

## **Rules of Order**

### **I. AGENDA FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

- A. On the first Monday of December following each quadrennial election, the Mayor shall convene the Board of Representatives for the purpose of organization.
- B. The Mayor shall preside until the election of a Temporary Chair.
- C. The Agenda of the Organizational Meeting shall be as follows:
  - 1. Calling of the Role.
  - 2. Administration of the Oath of Office to Elected Representatives.
  - 3. Appointment of a Temporary Teller.
  - 4. Election of a Temporary Chair.
  - 5. Election of a Temporary Clerk.
  - 6. Adoption of Rules of Order.
  - 7. Election of the President of the Board.
  - 8. Appointment by the President of two Tellers and two Alternate Tellers.
  - 9. Election of the Clerk of the Board.
  - 10. Announcement by the President of the Majority and Minority Leaders who have been elected by their respective parties.
  - 11. Announcement by the President of the Assistant or Deputy Majority Leader(s) and the Assistant or Deputy Minority Leader(s) who have been elected by their respective parties.
  - 12. Appointment by the President of the Standing Committees and any other Committees that may be necessary.

Any appointments that are not made at the Organizational Meeting may be made at the next Regular Meeting and shall be the first Order of Business following the Calling of the Roll at that Meeting.

### **II. DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

- A. President
  - 1. The President shall take the Chair at the time for which the meeting is called; he/she shall immediately call the Board to order. If, after Invocation and Roll Call, a Quorum is present, he/she shall proceed to the regular Order of Business. A majority of the members of the full Board shall constitute a Quorum.
  - 2. In the absence of a Quorum, the President shall adjourn the Board to a date within ten days thereafter.

3. The President shall preserve order and decorum and shall decide all questions of order, upon which no debate shall be allowed except at his/her request; however his/her decision shall be subject to an appeal to the Board, on which appeal no member shall speak more than once. No other business shall be in order until such appeal is disposed of. At the President's discretion, he/she may designate one or more members of the Board to act as Parliamentarian(s) to advise him/her on interpretation of these Rules of Order and questions of order.
4. Whenever the President leaves the Chair temporarily for the purpose of taking part in the debate or other cause, he/she shall designate a member to perform the duties of the Chair during his/her absence.
5. In the event of the absence of the President at any regular or Special Meeting, it shall be the duty of the Clerk, or in the absence of the Clerk, the Majority Leader, to call the meeting to order at the time for which the meeting is called, and to preside until the election of a Temporary Chair, which shall be the first Order of Business.
6. In the event of the death or resignation of the President, at a Special Meeting called for that purpose, or at the next Regular Meeting as the first Order of Business after the Calling of the Roll, the members present shall, by majority vote, elect a new President.
7. The President of the Board may be removed from office by a majority vote of the entire Board at a Special Meeting called for that purpose (C2-10-11).
8. In case of any disturbance or disorderly conduct in the meeting room, the President shall have the power to order the meeting room to be cleared. The President may designate one or members of the Board of Representatives as Sergeant at Arms to assist in keeping order.
9. The President shall be the Chair of the Steering Committee.

#### B. Clerk

1. The Clerk shall be responsible for the keeping of the Minutes and records of the Board; for the conducting of the correspondence of the Board; for the publication of all public notices of the Board; for the maintenance of the Roll of the members; for the keeping of a list of the Committees; for the keeping of the Committee reports; for the keeping of correct records regarding use of the Board mailing allowance; and for the maintenance of a correct and true copy of these Rules of Order, the Charter and the Code of Ordinances.
2. The Clerk shall be responsible for the supervision of any clerical and secretarial assistants, employees or aides.
3. In the event of absence or temporary disability of the Clerk, the President shall appoint a Temporary Clerk to perform the duties of the Clerk.
4. In the event of the resignation or death of the Clerk, at the next Regular Meeting the first Order of Business following the Calling of the Roll shall be the election of a new Clerk by a majority vote of the members present.
5. The Clerk shall provide that the voting machine be tested on the day of any Regular or Special Meeting of the Board prior to the meeting.

