



# RULES AND PROCEDURES

DRAFT 2024

## Town of Bridgeville

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# WHO WE ARE

## About the Town

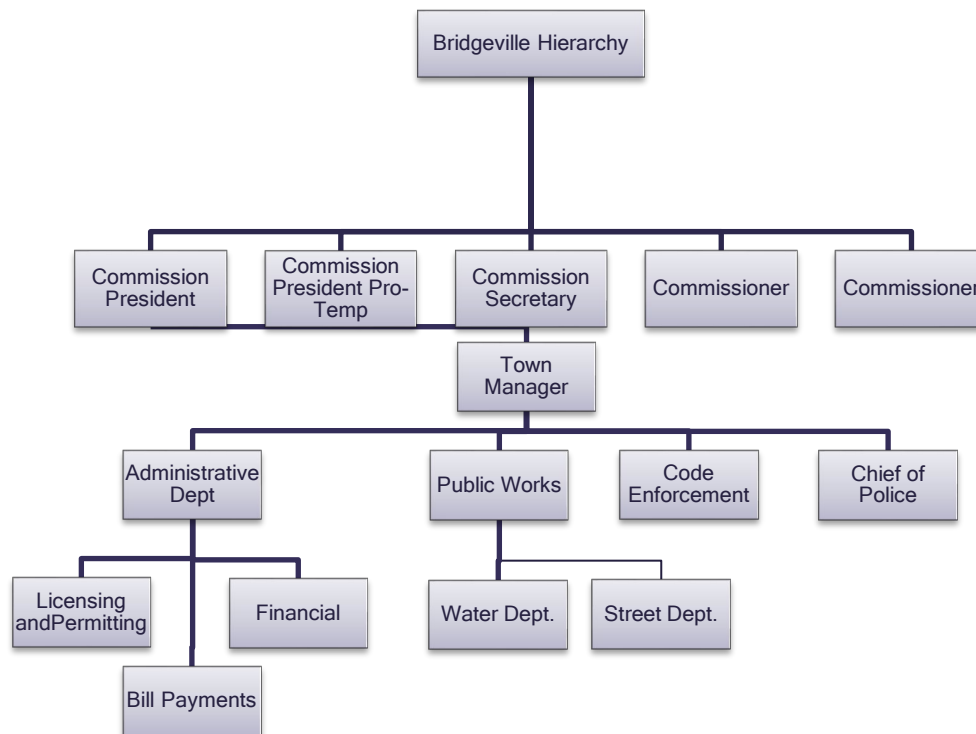
Welcome! The Town of Bridgeville aims to provide the citizens of Bridgeville with the services and information they need.

We are located in Sussex County in the southwestern part of Delaware. Bridgeville is located on U.S. 13, approximately 30 miles south of Dover, the capital of Delaware. Bridgeville is also 26 miles north of Salisbury, Maryland, the biggest shopping area south of Dover on the Delmarva Peninsula. The population of Bridgeville per the 2020 decennial census is approximately 2,568. The Town logo, posted at all entrances, is “If you lived here, you would be home now.”

Bridgeville is one of the oldest surviving communities in western Sussex County. Long before Sussex County was subdivided into hundreds, a community in the 1680s 's began to develop along the small waterway known as Bridge Branch. A bridge was built across the stream, and it served as the nucleus of the community. The name Bridgeville was adopted around 1810, and the Town was incorporated in 1871. Today, Bridgeville is a pleasant agricultural-oriented community known for fine homes and broad tree-lined streets.

## Audience and Organizational Chart

This guide is intended for the five Commission of Bridgeville. Below is the organizational chart or hierarchy of roles within the town government. We begin with the five Commissioners, led by the Commission President. Then, the Town Manager branches to each department head, who leads their subgroup of staff.



## Our Form of Government

The Town of Bridgeville operates under a Council-Manager form of Government.

