

MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

RULES OF PROCEDURE

RULE 1. AUTHORIZATION.

The Meridian Township Environmental Commission, hereinafter called the Commission, is established pursuant to Chapter 121 of the Code of Ordinances, Charter Township of Meridian.

RULE 2. RESPONSIBILITIES.

The Environmental Commission shall:

- a. Advise the Township Board, officials and staff on matters pertaining to environmental protection and water conservation, management of natural resources and preservation of open space.
- b. Identify ways to ensure and improve the quality of the Township's environment in the interest of the public health, safety and general welfare.
- c. Develop educational and outreach programs for local schools, businesses and individuals to encourage environmental stewardship, protect property values and avoid unnecessary financial costs for correcting environmental problems.
- d. Review and offer recommendations for Township ordinances, operating procedures and programs in order to achieve the stated purposes in Chapter 121 and ensure compliance with applicable state and federal environmental laws.
- e. Assume the duties of the Township Wetland Board as outlined in Section 105-16(c) of the Township Code of Ordinances.
- f. Offer recommendations for the Township budget as it pertains to the Commission.
- g. Assume such other duties as may be assigned by the Township Board.
- h. Encourage and utilize the involvement of residents and experts in achieving the environmental goals of the Township.

RULE 3. COMPOSITION, TERMS AND VACANCIES.

3.1 **Composition and Appointment.** The Commission shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the Township Board. Members shall be Township residents and shall have an interest or expertise in natural resources, environmental protection or ecology. In addition, two student members shall be appointed. These two members shall be voting members.

3.2 **Terms.** Terms of appointment shall be for three (3) years or until a successor is appointed, the student members shall serve one (1) year terms.

3.3 **Unexpired Terms.** A member appointed to fill an unexpired term shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term or until a successor is appointed.

RULE 4. REMOVAL FROM OFFICE.

A member may be removed from office by the Township Board for nonperformance of duty or misconduct in office, following written charges and after a public hearing.

RULE 5. OFFICERS.

5.1 **Selection.** At its first meeting in January, the Commission shall select a chair and a vice chair from among its members.

5.2 **Terms.** Term of office shall be one (1) year, or until a successor is selected.

5.3 **Duties.**

- a. The chair shall preside at all meetings, authorize calls for special meetings, and perform such other duties as may be specified by the Commission.
- b. The vice-chair shall act in the capacity of the chair in the chair's absence.
- c. In the event the office of the chair becomes vacant, the vice chair shall succeed to this office for the unexpired term and the Commission shall select a successor to the office of vice-chair for the unexpired term.

RULE 6. COMMITTEES.

6.1 **Purpose.** The Commission may establish committees necessary to assist it in fulfilling its responsibilities and shall define the purpose, functions, tenure, selection of chair, meeting and reporting requirements for each committee. The establishment of committees shall not preclude the use of individuals or study groups in the exploration or research of specific environmental issues.

6.2 **Appointments.** Committee members shall be appointed by the chair, with concurrence of the Commission. A committee may be discharged from its responsibilities by the Commission

6.3 **Public Participation.** Committees shall meet all requirements for public participation and access to records as provided in Rule 7 of these Rules.

RULE 7. MEETINGS.

7.1 **Regular Meetings.** The Commission may call one regular meeting each month, pending business.

7.2 **Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by the chair or shall be called at the written request of two (2) or more Commission members. The meeting notice shall include the purpose of the special meeting. At least forty-eight (48) hours notice of special meetings shall be given to Commission members.

7.3 **Meeting Schedule.** A schedule of regular meetings, including date, time and place, shall be established for each calendar year and shall be made available to the public in advance of said meetings. Changes in the schedule shall be posted for the public.

7.4 **Location.** Meetings shall be held at a Township facility unless otherwise indicated.

7.5 **Quorum.** Four (4) members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business unless otherwise indicated in these rules or required by Township ordinance, state or federal law. A member shall notify the chair or designated staff if the member will be absent from a meeting.

7.6 **Public Participation.**

- a. All regular and special meetings, work sessions or public hearings shall be open to the public, unless otherwise provided for in Township ordinance, state or federal law.
- b. Opportunity for public comment shall be provided in accordance with established Commission or Township rules and procedures (See attached Exhibit A).
- c. The chair may call to order any person who disrupts the orderly conduct of a meeting and prohibit said person from further participation or attendance at such meeting.

7.7 **Agenda.**

- a. An agenda shall be established for each meeting by the chair and designated Township staff and be made available to the Commission and public in advance of the meeting. The order of business shall be determined by the chair with concurrence of the Commission.

- b. Agenda items to be considered at a special meeting shall be limited to those included in the call-to-meeting notice unless all members are present and vote otherwise.

7.8 **Decisions.** Providing a quorum is present, a simple majority of those present and voting shall be required for Commission action, unless otherwise provided for in these rules, other Township or state statutes or parliamentary authority, as adopted.

7.9 **Records.** Designated Township staff shall be responsible for minutes and other official records of all Commission meetings and actions, including supporting documentation. Notice of meetings, minutes and other records shall be available to the public in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (P.A. 442, 1976, as amended) and Open Meetings Acts (P.A. 267, 1976, as amended).

RULE 8. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY.

Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern all questions of procedure not otherwise provided for in these rules or by Township, state or federal law.

RULE 9. SUSPENSION OF RULES AND AMENDMENT.

9.1 **Suspension.** A rule may be suspended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of Commission members present and voting at a meeting, provided said action is in accordance with established state or federal law, Township ordinance and parliamentary authority.

9.2 **Amendment.** Rules not required by state or federal law or Township ordinance may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Commission, provided thirty (30) days notice and an opportunity for comment is given to the public.

EXHIBIT A: PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS**RULE 7.6**

1. The number of persons admitted to a meeting room will be in keeping with public safety requirements and availability of space. Efforts will be made to provide adequate room to accommodate those in attendance.
2. Established protocols for public participation will be announced at the beginning of the meeting.
3. Opportunity to speak will be granted either under Public Remarks or during a public hearing, as most appropriate.
4. Reasonable time limits may be allotted for public comments, in keeping with other business which must be considered at a particular meeting.
5. A member of the public will be provided no less than three minutes to speak.
6. Those completing a request form in writing shall be called upon first to speak.
7. Members of the public will identify themselves by name and address prior to presenting their comments.
8. Written communications will be read into the record during a meeting when requested by the author. All written communications will become part of the Commission record.
9. The Chair, without objections from the Commission, may invite members of the public to participate in informal discussion on all or selected agenda items during Commission work sessions.