenda items shall be submitted to the Township Supervisor by 12:00 noon on the Tuesday preceding the next regular meeting. This includes all items for which official Board action is sought, as well as reports or other non-action Board information. If the Township Supervisor determines the item to be complete such that the Board has sufficient information with which to act upon the request, the Township Supervisor shall submit agenda items to the Township Clerk no later than 12 noon on the Wednesday prior to the Tuesday Board meeting. Items that are deemed incomplete will be returned to the appropriate party and will only be considered for inclusion on the agenda once they are complete.

The Township Clerk shall have the agenda prepared and ready for distribution no later than 4:00 p.m. on the Friday prior to the Tuesday Board meeting, however, every effort will be made to have the agenda ready for distribution by 4:00 p.m. on the Thursday prior to the Tuesday Board meeting. Reasonable accommodations may be made due to holidays or other unforeseen events that could occur.

Agenda packets for Board members shall be placed in their mailboxes at Township Hall. Agenda packets for department directors may be obtained at the Clerk's Office or at the Board Study Session. Media packets for the local media may be obtained at the Clerk's Office or upon request, may be obtained after business hours at the Public Safety Department lobby. Any other arrangements for the distribution of agenda packets may be made with the concurrence of the Township Clerk.

2. Special Meetings: all matters to be considered shall be stated in the notice of the meeting. No other matters will be considered. The Board will be provided written material as soon as possible prior to the commencement of the meeting.
3. Closed Meetings: all matters to be considered shall be stated in the meeting notice. No other matters will be considered. In general, written material will be disseminated to the Township Board at the Closed Meeting.

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Following is the manner in which the meeting agenda will be arranged:

- Call to Order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Roll Call
- Adoption of Agenda
- Adoption of Consent Agenda
- Public Hearings (if necessary)
- Approval of Minutes
- Correspondence (includes presentations of special awards, employee service awards, special recognitions.)

Letters of correspondence must conform to the above listed categories of awards and recognitions and be delivered to the Township Supervisor 48 hours before the meeting. Letters will only be read by the Chairperson or his/her designee if deemed appropriate.

- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Voucher List
- Announcements (includes township activities or announcements by civic or non-profit organizations)
- Audience/Non Agenda Items (Must conform to all categories of meeting conduct policy section Public Comment at Board Meetings.) (includes non-agenda items from either Board members or the general public and general public comment)
- Closed Session (may be inserted anywhere after adoption of the agenda as determined by the Board.)
- Adjournment

## **CONDUCT OF MEETING**

The Township Supervisor shall moderate and chair all meetings of the Township Board. In the absence of the Township Supervisor, the Township Clerk shall call the meeting to order and entertain a motion to appoint a Chairperson Pro-Tem for the meeting, by a majority vote. This individual may be any member of the Township Board.

The Township Supervisor or Chairperson shall introduce every item to be deliberated by the Township Board. Items may be presented by the Township Supervisor or other Board members as may be applicable, or by department directors. Items may also be presented by the party or entity seeking Board approval (civic/non-profit organizations, residents, developers, potential parties to a contract, etc.).

**Voting:** the Township Supervisor or Chairperson shall reiterate for clarity all motions made by the Board, listing the motion maker and motion supporter and the action outlined in the motion. The Township Supervisor or Chairperson will call for the vote and duly note the approval or denial represented by the majority vote of the Township

Board. No Board member shall abstain from voting “aye” or “nay” (yes or no) unless excused by the unanimous consent of other Board members present. Said consent shall be by way of a motion with concurrence and affirmative vote to permit the named Board member to abstain. Board members may only abstain from voting due to: matters in which he/she has a financial interest other than the common public interest; on any question concerning his/her own conduct; or on any question from which he/she is expressly excused from voting on by the unanimous consent of the remaining Board members then present.

In the case of a split vote in which both “ayes” and “nays” have been verbalized, the Township Supervisor shall request the Township Clerk to conduct a Roll Call vote. The Township Clerk shall duly call a Roll Call vote, by calling upon each Board member to state his/her vote and shall publicly state the outcome of that Roll Call vote. Roll Call votes shall be in random order with the Township Supervisor being called upon last, and shall also note the abstention or absence of Board members as applicable.

**Addressing the Board:** those wishing to speak shall first obtain the approval of the Township Supervisor or Chairperson to do so. Persons at the meeting shall not speak unless called on by the Township Supervisor or Chairperson. Only one person shall be permitted to speak at a time. The Township Supervisor or Chairperson shall determine, based upon the comment(s) made, who may further address the topic and either respond him/herself, or direct someone else, a department director, for instance, to provide further information on the topic being discussed.