According to the International City/County Management Association, the council-manager form of government combines the strong political leadership of elected officials with the strong managerial experience of an appointed city manager. All power and authority to set policy rests with an elected governing body, the city council. The council, in turn, hires a nonpartisan manager who runs the organization. Since its establishment, the council-manager form has become the most popular structure of local government in the United States. **In Bridgeville's case, we have a Commission instead of a Council and a President instead of a mayor, but the descriptions and duties are still the same.**

### How it Works

The elected city council members represent their community and develop a long-range vision for its future. They establish policies that affect the overall operation of the community and are responsive to residents' needs and wishes. To ensure that these policies are carried out and that the entire community is equitably served, the governing body appoints a professional manager on the basis of their education, experience, skills, and abilities (and not their political allegiances). If the manager is not responsive to the governing body, it has the authority to terminate the manager at any time.

**A city benefits from the council-manager form of government in a number of important ways:**

- Political power is concentrated in the entire governing body. The mayor and council share legislative functions.
- Policy making resides with elected officials, while oversight of the day-to-day operations of the community resides with the manager. In this way, the elected officials are free to devote time to policy planning and development.
- The manager carries out the policies established by the elected governing body with an emphasis on effective, efficient, and equitable service delivery.
- Because decisions on policy and the future of the community are made by the entire governing body rather than a single individual, council-manager governments more often engage and involve their residents in decision-making. Residents guide their community by serving on boards and commissions, participating in visioning and strategic planning, and designing community-oriented local government services.

### City Council's Role

The city council is the community's legislative and policymaking body. Power is centralized in the elected council, which, for example, approves the budget and determines the tax rate. The council also focuses on the community's goals, major projects, and such long-term considerations as community growth, land use development, capital improvement and financing, and strategic planning. The council hires a professional manager to implement the administrative responsibilities related to these goals and supervises the manager's performance.

### Mayor's Role

In council-manager communities, the mayor is a voting member of the city council who

presides at council meetings, represents the city in intergovernmental relationships, appoints members of citizen advisory boards and commissions (with the advice and consent of the council), assigns agenda items to committees, facilitates communication and understanding between elected and appointed officials and assists the council in setting goals and advocating policy decisions.

### **City Manager's Role**

The city manager is hired to serve the council and the community and brings to the local government the benefits of their training and experience in administering municipal projects and programs. The manager prepares a budget for the council's consideration; recruits, hires, terminates, and supervises government staff; serves as the council's chief advisor; and carries out the council's policies. Council members and residents count on the manager to provide complete and objective information about local operations, discuss the pros and cons of alternatives, and offer an assessment of the long-term consequences of their decisions. The manager makes policy recommendations to the council for consideration and final decision. The manager is bound by whatever action the council takes, and control is always in the hands of the elected representatives of the people. Appointed managers serve at the pleasure of the governing body. They can be fired by a majority of the council, consistent with local laws, or any employment agreements they may enter into with the council.

### **Chain of Command**

All individual department managers and employees of the town of Bridgeville report to and are responsible to the Town Manager. The Town Solicitor(s) generally report to the Town Manager on executive and administrative matters and to the Commission on legislative matters.

The Commissioners are responsible to the constituents. If a problem or complaint arises, the Commissioner should report it to the Town Manager, who will then assign the appropriate staff to address it as necessary. Commissioners are strongly discouraged from bringing issues directly to department heads or employees.

### **Commissioner Interactions with Staff and with Town Committees**

While a Commissioner is free to ask questions of an administrative nature to any staff member at any time, Commissioners shall be cognizant and respectful of the workload and not unduly burden them with personal projects. Commissioners shall coordinate with the President or a designee of the President before asking to reassign staff to projects that are important to the individual Commissioner.

Matters touching upon the performance, qualifications, and abilities of individual staff members are confidential personnel matters. Commissioners shall not engage in public discussions regarding internal personnel or performance issues affecting members of staff. If a Commissioner has a complaint or constructive criticism regarding the performance or conduct of a member of the Town staff, the Commissioner shall coordinate with the President as to the procedure and method for communicating that complaint or constructive criticism to the staff member. For example, the President may direct that the matter be discussed internally during a regular business day with the President, the Commissioner, and the Town Manager and staff member, or it may be appropriate for all of the Commissioners to discuss the issue in executive session with the Town Manager and the staff member.

Commissioners are free to ask questions of members of Town Committees, but it is unethical for Commissioners to seek to influence the judgment or the opinion of Committee members regarding issues pending or likely to be pending before them. Committee members are expected to act and decide matters independently, objectively, and impartially as a quasi-judicial body. For example, it would be inappropriate and unethical for a Commissioner to attempt to influence the basis or the reasoning for how a member, or members of the Planning and Zoning Committee, should decide on a pending or potential issue before the Planning and Zoning Committee.