### III. COMMITTEES

#### A. Standing Committees

1. There shall be the following STANDING COMMITTEES:

I.	Steering	17 to 21 voting members
II.	Appointments	7 to 11 members
III.	Fiscal	9 to 11 members
IV.	Legislative & Rules	9 to 11 members
V.	Personnel	7 to 11 members
VI.	Land Use/Urban Redevelopment	7 to 11 members
VII.	Operations	7 to 11 members
VIII.	Public Safety & Health	7 to 11 members
IX.	Parks & Recreation	7 to 11 members
X.	Transportation	5 to 9 members
XI.	Education	5 to 9 members
XII.	Housing/Community Development/ Social Services	5 to 9 members
XIII.	State and Commerce Committee	7 to 11 members

2. Whenever possible, such committees shall be composed of members of the major political parties in substantially the ratio in which such parties are represented on the Board. All Board members shall serve on at least one committee.
3. No member shall serve on any committee while considering any question involving his/her private right, distinct from the public interest.

B. Steering Committee

1. The Steering Committee shall be composed of the President, the Clerk, the Majority Leader, the Minority Leader, and the Chairs and Co-Chairs of each of the other Standing Committees. The President may appoint additional members. Vice-Chairs not on Steering shall be ex-officio members of the Committee. A Vice-Chair shall act as Committee Chair and have the right to vote at any particular Steering Committee meeting in the absence of the Chair or of both of the Co-Chairs. Unless otherwise designated by the President, Co-Chairs of a committee shall be entitled to  $\frac{1}{2}$  vote. In the absence of one of the Co-Chairs at a steering meeting, the other Co-Chair shall be entitled to a full vote at that Steering meeting. A quorum of Steering shall consist of sufficient members to constitute a majority of the total votes on Steering.
2. The President, with the assistance of the Clerk, shall screen communications addressed to the Board, channeling such communications not properly the responsibility of the Board to the proper authorities, and placing appropriate items on the agenda for consideration by the Steering Committee.
3. The Steering Committee shall prepare the Agenda for all Regular Meetings of the Board. The President shall establish a deadline for submission of items for the Steering Committee not more than five calendar days before the Steering Committee meeting. Items submitted after the deadline shall require a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting at the Steering Committee meeting to be considered for the

Board Meeting Agenda. Items shall require a majority vote of the members present and voting to be placed on the Board Meeting Agenda.

4. The Steering Committee may refer to the appropriate committees all matters which pertain to the Board Meeting Agenda. The Steering Committee may also refer any matter to a committee without placing said matter on the Board Meeting Agenda.
5. All requests for appropriations, additional or otherwise, shall be referred to the Fiscal Committee. Upon the request at the Steering Meeting of the either the President, Clerk, Majority Leader, Minority Leader, or the relevant committees' Chair, Co-Chair, or Vice-Chair, appropriations in excess of \$25,000.00 shall be referred to a second committee of subject interest, unless the Fiscal Committee is the most appropriate committee of interest. Upon a majority vote of the Steering Committee, appropriations less than \$25,000 shall be referred to a second committee of subject interest.
6. Whenever the Board is required to elect a successor to fill a vacancy in any citywide elective office, such as a vacancy on the Board of Finance or the Board of Education, pursuant to C1-80-2 of the Charter and Code of the City of Stamford, any candidate nominated to fill a vacancy on said Board shall be referred to the Appointments Committee. The candidate shall be required to appear before the Appointments Committee for report to the full Board at a meeting of the Board and prior to election by the Board of Representatives.
7. Any petition or other communication which, in the opinion of the President or Clerk, is properly the business of a Standing Committee of the Board, or of a duly constituted or administrative authority of Stamford, may be referred by the President or Clerk directly upon receipt to the proper committee or authority. Notification of the nature of each such petition or communication and its disposition shall be made to all members in written form or a report of same may be made to the Board or to the Steering Committee, whichever meets next, at its next meeting.