**Secretary to the Board:** the Township Clerk shall appoint an individual to serve as Secretary to the Board. The Secretary to the Board shall be responsible for audiotaping all regular, special and study sessions of the Township Board and shall prepare or assist the Township Clerk in the written recording of the proceedings of those regular, special and study meetings of the Township Board. It is expressly understood the sole purpose for which the Secretary to the Board audiotapes meetings is to facilitate the written preparation of meeting minutes. Upon approval of the minutes at a subsequent Board meeting, the Secretary to the Board shall reuse the tapes, as practical, for use in accurately preparing future meeting minutes. At the direction of the Township Clerk, the Secretary to the Board may attend Closed Sessions of the Board and assist in the written recordings of those closed meetings. The Secretary to the Board may assist, as needed, in the roll call votes and recording of such votes in the absence of or at the direction of the Township Clerk. The Secretary to the Board may perform other duties as determined by the Township Clerk.

**Public Comment at Board Meetings:** the public is encouraged to attend all public meetings of the Township Board, and in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, upon advance notice, reasonable accommodations will be made to accommodate said persons. To make themselves more informed about the items appearing on the agenda, it is suggested that individuals seek information from the appropriate department or through the Supervisor’s Office on items of interest prior to the meeting. This provides an opportunity for information to be relayed and if needed, appropriate research

to be conducted to provide a more thorough response. Often, township staff can address a concern quickly or provide the Board with additional information in advance of their deliberations.

The public will be afforded an opportunity to address the Board with comments or concerns throughout the meeting as each item is considered, during Public Hearings, and during the “Audience/Non-Agenda Items” part of the meeting. Public comments must be made at the podium and shall be directed to the Township Supervisor or Chairperson. Comments may be permitted only after one has been recognized by the Township Supervisor or Chairperson and has moved to the podium. If several members of an organization or group are in attendance to express the same concerns, they are encouraged to select one individual to serve as their spokesperson who can indicate they are speaking for that body or group.

Members of the public will be permitted to display signs, etc. provided they are not offensive and do not disturb or create a visual obstruction for other audience members. Persons attending meetings also have the right to tape record, to videotape, to broadcast live on radio and to telecast live on television the proceedings of the public body at a public meeting without prior approval of the Township. However, the set-up and location of equipment to record, videotape, broadcast or televise Township meetings shall not compromise the public’s safety, and shall be done in such a manner as to prevent disruption of the meeting and/or interference with Township recording and/or broadcasting equipment. Visual obstructions will be moved to provide that these matters are adequately addressed.

Comments by the public may include one’s name and address (preferred, but not required) or township residency, and be germane to Township business, meaning topics over which the Township Board has authority and which involves Township matters or township services. During Public Hearings, only the item for which the Public Hearing was convened may be discussed. Persons shall use civil language and make comments in a courteous, orderly manner when speaking at Board meetings.

Material will be deemed to be offensive if it contains personal attacks on persons, officials, or employees, or if it contains profanity, is of a grossly indecent nature, or includes inflammatory expressions reasonable persons would deem to cause or incite public outrage or expressions of disgust. Comments should be framed to provide a point of view, to provide information or to express a concern. Heckling or chiding is not permitted.

Personal attacks include comments about one’s gender, religious beliefs, physical features, sexual preferences, sexual activity and personal habits other than that involving the commission of an alleged crime or civil wrong and references to family members or relatives of such person. Personal attacks also includes references to conduct or activity of elected officials, employees or agents of the Township or members of the public unrelated to the discharge of their authority, duty and power involving Township business. Personal attacks further include criticism of claimed political views of elected

officials, agents or employees of the Township on political issues over which the Township does not exercise direct authority and control.

Comments advocating or announcing any person for elective office during an election cycle (election cycle means from qualification as a candidate or announcement as a candidate, whichever is earlier, until the election) are prohibited.

The Township Board has the discretion to respond (or not), to comments. No person shall have a second opportunity to address the Board until all persons have had a first opportunity. Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per person and may not be “shared” or “loaned” to others. Time limitations shall be routinely imposed in a fair and equitable manner. However, an extension of time is permissible at the discretion of the Township Supervisor or Chairperson. Written material must be submitted to the Secretary to the Board, the individual seated closest to the public podium.

Persons failing to abide by these provisions will be ruled out of order and may be requested to leave the podium or audio service may be interrupted. No person shall be removed from a public meeting except for an actual breach of peace in which case law enforcement personnel shall be requested to physically remove said persons from the Board Room and/or premises of Township Hall.

**Parliamentary Authority, Robert’s Rules of Order, revised:** Robert’s Rules of Order, as revised, shall govern all questions or procedures that are not otherwise provided by these rules or by state or federal law.

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Partridge moved, Ostrowski seconded to approve Resolution 2011-31 the Board Meeting Conduct Policy, as amended. Carried.

Yeas: White, Wright, Budd, Jahr, Ostrowski and Partridge.  
Nays: None.  
Absent: Hart (excused).

I, Leon Wright, Clerk of Van Buren Charter Township, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the Board of Trustees Meeting Rules of Conduct Policy, as amended as adopted by the Van Buren Charter Township Board of Trustees at the regular meeting held on October 4, 2011.

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Leon Wright, Clerk