# MISSION STATEMENT AND POWERS

## Mission Statement

The Commission of Bridgeville is elected by the citizens of the Town of Bridgeville, and each Commissioner represents all of the citizens of the Town. The Commission is elected by Election District, but such election does not preclude from or require a Commissioner to represent only the interests of citizens living in any of the several election districts from which they were elected. The Commission is non-partisan and will fairly represent the citizenry by actively engaging in the local legislative process and making decisions based on the facts before them. Commissioners are not merely conduits to share information with constituents. Commissioners will instead make their voting decisions based upon careful consideration of the issues being discussed and the earnest convictions of their core beliefs to the best of their ability.

## Powers By Charter

The procedures for operating as a Commissioner shall be governed at all times by the Charter of the Town of Bridgeville, which is included in the attachments. Procedures not reflected in the Code shall be governed by the tenets of this manual after the agreement of and adoption by the Commissioners of Bridgeville. The rules of procedures adopted herein are not a part of the Code and are, therefore, amendable at any future date by a majority vote of the Commission of Bridgeville.

## Conduct of the Commission

A Commissioner's conduct is a direct reflection of the Town. Commissioners are expected to conduct themselves with the utmost professionalism and decorum at all times, in addition to adhering to the Town's Ethics Policy. The business of the Town is not to be taken lightly and is to be considered secure information. Any act of a sitting Commissioner that would constitute a failure of a legal, ethical or moral standards may be considered a breach of conduct by said Commissioner and may be subject to censure in the following manner:

1. Presidential Oral Reprimand: The Commissioner will be counseled in private, and such action will be entered into the records of the Town at the discretion of the President.
2. Formal Letter of Censure: The Commissioner will have a formal letter of censure prepared and read aloud by the President or designee into the record at a regular monthly meeting of the Town Commission. Such action must be approved by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members elected to the Commission.
3. Removal: A Commissioner may be removed for cause by a 4/5 vote of all members elected to the Commission.



# COMMISSION RULES OF PROCEDURE

## Rules of Procedure Section Adopted by Resolution -

These rules shall govern the procedure of the Commission of Bridgeville.

### Definitions

"Agenda" includes but is not limited to a general statement of the major issues expected to be discussed at a public meeting, as well as a statement of intent to hold an executive session and the specific ground or grounds therefor.

"Town" means Bridgeville, Delaware, unless otherwise specified. "Commission" means the Commissioners of Bridgeville.

"Meeting" means the formal or informal gathering of a quorum of the members of the Commissioners of Bridgeville for the purpose of discussion or taking action on public business.

"President" means the President of the Commission of Bridgeville.

"Presiding Officer" means the "President" or such other person who presides over the meetings of the Commissioners of Bridgeville, pursuant to the Rules of the Commissioners of Bridgeville.

"Public business" means any matter over which the Commissioners of Bridgeville have supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

"Public record" Is information of any kind, owned, made, used, retained, received, produced, composed, drafted, or otherwise compiled by the Commissioners of Bridgeville, relating in any way to public business or in any way of public interest, or in any way related to public purposes, regardless of the physical form or characteristic by which such information is stored, recorded or reproduced. Records not deemed public under 29 Del. C. § 10002(d) are not deemed public under the Rules of the Commissioners of Bridgeville.

"Secretary" means the Secretary of the Commission of Bridgeville.

"Town Manager" means the Town Manager of Bridgeville.

### Rule 1 - Order of Business

1.1 The order of business at each regular meeting of the Commissioners of Bridgeville shall be as follows:

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Call to Order
- Quorum Present
- Amendments to Agenda
- Adoption of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Reading of Correspondence

Financial Statements  
 Reports of Town Departments  
 Public Comments  
 Old Business  
 New Business  
 Introduction of Ordinances/Resolutions  
 Good of the Order/Commission Comments  
 Adjournment

1.2 The order of business can be altered at any duly constituted meeting by an affirmative vote of a majority of all of the members of the Commission. The privilege of the floor may be granted to the public at any time by the presiding officer.