C. Standing Committees other than Steering

1. All committee members and committee chairs or co-chairs shall be appointed by the President, unless otherwise specifically directed by the Board. The President may appoint a member of the committee as the vice-chair.
2. All members of the Board of Representatives shall have the right to attend and to participate in any meeting of any committee of which they are not regular members, but without the right to vote.
3. An item referred to a committee and placed on the Agenda for any meeting of the Board shall be fully investigated and reported to the full Board at said meeting. The chair or his/her appointee shall make the majority report of the committee; any member may make a minority report. An item placed in committee but not on the Agenda shall be investigated fully and its findings made to the proper party directly.
4. Any matter on the Agenda for any Board meeting, which is not reported out at said meeting by the committee to which it was referred, may be removed from such committee's hands by a majority vote of the full Board, and the Board may then act upon said matter at that meeting.
5. It shall be the duty of the chair of each committee to call a meeting of his/her committee if any matter has been referred to it by the Steering Committee.

6. When a matter has been referred to more than one committee, it shall be the responsibility of the chair of the senior committee involved to arrange for a joint meeting of the committees involved to discuss the matter. For the purpose of this paragraph, the seniority of the committees of the Board shall be in the order of listing in these Rules unless specifically otherwise ordered for a particular matter by the referring authority.
7. There shall be no committee meetings on the day of any Regular or Special Board Meeting regarding an item on the Board's Agenda unless a committee meeting to consider said matter has been scheduled prior to the day of the Board meeting or unless a Special Meeting has been called to consider an emergency or time-sensitive matter and a committee meeting cannot reasonably be scheduled for another day. In such cases, the committee shall complete its business before the time the meeting is scheduled to begin to eliminate unnecessary delays of the full Board.
8. All press releases of any Standing Committee shall be made or authorized by the Chair or Co-Chairs only.

#### IV. ORDER OF BUSINESS OF BOARD MEETINGS

##### A. The Order of Business:

1. The Order of Business at a Regular Board Meeting shall be as follows:
  - a. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance
  - b. Roll Call
  - c. Moment of Silence
  - d. Communications and Announcements
  - e. Committee reports and any other matters according to the Agenda
  - f. Resolutions according to the Agenda and Honorary Resolutions on consent agenda
  - g. Old Business
  - h. New Business
  - i. Acceptance of the Minutes
  - j. Adjournment
2. The Order of Business for a Special Meeting shall be as follows:
  - a. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance
  - b. Roll Call
  - c. Communications and Announcements
  - d. Business pertaining to the Call of the Meeting
  - e. Adjournment

- B. If, at any meeting, the Board is required to fill a vacancy in any elective office of the City, pursuant to the provisions of Section C1-80-2 of the Stamford Charter, the election to fill the vacancy shall occur after the Roll Call and take precedence over all other business before the Board.

- C. No business other than what appears on the Agenda at a Regular Meeting shall be transacted except by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting. No business other than what pertains to the Call of a Special Meeting shall be transacted at a Special Meeting.
- A. At any time during the meeting the President may conduct a test of the Voting Machine to determine that it properly displays and records the votes of all members of the Board. Individual members shall verify the operation of their respective voting indicator lights, and the President and the Clerk shall verify the operation of the tallying device. The President shall determine if the machine, subject to any exceptions he/she shall announce, is in acceptable working order and shall be used for subsequent votes during the meeting.
- B. Procedures pertaining to Regular Board Meetings:
  - 1. Moment of Silence
    - a. After the test of the voting machine, the President or the Clerk or his/her designee shall read the names of those to be honored by a Moment of Silence. The Board, at the direction of the President, shall then observe a moment of silence for all those so honored. The name of any person to be honored shall be submitted to the Clerk prior to the Regular Board Meeting.
  - 2. Steering Committee Report
    - a. The Agenda of each meeting shall be incorporated by reference as the report from the Steering Committee, which shall be made a part of the Minutes thereof.
  - 3. Committee Reports
    - a. The President shall call on the Chair, or Co-Chair of each Standing Committee to address the Board and provide a report and/or committee recommendation regarding all items on the Agenda pertaining to that committee. Motions recommended by a standing committee shall not require a second to be considered by the Board.
    - b. If, during the report of the Chair and prior to discussion, an item is reported out as non-controversial and there is no objection from any member of the Board, the Chair shall remove that item to the Consent Agenda of the respective committee. The Consent Agenda shall be affirmatively moved by the Chair at the end of the committee report and shall be voted upon with no discussion. All other items shall be debated and acted upon in accordance with the Rules of Order of the Board.
    - c. All ordinances and resolutions, and amendments thereto, emanating from Standing Committees shall be presented in writing to the full membership of the Board by the Chair or Co-chairs of the committee prior to the regular monthly meeting.
    - d. An appropriation request will not properly be before the Board of Representatives unless reported out by the Fiscal Committee and such other committee to which it has been referred. The report of the committee other than Fiscal may be waived by a majority vote of those present and voting.
    - e. Initial publication of ordinances and all amendments approved in committee after initial publication shall require approval by a majority vote of those Board members present and voting. The Board may waive publication, or republication,

