

**Differences Between  
Chatham County Rules of Procedure  
and  
SOG Suggested Rules of Procedure  
for the Board of County Commissioners**

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## Rule 1: Open Meetings

Rule No. and Title	Chatham County Rules of Procedure Text	Relevant SOG Rule No(s).	Differences Between Chatham County Rules of Procedure and SOG Suggested Rules of Procedure
1: Open Meetings	<p>The public policy of the State of North Carolina and Chatham County is that the hearings, deliberations, and actions of this Board and its committees be conducted openly. Except where specifically exempted as closed session identified in NC General Statute 143-318.11, the meetings of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners shall be open to the public, and any person may attend.</p>	4: Meetings Be Open to the Public  5: Closed Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Instead of referring to NCGS § 143-318.11 as the only exemption, it refers to Rule 5, which discusses the reasons to enter closed session. Rule 5 restates certain parts of § 143-318.11, but not all, and also contains a catch-all phrase allowing closed session for any other basis permitted by law.</li><li>Rule 5 lists who may participate in a closed session.</li><li>Rule 5 also includes rules on motions for entering closed session and returning from closed session.</li></ul>

## Rule 2: Organization of the Board

Rule No. and Title	Chatham County Rules of Procedure Text	Relevant SOG Rule No(s).	Differences Between Chatham County Rules of Procedure and SOG Suggested Rules of Procedure
2: Organization of the Board	<p>On the first Monday in December following a general election in which County officers are elected, the Board of Commissioners shall meet at the regular meeting time and place.</p> <p>The Board member who served as the Chair of the Board of Commissioners during the preceding year shall call the meeting to order, except if the Chair was not reelected, the duty shall fall to the Vice Chair.</p> <p>In the case where neither the Chair or the Vice Chair were reelected, the duty shall fall to the members of the Board of Commissioners who have already been sworn in and shall be determined by seniority.</p> <p>The newly elected members of the Board of Commissioners who are present shall take and subscribe to the oath of office as the first order of business.</p> <p>As the second order, the Board of Commissioners shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair from its members.</p>	8: Organizational Meeting; Selection of Chair and Vice-Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Has separate provisions that apply based on whether it is an odd or even year.</li><li><b>Even-year order of business:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Take oaths;</li><li>Elect chair and vice-chair;</li><li>Approve bonds.</li></ul></li><li><b>Odd-year order of business:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Elect the chair and co-chair as the first order of business.</li><li>(Not in SOG Rule – but bonds are required each year)</li></ul></li><li>Presiding officer: outgoing chair unless the outgoing chair has lost seat, in which case the clerk presides.</li></ul>

## Rule 3: Agenda Preparation

Rule No. and Title	Chatham County Rules of Procedure Text	Relevant SOG Rule No(s).	Differences Between Chatham County Rules of Procedure and SOG Suggested Rules of Procedure
3: Agenda Preparation	<p>The County Manager is responsible for the preparation of the agenda for each regular, special, and emergency meeting. In doing so, the County Manager may review the draft agenda with Chair and/or Vice-Chair prior to the final publication.</p> <p>Each member of the Board of Commissioners shall be provided with a copy of the agenda prior to the meeting, and it shall be available for public inspection when it is distributed to the Board of Commissioners.</p> <p>Accept as otherwise provided below, the Board of Commissioners shall confine their discussion and comments to only those items that appear on the agenda.</p> <p>Matters may be added in the following ways:</p> <p>1) Prior to approval of the agenda, a Commissioner, or the County Manager may ask that a matter be added to the agenda. A majority vote of the Board of Commissioners is required to add such matters to the agenda.</p> <p>2) During Commissioner Reports, a Board Member may ask that a matter be placed on a future agenda. A majority vote of the Board of Commissioners is required to place such matters on a future agenda.</p>	15: Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draft Agenda: suggests that the clerk prepare but acknowledges different practices among counties.</li><li>• Does not include a review of the draft agenda with Chair or Vice-Chair prior to meeting.</li><li>• Placing items on agenda: a Commissioner may request an item be placed on the agenda within a certain number of days before the meeting. If the request is timely, the clerk must add it to the agenda.</li><li>• Board can add <u>and subtract</u> agenda items from agenda with the majority vote of the members present, except for additions limited by statute. (Emergency meetings and special meetings are limited.)</li><li>• Allows for designation of items “for discussion and possible action.”</li></ul>

## Rule 4: Agenda Packet

Rule No. and Title	Chatham County Rules of Procedure Text	Relevant SOG Rule No(s).	Differences Between Chatham County Rules of Procedure and SOG Suggested Rules of Procedure
4: Agenda Packet	<p>The agenda packet shall include the agenda document, any proposed ordinances, or amendments to ordinances, and supporting documentation and information relevant to the agenda items.</p> <p>The agenda packet will be emailed to the Board of Commissioners before the meeting and posted to the website.</p>	15(a)(2) & (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Very similar to Chatham County Rule 4 but includes a deadline (suggests 24-hours before the meeting) on when the agenda and agenda packet should be delivered to the Board.</li></ul>

## Rule 5: Consent Agenda

Rule No. and Title	Chatham County Rules of Procedure Text	Relevant SOG Rule No(s).	Differences Between Chatham County Rules of Procedure and SOG Suggested Rules of Procedure
5: Consent Agenda	<p>To increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Board of Commissioners meetings while reserving valuable meeting time for deliberating on important issues, the Board of Commissioners shall use a consent agenda for non-controversial or routine items.</p> <p>Items for inclusion within the consent agenda shall be reviewed and selected by the County Manager upon the recommendation of Staff.</p> <p>Consent agenda items will be grouped together on the agenda and acted upon by one motion and vote of the Board of Commissioners.</p> <p>During agenda review and approval, any Board member may remove items from the consent agenda and place on the regular agenda, unless another member objects to the removal, in which case the item may only be removed from the consent agenda by majority vote by the Board of Commissioners.</p> <p>In the minutes of the meeting, the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners shall record each of the items with separate votes indicated, as if each item was adopted separately.</p>	15(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Allows one Board member to request to have item moved from the consent agenda to unfinished business prior to the adoption of the agenda, and the request must be honored by the Board.</li></ul>