1.3 During public hearings and public meetings, any person desiring to address the Commission shall first secure the permission of the presiding officer. After being recognized by the presiding officer, the person will first give his/her name and address and state his/her reason for addressing the Commission for the record. These statements must be given in an audible tone of voice.

1.4 After a motion is made by the Commission, no person shall address the Commission without first securing the permission of the presiding officer as outlined in Rule 1.3.

1.5 Each person addressing the Commission shall address all his/her remarks to the Commission as a body and not to any member thereof. Each person shall limit his/her remarks to the matter under discussion, shall be permitted to speak one time on the matter under discussion, and shall be permitted to speak no longer than three (3) minutes. No persons other than the members of the Commission shall be permitted to enter into a discussion of the matter under consideration. No members of the public shall be permitted to ask questions of a Commission member or the person speaking without the permission of the presiding officer. The public shall not address any speaker or ask questions of any speaker while the speaker is addressing the Commission. An individual may submit a written statement in lieu of or in addition to verbal comments about matters then under consideration.

1.6 Every attempt will be made to complete all business scheduled. In the event that the presentation of a scheduled agenda item takes longer than reasonably anticipated, the presentation may be suspended by the approval of a majority of all of the members of the Commission. A motion to suspend a presentation should include the date and time at which the remainder of the presentation will be heard.

## **Rule 2 - Meetings of the Commission of Bridgeville**

2.1 Regular meetings shall be held in the Administration Building or any other location designated by a majority vote of all of the members of the Commission.

2.2 As per Section 8 of the Charter, the Commission shall meet at least monthly on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 P.M.

2.3 Special meetings may be held at the call of the President or a majority of the Commission when deemed necessary to conduct the affairs of the Town or address a bona fide public emergency.

- 2.4 Emergency meetings may be called without notice to address any emergency regarding the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.
- 2.5 Except for executive sessions, all meetings shall be open to the public.
- 2.6 On the affirmative vote of a majority of all of the members of the Commission present at any duly constituted meeting, an executive session may be held and closed to the public for any of the purposes set forth in Title 29, Chapter 100 of the Delaware Code.
- 2.7 A vote to hold an executive session must be taken at a public meeting prior to the executive session, and the purpose of the executive session shall be announced publicly. The results of the vote shall be made public and shall be recorded in the minutes.
- 2.8 Discussions in executive session shall be limited to the purposes for which an executive session was called.
- 2.9 Minutes of all meetings, excluding executive sessions, shall be kept and made available for public inspection and copying. At a minimum, the minutes shall include a record of attendance and a record, by individual members of the Commission, of each vote taken and each action agreed upon. Such minutes, or portions thereof, relating to executive sessions may be withheld from public disclosure in those cases where such disclosure would defeat the lawful purpose of the executive session.

### **Rule 3 - Posting of Meeting Notices**

- 3.1 Public notice of all meetings shall be posted within public view at Town Hall except as noted in 3.4 below.
- 3.2 Notices of regular meetings and of the intent to hold an executive session closed to the public shall be posted at least seven days in advance thereof.
- 3.3 Notices of special or rescheduled meetings shall be posted at least 24 hours in advance thereof.
- 3.4 Public notice is not required for any emergency meeting, which is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.
- 3.5 Meeting notices shall include the agenda if such has been determined at the time and the dates, times, and places of such meetings. However, the agenda shall be subject to change to include items that arise at the time of the Commission meeting or to delete items, including executive sessions. A reasonable number of copies of the meeting agenda shall be available to the public.
- 3.6 When the agenda is not available at the time of the initial posting of the public meeting notice, it shall be added to the notice at least 6 hours in advance of said meeting. The reasons for the delay in posting shall be briefly set forth on the agenda.

## **Rule 4 - Agenda**

4.1 The agenda for regular and special Commission meetings shall be available to the members of the Commission at least one day prior to the scheduled meeting.

4.2 The Town Manager shall be responsible for the preparation and contents of the agenda. Any member of the Commission may place items on the agenda by contacting the Town Manager, either verbally or in writing, prior to the agenda being posted. Any other person may request to have items placed on the Commission agenda by notifying the Town Manager, in writing, prior to the close of business not less than seven (7) days prior to the Commission meetings, provided, however, that items requested to be placed on the agenda that are not, in the opinion of the Town Manager, of Commission jurisdiction will not be placed on the posted agenda. Those items that do not qualify as Commission business will be responded to by the Town Manager and copied to the members of the Commission.

