Rule 1. **INTRODUCTION.** The purpose of these rules is to provide for the smooth and orderly functioning of the business of the Board of County Commissioners (Board) and to provide a basis for resolving questions of procedure when they arise.

Rule 2. **STANDING RULES OF ORDER.** "The Roberts Rules of Order, -- Newly Revised", using the most current edition, is adopted as parliamentary authority for the conduct of all meetings of the Board except when they are inconsistent with these rules of order or any other provisions of law which apply to this Board. The county attorney or his or her designee shall be the parliamentarian for the Board at all Board meetings. Anyone who serves as parliamentarian shall have taken a course in parliamentarian procedure and shall be obligated to take continuing courses; this provision shall become effective upon hiring of the new county attorney in 2012 and after the appropriate courses have been completed.

Rules of Order shall be reviewed three months after each election, with suggestions and changes to be presented to the Board for formal adoption and acceptance. A Review Committee consisting of representatives of the Board, the County Administrator, and the Clerk to the Board shall review the Rules and make recommendations with a representative of the County Attorney’s Office providing legal counsel to the Review Committee.

Rule 3. **QUORUM.** A quorum is the number of Commissioners necessary to legally transact business. Four Commissioners shall constitute a quorum.

In the absence of a quorum, the following action may be taken:

1. adjournment;
2. fix time to which to adjourn (continuance);
3. take steps to obtain quorum.
Rule 4. **SEATING ARRANGEMENT OF COMMISSIONERS.** The Chairman of the Board shall be seated in the center seat of the dais, the Vice-Chairman shall be seated at the immediate right of the Chairman, and the Chaplain shall be seated at the immediate left of the Chairman to facilitate smooth transferal of the gavel when necessary. With the exception of seating for the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Chaplain, the balance of seating for the Board will rotate at the second regular meeting in November and in May of each year as follows:

Considering the seats of the Commissioners are numbered 1 through 7 from their right, at time of rotation:

- Commissioner in Seat #1 will move to Seat #2,
- Commissioner in Seat #2 will move to Seat #6,
- Commissioner in Seat #6 will move to Seat #7,
- Commissioner in Seat #7 will move to Seat #1.

When new officers are elected the former Chairman will take the seat the new Chairman is leaving, unless the new Chairman is the former Vice-Chairman, in which case the former Chairman will take the seat the new Vice Chairman is leaving. The former Vice-Chairman, if not elected Chairman, will take the seat the new Vice-Chairman is leaving. Newly elected or appointed Commissioners will take the seat and rotation position of the former Commissioner from the same district number.

Rule 5. **PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the County Commission. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall preside. In the absence of either the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, the Chaplain shall preside. In the absence of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Chaplain, a presiding officer shall be selected by a majority vote of those Commissioners present. The Chaplain shall open each Regular and Land Use meeting with an invocation.

The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Chaplain shall be selected annually at the Board's organizational meeting which will be held the third Tuesday of November in a Commissioner Election year and either the second or third Tuesday of November in a non-election year. In addition to electing the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Chaplain at the annual organizational meeting, the Board shall appoint Commissioners to the various boards, agencies and authorities for the next annual term.

The Chairman or Vice-Chairman in the absence of the Chairman, or Chaplain, in the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, is authorized to sign manually or electronically any documents approved by the Board no later than the next business day after such approval.
The presiding officer of the Board shall have the following functions:

(a) determining that a quorum is present.
(b) opening the meeting and calling the meeting to order.
(c) recognizing members of the Board to speak.
(d) recognizing members of the general public or staff to speak. (See Rule 26)
(e) putting to vote all questions which come before the Board as motions.
(f) restating the motion prior to the voting on the motion.
(g) deciding all questions of order.
(h) refusing to recognize frivolous or dilatory motions.
(i) refusing to recognize motions out of order.
(j) adjourning meetings when there is a sudden emergency affecting the safety of the Board and others.

The decision of the presiding officer shall stand unless reversed by a majority vote of the members present after the proper motion has been made and seconded to reverse such decision.

Where the Chairman will be absent for a period of 4 weeks or longer, the Vice-Chairman shall receive the additional 10 percent of the basic salary as set out in Section 4.07, Hillsborough County Charter, for the period of time that the Vice-Chairman serves as Chairman.

Where matters of policy or position are concerned, the title "Chairman, Board of County Commissioners" shall only be affixed by the Chairman on items where the Board has taken official action.