of an ordinance by a two-thirds vote of the entire Board (27 votes) pursuant to Charter Section C2-10-12. Final adoption of an ordinance shall require 21 affirmative votes.

4. Honorary Resolutions

Honorary Resolutions submitted to the Steering Committee and placed on the Board Meeting Agenda shall be moved as consent agenda items without debate unless any Board member objects. Honorary Resolutions not on the Board Meeting Agenda but submitted to the Clerk of the Board in writing at least three days prior to the Board meeting may be taken up under Honorary Resolutions at the discretion of the President, but shall be moved as consent agenda items without debate. The Rules shall not be suspended to consider an Honorary Resolution not on the Agenda in order to allow discussion on such resolution.

5. Minutes

Minutes of any prior meeting of the Board shall be made available to all members of the Board at least three days before the Board may approve them.

V. RULES OF PROCEDURE

A. The Rules of Parliamentary Procedure as contained in *ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER, Newly Revised* shall govern the Board in all cases to which they are applicable and are not inconsistent with these Rules.

B. Debate

1. Any members of the Board desiring to speak in debate, deliver any matter to the Board, or to ask questions pertaining to any matter, shall indicate to the President or the Clerk his/her desire to address the Board. The President, with the assistance of the Clerk, shall keep track of those who wish to address the Board on any matter. The President shall name the member entitled to address the Board in the order in which they notified the Clerk or President. When any member addresses the Board, he/she shall address the Chair as "Mr. President" or "Madam President". All discussion shall be germane to the matter or motion under discussion. The President may direct any question asked by a member to the appropriate Board member.
2. No member who has already addressed the Board on the matter under discussion is entitled to address the Board a second time on the same matter as long as any member who has not spoken on that matter desires to address the Board. No member shall speak on the same question more than twice without permission of the President. The Clerk shall assist the President in keeping count of the number of times a member has spoken.
3. If there are no other members who desire to address the Board, the President shall put the question to a vote or move on to the next order of business as appropriate.
4. A motion to Move the Previous Question shall take precedence over further discussion on a matter. If seconded, the Motion to Move shall be put to a vote without further debate. If the motion to move the previous question receives a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, further debate on the main matter shall end and a vote on the main matter shall be taken.

5. No motions to limit debate shall be in order except as follows:

Any item being debated by the Board shall be subject to a motion to limit debate, which shall pre-empt all other motions. If seconded, and if both the Majority leader and the

Minority leader (or in their absence, one of their respective Deputy Majority leaders or Deputy Minority leaders) concur with the motion to limit debate, then such motion shall be put to a vote without further debate.

If the motion to limit debate receives a majority vote of those present and voting, from that moment on, each speaker shall limit his/her remarks to a maximum of two (2) minutes on the item. The President shall have the authority, at his/her discretion, to allow additional time for committee reports, members to ask or answer questions in good faith, members to respond to personal remarks, or if an item has been either taken out of committee or taken up under a suspension of the rules where time is of the essence.

If subsequent motions are made affecting the item, including amendments or a motion to return said item to committee, the limitations on debate shall continue, provided, however, that each speaker's allotment of time shall be extended by one (1) minute. The President, at his/her discretion, may permit an additional two (2) minutes, instead of an additional one (1) minute, per speaker following motions to amend if a proposed amendment, in the judgment of the President, would materially alter the item previously under consideration and similar amendments have not been previously considered.

When the motion to limit debate is in effect, no motions to end debate or to call the previous question shall be in order until all speakers desiring to speak have had at least one opportunity to speak on the current motion.

