

REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

THE PORT VILA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
(STANDING ORDERS) ORDER No. 6 OF 1989

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred by Section 11 of the Municipalities Act No.5 of 1980, the Port Vila Municipal Council hereby makes the following Standing Orders:

PART I
PRELIMINARY

INTERPRETATION

1. In these Standing Orders, unless the context otherwise requires:-
 - "Act" means the Municipalities Act No.5 of 1980;
 - "Council" means the Port Vila Municipal Council;
 - "Councillor" means an elected member of the Council;
 - "Clerk" means the Town Clerk of the Council appointed in accordance with Section 18 of the Act or anyone acting on his behalf;

PART II
COMMITTEES

FINANCE COMMITTEE

2. (1) There shall be a finance committee of the Council which shall consist of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and three other Councillors.
- (2) One of the members of the finance committee shall be appointed by the Council to be the Chairman of the finance committee.

TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE

3. (1) There shall be a town planning committee which shall make examination of building permit applications, approve building permits and deal with town planning matters on behalf of the Council.
- (2) The town planning committee shall consist of the Mayor and five other members, and may include not more than two persons who are not Councillors.

- (3) One of the members of the town planning committee who shall be a Councillor shall be appointed by the Council to be the Chairman of the committee.

TERM OF OFFICE OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

4. (1) A member of a committee of the Council appointed under these Standing Orders, shall hold office for such period not exceeding one year as maybe specified in the instrument of appointment of the member unless the committee is dissolved before the expiry of that period.

- (2) Where a committee member:-

- (a) dies;
- (b) resigns; or
- (c) ceases to be a Councillor,

another member shall be appointed to serve for the remainder of the term of office.

PART III **COUNCIL MEETINGS**

MEETINGS

5. (1) One meeting of the Council shall be convened in the month of April of each year to debate and approve the annual estimates of the Council for the coming year.
- (2) Extraordinary meetings may be convened at the request of two thirds of the Councillors by giving notice in writing to the Clerk not less than three weeks before the date of such meeting.
- (3) Before a Council meeting ends, the Council shall approve the date for the next meeting of the Council.

CALLING OF MEETINGS

6. (1) The Mayor shall in writing issue notice of Council meetings to each Councillor stating the place and time of meeting therein.
- (2) The notice issued under subparagraph (1), shall be given not less than three clear days in advance of the day of the meeting and shall be recorded in the minute book.
- (3) Where the agenda has not been exhausted at one session and it becomes necessary for the Council to meet the following day or on subsequent days, the Mayor shall, at that session verbally obtain the consent of the majority of Councillors to attend meetings on the following day or subsequent days, as the case may be.
- (4) Notices of Council meetings shall be displayed on the notice board at the door of the Town Hall, and shall be publicized as much as possible, particularly in the press and over the radio.

INVITATIONS TO NON-COUNCILLORS TO ATTEND MEETINGS

7. (1) The Council may invite to its meetings any person having special knowledge of matters which the Council is concerned with, and whose advice may be of use.
- (2) Any person invited to attend a Council meeting under subparagraph (1) shall not have a right to vote.

PLACE OF MEETINGS

8. (1) All meetings of the Council shall be held at the Town Hall, except as the Mayor may decide.
- (2) When a meeting is to be held at a place, other than the Town Hall, the Mayor shall in the notice of the meeting give reasons for holding the meeting in that place.

PRECEDENCE

9. (1) Councillors in office take precedence in alphabetic order, except that the Mayor followed by the Deputy Mayor shall take precedence in the order of their appointment.
- (2) The Mayor shall keep a list of Councillors in this order at the Town Hall for the information of the public and shall ensure that the list is kept up-to-date.

AGENDA

10. (1) The agenda for all ordinary meetings shall be drawn up by the Mayor in conjunction with the Clerk and shall be issued with notices convening such meetings. It shall list items in the following order:
 - (a) approval of minutes of the previous meeting;
 - (b) Clerk's report to the Council;
 - (c) committee's reports to the Council;
 - (d) examination of listed business;
 - (e) any other business;
 - (f) date of next Council meeting.
- (2) (a) If a Councillor wishes a subject to be included on the agenda he shall give the Clerk written notice of the item not less than eight days before the date of the meeting.
- (b) If an item does not appear on the agenda the Councillor shall obtain the approval of the majority of members before it may be discussed.

Division 1 - Procedure of Council Meetings

OPENING OF MEETINGS

11. (1) The Mayor shall open meetings at the time specified in notices issued under paragraph 6(1), and shall call the roll of Councillors in office to ascertain that a quorum is reached.

- (2) If one hour after the time specified a quorum is still not reached the Mayor shall adjourn the meeting for eight days.
- (3) On adjournment of a meeting under subparagraph (2), new notices shall be issued to Councillors who were absent from the meeting.
- (4) The Council shall meet after the eight days adjournment declared under subparagraph (2) and shall proceed with its normal business whatever the number of Councillors present.