Rule 6. **VOTING.** Voting shall be done electronically. The Clerk to the Board will officially record the votes. In case of electric failure, voting shall be done by voice.

Rule 7. **ABSTENTION AND NEGATIVE VOTES ON CONSENT ITEMS.** No Commissioner may abstain from voting on any matter before the Board upon which official action is to be taken unless there is or appears to be a possible conflict of interest under the provisions of applicable laws. In such cases, said Commissioner shall comply with the disclosure requirements of State Law.

If a Commissioner has a conflict with an item appearing on the consent portion of the Board of County Commissioners’ agenda or desires to vote against a specific item, the Commissioner shall announce such items he or she wishes to abstain from or vote against and such items shall be considered by a separate vote of the Board immediately after the approval of the consent agenda. Prior to abstaining from voting on an item on the consent agenda the Commissioner must:
A. publicly disclose the nature of his interest in the matter from which he is abstaining and,
B. notify the Clerk of the conflict.

The Commissioner must supply the Clerk with a completed Memorandum of Voting Conflict form within 15 days after the vote occurs.

Rule 8. MOTIONS. No matter may be officially acted upon by the Board unless a motion has been made by a Commissioner to take such action and said motion has been seconded by another Commissioner. Motions require a majority vote of those members present for passage. In the case where a motion must receive a supermajority vote, such motion must receive an affirmative vote of a majority of those present and voting, plus one, for passage, unless otherwise required by charter, special or general law or county ordinance. When a motion requires a majority of the entire Board for passage, four (4) affirmative votes are necessary.

When a motion has been made and seconded, the presiding officer shall conduct debate on the merits of the motion.

The presiding officer shall first recognize Commissioners to speak on the question and then may recognize members of staff and the general public to speak on the question. The presiding officer shall have the authority to close debate and call for a vote on the motion as long as no other Commissioner wishes to speak. Debate can also be closed upon motion to call the question being approved by the majority of the Commissioners present.

Rule 9. SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS. These are applied to original motions in order to more appropriately dispose of the original motions. The following subsidiary motions are listed in ranked order of priority from highest to lowest.

(1) Lay on The Table.
(2) Previous Question.
(3) Limit or Extend The Limits of Debate.
(4) Postpone To a Certain Time.
(5) Refer or Commit.
(6) Amend (or Substitute.)
(7) Postpone Indefinitely.

When such motions are made and seconded, the subsidiary motion supplements the original motion and must be decided by a majority vote before the original motion can be acted upon. However, motions to Limit or Extend the Limits of Debate and motions to order the Previous Question require a second, are debatable, and require at least five affirmative votes for passage.
Rule 10. **PRIVILEGED MOTIONS.** These motions are of such great importance that they take precedence over all other motions and questions and are not debatable. These motions include:

(a) fixing a time to adjourn.
(b) adjournment.
(c) taking a recess.

Rule 11. **MOTION TO RECONSIDER, RENEWAL, MOTION TO RESCIND AND MOTION TO AMEND SOMETHING PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED.**

**RECONSIDER.** A motion to Reconsider is a motion to consider again any vote or proceeding upon which action was taken by the Board. It can only be made at the same meeting the original action was taken and may only be made by a Commissioner who previously voted on the prevailing side.

In the event of a tie vote any Commissioner may move the matter for reconsideration at the next ensuing meeting of the same type at which all members of the Board are present. No item may be reconsidered unless a motion has been made and seconded and a majority of the Board votes to so reconsider.

**RENEWAL.** Upon motion by any Commissioner, the Board may consider an action that did not pass in a prior meeting.

**RESCIND.** A motion to Rescind is a motion by which a previous action can be canceled. It strikes out an entire motion that has been adopted at some previous time. It requires either a two-thirds vote, a majority vote when notice of the motion is provided at the previous meeting or in the call of the meeting, or a vote of a majority of the entire Board. It can be made by any Commissioner regardless of how the Commissioner voted on the original question. There is no time limit on making this motion after the adoption of the measure to which it is applied.

**AMEND SOMETHING PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED.** A motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted is a motion used if a Commissioner desires to change only a part of the text or to substitute a different version. It requires either a two-thirds vote, a majority vote when notice of the motion is provided at the previous meeting or in the call of the meeting, or a vote of a majority of the entire Board. It may be moved by any Commissioner regardless of how the Commissioner voted on the original question. There is no time limit on making this motion after the adoption of the measure to which it is applied.