Notwithstanding the provisions of any other rule, upon action by Committee, this rule may be rescinded by a majority vote of the full Board.

6. Any member who has an interest in any matter before the Board of such a nature that he/she cannot vote may stay in the meeting when such a question is discussed or decided, but without the right to address the Board on the matter.
7. If any member, in speaking or otherwise, shall transgress the Rules of Order, the President shall, or any member may, call him/her to order, and, if speaking, he/she shall immediately relinquish the floor, unless permitted to explain.

#### C. Motions

1. When a motion is made, it shall be stated to the Board by the President before any debate shall take place; but every motion shall be presented in writing, if the President so directs.
2. When a motion is stated by the President, or read by the Clerk, it shall be deemed to be in the possession of the Board. It may be withdrawn at any time before decision or amendment, but not after amendment, unless the Board gives permission.
3. The question first moved shall be first put, except as modified by Rule. When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received except:
  - a. To Adjourn
  - b. To Recess
  - c. To Lay on the Table
  - d. To move the Previous Question
  - e. To Close the Debate at a Specified Time
  - f. To Postpone to a Certain Time
  - g. To Commit or Recommit
  - h. To Amend
  - i. To Continue to the Next Meeting
  - j. To Postpone Indefinitely

The above motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are arranged in this Rule. No motion to Lay on the Table, Commit or Recommit, to Continue to the Next Meeting, or to Postpone Indefinitely, having been once decided, shall be again allowed at the same meeting and at the same state of the subject matter.

#### D. Voting

1. When a vote is taken, the President shall determine whether the vote will be taken by voice vote, by machine, or, if the machine is not in working order, by division. If five or more members desire, the vote shall be made by machine, or, if the machine is not in working order, by division.

- a. Voice Vote:

The President shall ask all those in favor of the motion to say aye and all those opposed to the motion to say nay. Unless the vote is unanimous, a recording of the ayes and nays of individual members shall be required. If required, the President shall determine whether a subsequent recorded vote is by machine or by division. The President shall determine whether the vote has passed and is unanimous. If the President doubts the unanimous result of a voice vote or if a member rises in his/her place and states that he/she doubts the unanimous result of a voice vote, the President shall try the vote again, either by voice or by machine. If five or more members desire, the vote shall be retried by machine, or, if the machine is not in working order, by division. A voice vote does not allow the recording of ayes and nays of individual members. However, at the conclusion of a voice vote, any member desiring to be recorded as not voting or abstaining shall notify the President.

- b. Machine Vote:

When the voting machine is used, each member shall be responsible for the verification of his/her own vote as it appears on the light panel and shall inform the Chair if a discrepancy is noted. Members shall be required to vote from their own positions except that a temporary President or temporary Clerk may vote from the President's or Clerk's position and vice-versa. In such cases, the Clerk shall properly record the votes of the members not voting in their usually assigned positions

If there is a discrepancy between the vote as it appears on the light panel and the vote recorded by the machine, the vote on the light panel shall take precedence. The President, or one-fifth of the members present, may call for a new machine vote if the machine vote is doubted.

- c. Division

Those in the affirmative shall vote by raising their hands until counted, and afterwards those in the negative. The President may request the members to stand to assist in counting their votes. The President may request the assistance of the tellers in the counting of the vote. After the President has declared the vote, those who wish to be recorded as not voting or abstaining shall notify the President.

At the desire of one-fifth of the members present, at any time before a declaration of the vote, the yeas and nays shall be taken on any question by Roll Call vote. When the name of a member is called, he/she shall announce his/her

vote. A member may pass only once. If a member fails to vote the second time his/her name is announced, then his/her vote shall be recorded as abstaining.