4.3 During a meeting, items which arise at the time of the Commission meeting may be added to the agenda, and items may be deleted from the agenda by a majority vote of all of the members of the Commission.

## **Rule 5 - Attendance of Members of the Commission at Meetings; Quorums**

5.1 No members of the Commission shall be absent from scheduled meetings or from other official duties without cause. When unable to attend a scheduled meeting, a member of the Commission shall be responsible for notifying the President or the Town Manager.

5.2 The presence of no less than three (3) members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum.

5.3 When a quorum is not present at any properly called meeting, the members of the Commission present may adjourn.

5.4 If no members of the Commission are present, the Town Manager may adjourn the meeting.

5.5 Three (3) affirmative votes shall be required to pass any motion unless otherwise provided herein or provided by law.

5.6 A matter to be voted on may be placed on the table with three (3) affirmative votes.

## **Rule 6 - Roll Calls**

6.1 On each motion duly made and seconded, the presiding officer shall call the roll or determine the vote in some other manner and announce the results.

6.2 A record shall be made of the vote by each member of the Commission on each vote taken. Said record shall also reflect the number of "aye" votes, the number of "nay" votes, and the number of "abstaining" votes.

6.3 The President may make and second motions.

## Rule 7 - Record Keeping

7.1 A file shall be kept in the office of all Commission meetings. The file shall include copies of the meeting agendas and the minutes of the meeting.

## Rule 8 - Minutes of Commission Meetings

8.1 Minutes shall be taken at each meeting of the Commission and shall reflect the following:

- a. Kind of meeting.
- b. Date and place of meeting.
- c. Name of the presiding officer.
- d. Members of the Commission present.
- e. Whether the minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
- f. The proceedings of the Commission, briefly and accurately stated, including titles of ordinances and titles of resolutions considered. The minutes shall record what was done and as accurately as possible what was said. However, a member of the Commission may request that a statement or written material be attached to the minutes and made a part thereof.
- g. All motions were voted upon, as well as the results of said motions.
- h. Names of members of the Commission making motions and those making secondary motions.
- i. A record by individual members of the Commission of each vote taken and action agreed upon.
- j. Time of commencement and adjournment.

8.2 Minutes shall be taken, prepared, and presented by the Secretary in written form for approval as written or as amended. The minutes, as approved, shall be filed in the minute book of the Commission. Copies of the approved minutes shall be made available to the general public.

8.3 Recordings shall be made of all Commission meetings at which Town business is transacted. The recordings shall be under the custody of the Secretary and shall be open to inspection and copying in accordance with applicable law regarding access to public records. Recordings shall be kept for a period of three (3) years and six (6) months.

## Rule 9 - Records

9.1 The approved minutes of each meeting, together with a copy of each ordinance or resolution introduced at the meeting, which is not set forth in full in the minutes thereof and a copy of each communication presented at the meeting, shall be kept in the office and shall be made available for inspection by the public.

## Rule 10 - Ordinances

10.1 The Commission may request the Town Solicitor to draft an ordinance for introduction. Upon drafting of the proposed ordinance, it shall be placed on the agenda for discussion and possible introduction.

10.2 The proposed ordinance shall contain no more than one subject, which shall be stated in its title.

10.3 When a proposed ordinance is introduced, the Town Manager shall:

- a. Distribute a copy of the proposed ordinance to each elected Town official;
- b. Comply with all public advertisement requirements as mandated by applicable law; and
- c. Cause a fiscal note to be attached to the ordinance setting forth a good faith estimate of any expenses that will be incurred by the Town administering or enforcing the ordinance; an estimate of revenues that will be received; the intended use of any revenues received; and the persons, entities or other organizations that will be affected by the proposed ordinance.

10.4 The President or other presiding officer, or his or her designee, shall designate a date, time, and place for the public hearing for a proposed ordinance.

10.5 Following the public hearing or hearings, the Commission may:

- a. Adopt the ordinance as introduced;
- b. Adopt the ordinance with amendments;
- c. Place the ordinance on the table prior to voting; or
- d. Reject the ordinance.