Rule 12. **AGENDA AND ORDER OF BUSINESS.** An agenda of matters to be discussed by the Board shall be made available to the public forty-eight (48) hours before the Board meeting. In cases of special circumstances or emergencies, those items not on the agenda may be acted upon by the Board. However, in response to unscheduled agenda
items, the Board shall either defer the issue to the end of the agenda, or to a subsequent meeting.

**CONSENT AGENDA.** A portion of the agenda shall be designated as a consent agenda and all items contained therein, may be voted on with one motion, except that any Commissioner may withdraw an item from the consent agenda and it shall be voted on separately.

(A) Land Use Meetings: If a Commissioner desires to withdraw an item from the consent agenda for a separate discussion and vote, he or she shall provide written notice of his or her intention to the Director of Development Services, or the Director’s designee, no later than 4:00 PM on the day prior to the Land Use meeting. The Director or designee shall compile and provide a list of Commissioner withdrawals from the consent agenda to each Commissioner. The following procedure shall apply for the consideration of items withdrawn from the consent agenda:

1. Items withdrawn from the consent agenda shall be heard immediately following the approval of the consent agenda.

2. The order of appearance and time allotments for each item withdrawn from the consent agenda shall be as follows:
   a. Administrator’s summary of the application, County staff and department findings: five minutes.
   b. Applicant presentation: ten minutes.
   c. Board deliberation and action.

3. If an item is withdrawn from the consent agenda, the applicant shall have the right to request a continuance to the next Land Use meeting in order to fully prepare for a presentation to the Board, and this request shall be granted by the Board as a matter of right. The right to a continuance to the next Land Use meeting shall not apply in the event that the Board elects to remand the application to the Zoning Hearing Master for further review prior to the applicant presentation on the application. The applicant shall make the request for a continuance prior to the commencement of the applicant’s presentation on the application.

The deadline for withdrawal of an item from the consent agenda for a separate discussion and vote shall not apply to an abstention or negative vote on a consent agenda item pursuant to Rule 7.

(B) Regular Meetings of the Board: If a Commissioner desires to withdraw an item from the consent agenda for a separate discussion and vote, he or she shall provide written notice of his or her intention to the County Administrator, or the County
Administrator’s designee, no later than 4:00 PM on the day prior to the Regular Board of County Commissioners meeting. The Administrator or designee shall compile and provide a list of Commissioner withdrawals from the consent agenda to each Commissioner.

The deadline for withdrawal of an item from the consent agenda for a separate discussion and vote shall not apply to an abstention or negative vote on a consent agenda item pursuant to Rule 7.

Additions, deletions, or corrections to the agenda may be considered by the Board and adopted by the passage of a single motion.

Rule 13. **SCHEDULING OF AGENDA ITEMS.** The County Administrator has the primary authority and responsibility for determining subject matter appropriateness relative to the scheduling of all agenda items before the Board. Accordingly, the County Administrator's office will screen all agenda scheduling requests, exercising discretion in referring suitable matters to appropriate County departments for appropriate disposition.

Except as provided below, Commissioners may request that items be placed on the published agenda by filing a completed Commissioner's Agenda Item Request form with the County Administrator by Thursday at 11:00 a.m. preceding the next Board meeting. Commissioners may request a time certain at the time of submission of their items. A Commissioner's Agenda item will only be scheduled on the agenda if it includes sufficient detail so that other Commissioners can understand the nature of the item discussed, and to allow for the appropriate staff to be in attendance. In the alternative, a Commissioner may schedule a brief topic that does not require initial action other than to refer the matter for staff to review and recommendation to the Board at a subsequent meeting. The requirements of this section can be waived by the County Administrator's Office regarding matters concerning impending health, safety, and welfare emergencies or external deadlines that require action prior to a subsequent Board meeting. Any item not meeting these guidelines will be scheduled for the subsequent Board meeting. A decision by the County Administrator's Office to schedule a requested item for a subsequent Board meeting rather than the next meeting may be appealed to the Board by the requesting Commissioner during the discussion of agenda modifications the day of the next meeting.

Commissioners may raise substantive, off-the-agenda matters which will appear on the addendum approved by the Board of County Commissioners only in instances where the County Administrator has been provided prior written notice thereof not later than 3:00 p.m. on the Friday preceding the regular Board meeting held the following week. Any item not meeting these guidelines, except for emergencies and external deadlines outlined above, will be scheduled on the subsequent Board meeting.
The addendum to the Board’s agenda must be made available to the Board and to the public at least 48 hours prior to the Board meeting.