2. No ordinance or appropriation resolution shall be adopted except by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Board (21 votes), pursuant to Charter Section C2-10-6.
3. On all questions to fill a vacancy for any elected office or to approve an appointment to any Board or position submitted by the Mayor, the voting shall be by an open and recorded vote. In all elections or appointments by the Board, if more than one candidate or more than one slate of candidates is nominated for any position, the voting shall be by Roll Call vote. In all elections, the candidates receiving the most votes shall be elected. If there is a tie, the vote shall be declared no election, and the Board shall proceed to vote again. If there is only one candidate nominated, the vote shall be by unanimous consent without balloting; however individual members may note their abstention.
4. The vote of each member of the Board of Representatives upon any item on the Agenda, or any item made a part thereof by virtue of Suspension of the Rules, at its Regular Meeting or at a Special Meeting, shall be recorded in writing in accordance with Public Act No. 75-342 as it now stands, or as it may be amended.
5. In all cases of balloting, the President shall have the right to vote; however, he/she shall not be required to vote, unless his/her vote would be decisive and such vote would not be in violation of Section VI B 5 of these rules. In the case of a tie vote, the question shall be lost.

#### V. Miscellaneous

1. Persons other than members of the Board of Representatives shall not converse with Board members on the floor of the Board while the Board is in session.
2. Members that join the meeting after the Roll Call, or leave the meeting prior to adjournment, shall notify the Clerk so that he/she can keep track of the number of members present.

#### VI. POSTAGE ALLOWANCE

- A. All members shall be entitled to a postage allowance of \$750.00 per four year term for mail disseminated through the Board office. Such allowance shall be prorated by month for members who resign from the Board or are elected to the Board during the term of the Board.
- B. The postage allowance shall not be used:
  1. By any Representative within the four (4) months prior to a city quadrennial election for the Board of Representatives or by any Representative filling a vacant seat on the Board within the four (4) months prior to a general city biennial election in which such Representative is a candidate.
  2. By any Representative who is on the ballot for any election or primary for any elected position in the City of Stamford or the State of Connecticut.
  3. By any Representative who has formed a fundraising or finance committee under the laws of Connecticut for election to any office.
- C. No communications utilizing the postage allowance shall endorse any candidate for any office.

- D. All communications utilizing the postage allowance shall be marked as *Board of Representatives Official Business*. The postage allowance shall not be used for the personal business of any Representative.
- E. Communications conducted on behalf of the Board by the President or the Clerk, or conducted on behalf of any committee by the committee Chair or Co-Chair, shall not count toward the postage allowance of such representative.
- F. The President may establish procedures for use of the postage allowance. Attached hereto and made a part hereof are the Postage Allowance Guidelines for the 27<sup>th</sup> Board of Representatives as approved by the President.

#### VI. AMENDMENTS

An affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the members present shall be required to amend the Rules of Order. However, these rules may be amended by a majority vote of the full Board (21 votes) at the first three regular or special Board meetings after the organizational meeting, beginning with the quadrennial election of 2001.

FROM: Randall M. Skigen

RE: Postage Allowance Guidelines

The Rules of the Board of Representatives includes a postage allowance for Representatives. The following are the procedures to be used by any Representative taking advantage of the postage allowance:

1. The limit is \$750 per four-year term. \$375 is allotted for each two year period and if the \$375 is not used, it is lost.
2. Any Representative seeking to use the postage allowance must provide the Board office with notice of his/her intent to send out a mailing, with a count of the number of envelopes required, at least ten (10) business days before such mailing is to go out.
3. A Representative may not use the postage allowance to send a mailing outside of his/her district.
4. Only Board of Representatives official letter-sized envelopes (available in the Board Office) may be used, unless a different size is approved by the Clerk of the Board or the President. Any envelopes not used for such mailing must be returned to the Board Office within thirty (30) days of the mailing.
5. Only material related to issues affecting residents of the Representative's district, including citywide issues, may be included in the mailing.
6. At least five (5) business days prior to mailing, the Representative shall submit a final draft of the material proposed to be mailed to the Board office for review by the President or the Clerk of the Board. Any questionable communications will also be reviewed by the Majority or Minority Leader, as appropriate. The President or Clerk of the Board will notify the Representative of any required changes within two (2) business days.
7. Preparation of all material, including copying, stuffing and addressing of envelopes, is the responsibility of the Representative.
8. At least two (2) business days before mailing, the Representative must submit the prepared mailing, unsealed, to the office of the Board of Representatives to be mailed, with a total count of the pieces to be mailed.

The material may not be postmarked less than 123 days before the date of a city quadrennial election for the Board of Representatives or a general city biennial election in which the Representative is a candidate.

*(Revised 7/2011)*