MINUTES AND REPORTS

12. (1) After the opening of the meeting the Mayor shall direct -
 - (a) the Clerk to read out minutes of the previous meeting; and
 - (b) the Chairman of the -
 - (i) finance committee;
 - (ii) town planning committee; and
 - (iii) any other committee that has been established,to give a report on the activities of those committees.
- (2) The Clerk shall take minutes of all proceedings, discussions, decisions and votes of Council meetings.
- (3) The minutes shall be written in English, French and Bislama.
- (4) Copies of the minutes shall be issued to Councillors with notices of Council meetings issued under paragraph 6(1) of these Standing Orders.

VOTING

13. (1) A vote shall be taken on all matters discussed by the Council.
- (2) Every vote shall be moved and seconded by Councillors whose names shall be recorded in the minutes.
- (3) Subject to the Act and these Standing Orders, all members of the Council may vote in a Council meeting.
- (4) Except as provided for in subparagraph (6), voting shall be by show of hands and shall be by the majority of Councillors voting.
- (5) Councillors who abstain shall not be considered to be voters.
- (6) A secret ballot may be held in the case of any nomination or appointment, and whenever a majority of elected members present so wishes.
- (7) A secret ballot shall be taken by means of blank slips handed out to members, who shall write "FOR", "AGAINST", or "ABSTENTION" on the slip and return it to the Clerk for counting.
- (8) Municipal bye-laws and annual estimates shall be voted on section by section.

Division 2 - Discipline and Order at Council Meetings

MAYOR TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DISCIPLINE AND ORDER

14. The Mayor shall be responsible for discipline and order in the Council Chamber and all remarks and observations shall be addressed to him.

MEMBERS TO OBEY AND OBSERVE ORDERS BY MAYOR

15. (1) All members shall obey and observe all orders by the Mayor.
- (2) (a) The Mayor may call to order any Councillor whose dress, speech or behaviour is contrary to the rules of decency or propriety or for failure to observe these Standing Orders.
- (b) A second call to order to the same Councillor during the same meeting shall cause him to be excluded from the Council Chambers.
- (c) Calls to order shall be recorded in the minutes.

NON-COUNCILLORS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL UPON REQUEST

16. (1) Officers or employees of the Council may only address the Council at the request of the Mayor.
- (2) No person, other than a Councillor, may address the Council without prior written invitation of the Council in accordance with paragraph 7 of these Standing Orders.

PART IV
COMMITTEE MEETINGS

CALLING OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

17. A meeting of a Committee of the Council shall be convened whenever necessary at the request of the Chairman or at least four members, provided that not less than six meetings of any committee shall be held in any one year.

CHAIRMANSHIP OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

18. Working sessions of committees of the Council shall be chaired by the Chairman or in his absence by a member of the committee elected to act as Chairman for that meeting only.

QUORUM OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

19. (1) The quorum for any meeting of the committee of the Council shall be two thirds of the total membership.
- (2) If at a first meeting the quorum is not reached, the Chairman shall convene the meeting 24 hours later and the committee's deliberations shall be valid if two members including the Chairman are present.

AGENDA OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

20. (1) The agenda shall be drawn up by the Clerk after consultation with the Chairman, and shall be given in notices notifying members of meetings.
- (2) If a member of a committee of the Council wishes to add any items to the agenda he may do so at the meeting without prior notice.

VOTING

21. (1) A vote shall be taken on all matters discussed by a committee of the Council.
- (2) Only members of a committee of the Council may vote.
- (3) Unless all members of a committee of the Council present in a committee meeting decide otherwise, voting shall be by show of hands.

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

22. (1) The Clerk shall take minutes of all proceedings, discussions, decisions and votes of a committee of the Council meetings and shall circulate the minutes to the members of the committee within reasonable time before its next meeting.
- (2) The minutes may be written in English, French and Bislama.
- (3) Minutes of Committee Meetings must be approved by subsequent meeting of the Committee.

PART V
MISCELLANEOUS

ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE

23. (1) Each Councillor shall be entitled to a maximum allowance of 5,000 vatu for each meeting of a committee of the Council that he attends.
- (2) Each Councillor shall be entitled to a maximum allowance of 5,000 vatu for each meeting of the Council that he attends.
- (3) A person attending a meeting of the Council in accordance with paragraph 7(1) shall be entitled to the same allowance as Councillors if the meeting is taking place after working hours.
- (4) For the purpose of this paragraph "meeting" shall mean one day's sitting of the Council.

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COMMENCEMENT

24. These Standing Orders shall come into force on the date of approval by the Minister responsible for Municipalities.

MADE at Port Vila the 30th day of December, 1988.

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MAYOR

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CLERK

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COUNCILLOR

Approved on the 30th day of December, 1988.

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IOLU J. ABBIL
Minister of Home Affairs and Minister
responsible for Municipalities