Excluding emergencies or special circumstances, all materials to be distributed or presented to Board members regarding any item to be considered by the Board of County Commissioners on the agenda at any Board meeting shall be distributed to the Board at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting. This restriction does not apply to application-related materials for land use meetings.

**Rule 14. REGULAR MEETINGS.** Regular meetings of the Board shall be held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. However, when, in the judgment of the Board, a holiday, county association meeting, election or other event represents a conflict with scheduling a regular meeting for the first or third Wednesday, the Board shall schedule the regular meeting on a different date upon giving of due notice. Meetings shall convene at 9:00 a.m., subject to a ten minute break at approximately 10:30 a.m., upon call by the Chairman. The Board may call a lunch recess for the period of 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The Board may reconvene at 1:30 p.m., to conclude its business. The lunch recess may also apply to Workshop Sessions of the Board. Land Use meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the approved Zoning Code. Town Hall meetings are scheduled at Board direction in various county locations for public comment.

**Rule 15. CONTINUANCE OF LAND USE APPLICATIONS.** It shall be the policy of the Board to allow for the continuance of land use hearings at the request of the applicant, when two or more members are not present. This policy shall apply to applications considered by the Board during its Land Use Meeting and Board Public Hearings on proposed amendments to the Land Development Code and the Future of Hillsborough Comprehensive Plan for Unincorporated Hillsborough County. If the applicant desires to request a continuance of a land use application pursuant to this Rule, the applicant shall request the continuance prior to the commencement of the applicant’s presentation on the application.

**Rule 16. SPECIAL MEETINGS.** Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the Chairman, or by the Vice-Chairman in the absence of the Chairman, or when the circumstances dictate in the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman by the County Administrator, or by majority vote of those Commissioners present and voting. Notice of special meetings shall be in writing. The County Administrator or his duly authorized representative shall serve each Commissioner with notice of a special meeting at least 24 hours before the meeting. Said notice shall state subject matter(s) to be discussed at the special meeting.

**Rule 17. EMERGENCY MEETINGS.** Emergency meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman, or when the circumstances dictate in the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman by the County Administrator. Public notice given shall be that which is the most appropriate and effective under the
circumstances. Minutes of emergency meetings must be kept in the same manner as those for regular and special meetings.

Rule 18. **WORKSHOP MEETINGS.** By majority vote plus one, the Board may schedule a workshop meeting to discuss items of special importance or complexity to the Board. The purpose of a workshop meeting is to allow staff to make presentations and to allow questions by the Board. Generally, public comment will not be allowed during a Board workshop meeting. However, a citizen may provide written comments on a workshop issue to the County Administrator at least a week in advance of the workshop meeting which will be provided to Commissioners as part of the workshop agenda materials. Further, public comment may be allowed at the discretion of the presiding officer, but will be no more than three (3) minutes for each person unless the presiding officer wishes to extend the time limit. If the Board plans to take official action on a proposition at the workshop meeting, then members of the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard and public comment will be taken. An agenda of the order of business at the workshop meeting shall be prepared by the County Administrator and made available to the public a reasonable time before the workshop meeting. The County Administrator’s Office shall include language in the agenda of each workshop meeting that if the Board plans to take official action on a proposition at the workshop meeting, members of the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard and public comment will be taken. Official action may be taken upon any of the items discussed at the workshop meeting and any of the items of official business that require immediate consideration and decision by the Board. If a workshop meeting is scheduled on a Wednesday following a Tuesday land use meeting, the workshop meeting shall start at 1:30 p.m.

Excluding emergencies or special circumstances, all materials to be distributed or presented to Board members regarding any item to be considered by the Board of County Commissioners on the agenda at any workshop shall be distributed to the Board at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting. This restriction does not apply to application-related materials for land use meetings.

Rule 19. **BRIEFINGS.** Briefings may be called by the presiding officer or by a majority of the Board present and voting. The Briefings will involve staff presentations and questions by the Board. The Board will take no action on any item at a Briefing and there will be no input participation from the public. Minutes of Briefings will be kept in the same manner as for regular and special meetings.

Rule 20. **PUBLIC HEARINGS.** Public Hearings will be held as necessary to receive public comment on matters of special importance or as prescribed by law. Notice of Public Hearings shall be as directed by Florida Statute and Hillsborough County ordinances. Public comment will be limited to three (3) minutes for each person unless the presiding
Rule 21. **OPEN MEETINGS.** All regular, special, emergency and workshop meetings, briefings, and public hearings of the Board shall be open to the public in accordance with Chapter 286, Florida Statutes.

