



**Tompkins County Legislature**

Governor Daniel D. Tompkins Building  
Ithaca, NY 14850

Meeting: 01/04/17 03:30 PM  
Department: Tompkins County Legislature  
Category: Administrative  
Functional Category: Rules of the Legislature

**WITHDRAWN**

**RESOLUTION NO.**      *DOC ID: 6730*

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1      **Amendments to the Rules of the Tompkins County Legislature and**  
2      **Functions of Committees**

3            WHEREAS, for the citizens of Tompkins County, the Legislature serves as a reflection of the County  
4 government as a whole, and

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6            WHEREAS, the Legislature seeks to demonstrate smooth and efficient governance as a measure of its  
7 competence as a body to conduct the people's business, and

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9            WHEREAS, the smooth and efficient function of the Legislature is, in fact, a necessary requirement for good  
10 governance of the County, and

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12            WHEREAS, the Legislature should continually examine its policies and practices to ensure it is operating  
13 within rules for Legislators to speak in support of, or opposition to, the matters before the Legislature, to engage in  
14 debate, and providing opportunities for each Legislator to be heard on issues of importance to them, but also support  
15 the management of the business of the County to be conducted in a reasonable length of time, and

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17            WHEREAS, the Legislature has adopted rules for the conduct of its business, modeled on Roberts Rules of  
18 Order, where the method and manner of speaking by the Legislators is governed, now therefore be it

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20            RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations Committee, That the following changes to  
21 the Rules of the Legislature be adopted:

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23            Amend Rule IV - Order of Business, to add a sentence after the list of business items to read as follows:

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25            The written order of business at each session shall include the anticipated periods of time allotted for items on  
26 the agenda to provide a guide to the Legislators as to how much discussion may be appropriate.

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28            Amend Rule IV - Order of Business, to move the Legislators' Privilege of the Floor to a position after  
29 approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting and before Adjournment of the meeting.

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31            Amend Rule IV - Order of Business (4) Announcements of Executive Sessions, Reordering of Business, and  
32 Special Orders of the Day, to add the following provision:

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34            Notice of events may be given in writing to the Chair, to be read as a part of the Chair's Report, if a Legislator  
35 wants to have something announced at the beginning of the Meeting. A Legislator may also make such  
36 announcements at Legislators' Privilege of the Floor.

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38            Amend Rule IV - Order of Business (5) Privilege of the Floor, to add the following provision:

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40            A Legislator shall be allowed to speak during Legislators' Privilege of the Floor for three minutes, in order to  
41 match the amount of time accorded to members of the public who address the Legislature in the Public  
42 Privilege of the Floor of the Legislative meetings. A speakers three minute limit may be extended for an  
43 additional three minutes by the consent vote of four or more Legislators to extend.

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45            Amend Rule V - Order and Decorum, to add the following provisions:

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- 2 a. During debate on a motion, the Chair shall have authority to limit debate on a motion to a designated time per
- 3 speaker, subject to a vote to remove the limit by a vote of four or more Legislators.
- 4 b. During debate on a motion, the Chair shall have authority to stop a Legislator from speaking after exhausting
- 5 his or her allotted time for debate, or speaking on topics outside of the agenda.
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7 Amend Rule VI - Motions and Their Procedure, to add the following provisions:

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- 9 a. At the presentation of a written motion, the mover shall be required to indicate whether the version of the
- 10 proposed motion has been updated to include spelling corrections, grammatical or syntax changes, as
- 11 compared to what is included in the Agenda for the Legislative Meeting so it is clear which motion is
- 12 being considered. No spelling corrections, grammatical or syntax changes may be considered during the
- 13 debate on the motion. If not included in a modified version presented prior to the Meeting, spelling
- 14 corrections, and grammatical and syntax changes shall be treated as manifest error to be addressed with the
- 15 Clerk after the conclusion of the Legislature meeting.
- 16 b. During debate on a motion, Legislators shall commence comments by stating their position either in
- 17 support of or opposition to the proposal on the floor.
- 18 c. During debate on a motion, it shall be the policy of the Legislature for speakers in support and opposition
- 19 to the proposal on the floor to alternate speaking. At commencement of debate, the Chair shall call for a
- 20 show of hands of those who wish to speak in support and opposition at the opening of debate on an issue.
- 21 d. During debate on a motion, it shall be the policy of the Legislature for speakers to indicate agreement with
- 22 a prior speaker, rather than stating the same points again.
- 23 e. During debate on a motion, it shall be the policy of the Legislature for speakers to speak once on a motion
- 24 before all other Legislators have had an opportunity to speak.
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26 Amend Rule VII - Rules of Voting, to include a new subsection ten as follows:

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- 28 (10) Legislators shall not explain the reasons for their vote during voting. Legislators shall be allowed to e-
- 29 mail the Clerk with reasons for particular votes to go on the record in the notes to the Minutes of the Meeting.

30 **SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20**