10.6 If the ordinance is amended in any substantial manner not included in the title of the ordinance, the amended portion thereof shall be introduced by the procedures set forth in Rules 10.2 - 10.6.

10.7 Upon the adoption of an ordinance, the Town Manager shall assign a permanent number to the ordinance and publish the ordinance in its entirety, with notice of its adoption.

10.8. Unless the effective date is included in the body of the ordinance, the ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

## **Rule 11 - Resolutions and Proclamations**

11.1 All resolutions and proclamations shall be in writing and submitted to the members of the Commission prior to consideration by the Commission.

11.2 Any member of the Commission may request that a resolution or proclamation be placed on the Commission agenda by submission of the resolution or proclamation to the Town Manager in accordance with Rule 4.

11.3 No resolution or proclamation shall contain more than one subject, which shall be clearly expressed in its title.

11.4 Each resolution and proclamation shall bear a title that shall clearly express its subject matter. At the time of its consideration and prior to a motion for its adoption, a resolution or proclamation may be read by title only.

11.5 A resolution or proclamation may be amended without resubmission unless such resubmission is desired by a majority of all of the members of the Commission.

### **Rule 12 - Conduct During Meetings**

12.1 When a member of the Commission desires to speak, that member shall address the presiding officer and shall not proceed until recognized and granted the privilege of the floor. The presiding officer shall recognize the member of the Commission who is the first to address the presiding officer.

12.2 No member of the Commission shall interrupt another without the consent of the other. To obtain such consent, the member shall first address the presiding officer.

12.3 If any member of the Commission, in speaking or otherwise, transgresses the Rules of the Commission, the presiding officer shall, or any member of the Commission may call the errant member to order. When a member shall be called to order, that member shall not proceed without the permission of the presiding officer.

### **Rule 13 - Change or Suspension of Rules**

13.1 Any rule of the Commission may be changed or suspended by the approval of a majority of all of the members of the Commission.

### **Rule 14 - Rules of Order**

14.1 All rules of parliamentary procedure not covered or provided for by the RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COMMISSION, or by the laws of the State of Delaware, shall be decided in accordance with MASON'S MANUAL OF LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE.

### **Rule 15 - President Pro Tempore and Other Presiding Officer**

15. 1 In the absence of the President, the presiding officer, with all powers and duties of the President enumerated herein, shall be the President Pro tempore as elected by a majority vote of all of the members of the Commission. In the absence of the President Pro tempore, the presiding officer, with all powers and duties of the President enumerated herein, shall be such other member of the Commission as is elected by a majority vote of the members of the Commission.

### **Rule 16 - Appointments**

16.1 The President, with the concurrence of a majority of all the members of the Commission, may appoint any member to represent the Commission on any committee, board, or commission or any event.

16.2 A member of the Commission so appointed shall inform the Commission of issues discussed at those meetings or events that impact the Town Government.

### **Rule 17 - Standards of Conduct**

17.1 Members of the news media shall conduct themselves in such a manner as to not be disruptive of the proceedings of the Commission.

17.2 All persons attending Commission meetings shall at all times conduct themselves in an orderly manner and follow the direction of the presiding officer. The Town Manager or other person designated by the presiding officer shall be responsible for ensuring that standards of conduct are observed at meetings of the Commission. Any persons who do not conduct themselves in an orderly manner and do not follow the direction of the presiding officer shall be removed from the Commission meeting at the direction of the presiding officer.

#### **Rule 18 - Delaware Freedom of Information Act**

All procedures of the Commissioners shall comply with the Delaware Freedom of Information Act, as contained in Title 29, Chapter 100 of the Delaware Code. To the extent that any provision herein shall conflict with provisions of the Delaware Freedom of Information Act, the more restrictive provision shall apply.

#### **Rule 19 - Adoption of Effective Date**

19.1 These rules shall become effective upon adoption by a majority vote of all of the members of the Commission. **These rules shall be adopted annually by the Commission.**



# TOWN COMMITTEES

**Planning and Zoning** - Meets regularly every third Tuesday of the month.

**Board of Adjustment** - Meets as needed.

**Economic Development Committee** - Meets regularly every second Monday of the month at 5:00 PM.

\*The Commission may create ad hoc committees as needed to handle or examine specific issues or projects.