Rule 22. **MINUTES.** Written minutes of all meetings of the Board shall be recorded by the Clerk to the Board. These written minutes shall be open for public inspection. Minutes of previous meetings may be circulated for corrections and studying by Commissioners as long as any changes, corrections or deletions are discussed during an official meeting and are duly approved by the Board at said meeting.

Rule 23. **RESOLUTION.** All resolutions shall be in writing and shall embrace only one subject matter. Four (4) affirmative votes are required for passage.

Rule 24. **ORDINANCES.** All ordinances shall embrace only subject matter which shall be briefly expressed in a title. Four (4) affirmative votes are required for passage, except where the law provides for adoption by greater than a majority vote of the entire body.

Except for proposed ordinances granting ad valorem tax exemptions pursuant to Sections 46-125 through 46-137 of the Hillsborough County Code of Ordinances and Laws, (the Hillsborough County Economic Development Ad Valorem Tax Exemption Ordinance), no ordinance shall be drafted or amended unless requested by a majority of the Board. Any proposed ordinance shall be noticed for public hearing by a majority of the Board present. The title of the proposed ordinance shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in Hillsborough County in accordance with general law, and copies of the full text of the proposed ordinance shall be on file in the office of the Clerk of the Board.

This rule is not applicable to ordinances subject to Florida Statutory notice requirements different from those requirements set forth in Section 125.66(2), Florida Statutes (1987), as amended.

Rule 25. **APPOINTMENTS.** Appointments to various boards made by individual Commissioners or by polling Commissioners at a regular meeting shall be confirmed by a motion adopted by the Board.

Rule 26. **PUBLIC COMMENT.** During the morning session of its regular meetings, the Board designates a 45-minute period for public comment. Any person wishing to address the Board during the designated public comment period must complete and turn in a Public Comment Form. During the public comment period, the Chairman shall recognize persons who have turned in Public Comment Forms, and those persons may, as their name is called, approach the podium and address the Board. Speakers may address the Board regarding any scheduled agenda item or any non-agenda matter(s) of personal
or general concern. Speakers addressing scheduled agenda items shall be heard first; otherwise, speakers shall be heard in the order in which they submitted a Public Comment Form. Each speaker may address the Board for no more than three (3) minutes, although the Chairman has the discretion to grant additional time to any speaker. Should the 45 minutes designated for public comment be insufficient to accommodate all persons who have completed and turned in a Public Comment Form, the Board may extend the public comment period or may hear public comment at the end of that day’s meeting.

If a Commissioner wishes to discuss or comment on any issue raised during public comment, the Board may either refer the issue to the County Administrator or continue the item to the end of the agenda for further discussion. This will assure that the 45 minutes designated for input from the public is not unduly interrupted.

Speakers shall refrain from disruptive behavior, and from making vulgar or threatening remarks. Speakers shall refrain from launching personal attacks against any Commissioner, county staff member, or member of the public. The Chairman shall have the discretion to have any speaker who disregards these rules removed from the Boardroom for the remainder of that day’s meeting.

Rule 27. **CHANGING OF COMMISSIONERS/SWEARING IN CEREMONIES.** Prior to the close of the last regular bi-weekly meeting of retiring Commissioners, an agenda item will be provided for recognition of services and farewell remarks.

On the second Tuesday after the election of a new Commissioner(s), the new Board will be convened for a swearing-in ceremony of the newly elected members at a designated location based on the expected attendance. The meeting will be called to order by a representative of the Clerk to the Board who will handle the gavel until a new Chairman is nominated and elected. After the new Board is convened, a professional parliamentarian shall train the Board on parliamentary procedure and the Board's Rules of Order.

Rule 28. **WAIVER OF RULES OF ORDER.** Where not in conflict with law, any of the above rules of order may be temporarily suspended for the meeting in session by a majority vote plus one of those Commissioners present at said meeting.

Rule 29. **AMENDMENTS.** These rules of order may be amended by action of a majority vote of the Commissioners present at a regular or special meeting of the Board; provided, however, such amendments shall not become effective until approved by the Board a second time at the next regular meeting of the Board.

Rule 30. **EFFECTIVE DATE.** These rules shall become effective immediately upon adoption by the Board and shall supersede all other rules previously adopted by the Board.

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