# LEADERSHIP TRAINING – TIPS AND TRICKS

*"Anyone can steer the ship, but it takes a leader to chart the course. Leaders who are good navigators are capable of taking their people just about anywhere." John C. Maxwell*

Good, strong leadership improves management and performance. With strong leadership skills, you can help transform and adapt the Town of Bridgeville, along with its dedicated staff of public servants, to address needs, resolve problems, and grow the community.

Before getting into the process of honing and guiding leadership skills, it is important to get a grasp of the inherent traits that make you a leader. These can constantly evolve and change as you develop your skills, so it is recommended that you perform self-assessments and reviews regularly. There are many tests available to gauge your personality types and leadership-related tendencies:

- 16Personalities.com - As within the graphic to the right, this website will gauge your Myers-Briggs personality type. This can give you a detailed, base analysis of who you are and why you lean towards certain tendencies and do things the way you do.
- Leadership Style Tests - These particular tests, like those found at MindTools, can tell you about your strengths and weaknesses in how you like to lead.

**ANALYSTS**  
Intuitive (N) and Thinking (T) personality types, known for their rationality, impartiality, and intellectual excellence.

- Architect (INTJ)
- Logician (INTP)
- Commander (ENTJ)
- Debater (ENTP)

**DIPLOMATS**  
Intuitive (N) and Feeling (F) personality types, known for their empathy, diplomatic skills, and passionate idealism.

- Advocate (INFJ)
- Mediator (INFP)
- Protagonist (ENFJ)
- Campaigner (ENFP)

**SENTINELS**  
Observant (S) and Judging (J) personality types, known for their practicality and focus on order, security, and stability.

- Logistician (ISTJ)
- Defender (ISFJ)
- Executive (ESTJ)
- Consul (ESFJ)

**EXPLORERS**  
Observant (S) and Prospecting (P) personality types, known for their spontaneity, ingenuity, and flexibility.

- Virtuoso (ISTP)
- Adventurer (ISFP)
- Entrepreneur (ESTP)
- Entertainer (ESFP)

## Core Organizational Behaviors

The following core organizational behaviors should be routinely adopted and practiced in your role as a leader.

Motivating others	Making effective decisions
Being an effective team member	Using power and politics constructively and ethically
Leading and inspiring others	Creating and securing commitment to shared values
Communicating effectively within and outside of the organization	Managing conflict productively
Using diversity to enhance organizational performance	Helping people to become more innovative and creative

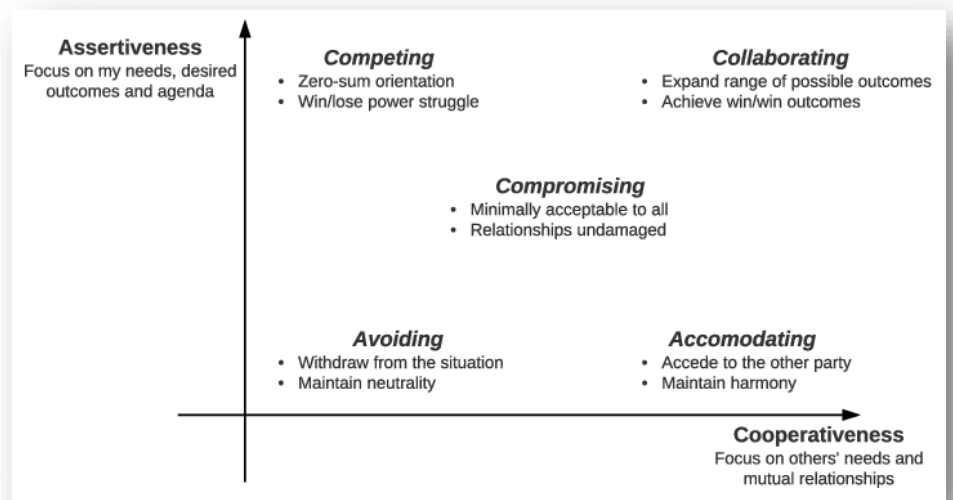
# CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

It is inevitable in your role as a leader that you will face conflict and change. This can range from disagreements among Commission to feedback from residents and even tension between yourself and your administrative team. First, we have to identify the source that caused the conflict; then, by understanding your conflict management styles, you will be able to better understand how to come to a solution.

## Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)

This assessment tool allows you to discover which of the five conflict modes you tend to lean towards. These are based on your instincts in intense situations - so be honest on the test!

Once you take the test, you can see where you lean on this chart and work on developing management resolution skills in differing styles as needed.



## Ways of Acting

When dealing with conflict, it's important to think through the situation and determine appropriate ways to react to the situation. Below are some examples.

First, Ask Why Conflict Exists	Then Use This Role to Transform Conflict
1. Frustrated Needs	Act as a provider.
2. Poor Skills	Act as a teacher
3. Weak Relationships	Become the bridge builder.
4. Conflicting Interests	Resolve through mediation.
5. Disputed rights	Resolve through arbitration.
6. Unequal power	Act as an equalizer.
7. Injured relationship	Become the healer.
8. No attention	Act as the witness.
9. No limitation	Become the referee.
10. No protection	Act as the peacekeeper.

And always remember that if you cannot find a way through the barrier, resources exist to help. Communicate with your Commission President or Town Manager to seek assistance before pushing boundaries.

## Assessing the Need for Change

Should conflict go beyond the needs outlined in the previous table, it may be possible that changes are required to resolve the issue at hand. As leaders, we must be open and flexible toward change. Whether it is simple - or more complicated, such as a policy or program change, there are five phases that are essential to the change process.

- **Diagnosis** - Assess the current state and identify the problem. Keep this as simple as possible.
- **Clarification and coalition building** - refine and clarify the vision of the future state after the change - communicate with staff and describe how the change will happen.
- **Action** - Establish the planned change.
- **Consolidation and refinement** - Assess the change and see if there are any additional problems. Get feedback from your staff on the effectiveness and acceptance of the change.
- **Sustainability** - Focus on additional refinements that may be needed. Launch additional changes if needed, and help to reinforce the idea that change is a positive concept for the organization. (Denhardt, 2016, p. 377).

## Additional Notes on Change

Change can be a difficult concept to swallow - especially in government organizations. We so often rely on the "tried and true" methods adopted by our predecessors. There is a delicate balance to maintain - we shouldn't seek out change constantly, but we should always be open to the concept of change when the need arises rather than relying on outdated or inefficient policies and procedures. Below are some guidelines for leading and fostering change in the workplace.

Leading Change
1. Consider the emotional and psychological impacts of change and how that may lead to resistance.
2. Try to clarify and communicate the problems associated with necessitating change.
3. Involve people as much as you can throughout the process to encourage teamwork and increase comfort.
4. Think about the forces that are driving the change and how that may connect to those who are resisting.
5. Consider the culture of our organization. Understanding the norms, beliefs, and values will go a long way in understanding how to more easily facilitate change.
6. Listen, listen, listen. We cannot successfully bring about change without having a strong understanding of our staff and other stakeholders. Talk to and get to know everyone before trying to implement a plan that may never work.
7. Build capacity for learning to encourage ease into new concepts and ideas.
8. Focus on learning new strategies rather than new basic assumptions.
9. If you think organizational structure change is necessary, think twice. It may be behavioral in disguise.
10. Remember that local governments are complex and require insight from all existing stakeholders.
11. Try to operate organically and encourage participation and democracy.
12. Be attentive to the politics of change. There will always be political implications and ramifications.

# ORGANIZATIONAL DECISION MAKING

## Understanding Decision Making

Effective leaders must have the ability to make strong decisions. Some may allow for time and research, while others may need to be made on the spot in times of crisis. Decisions we make on a day-to-day basis can also have a large impact, not only on staff but on the couple of thousand residents of our area. Therefore, it is imperative to know and understand how to go about making the best decisions for our organization.

Organizational decision-making takes place when a person in authority identifies an important issue and carries out a process to make a choice that produces outcomes with a consequence. Decisions differ from problem-solving in that problems are usually not unique but rather are evidence of underlying issues, and by resolving those issues, fewer decisions need to be made. All problems require decisions, but not all decisions will require problem-solving.

## Types of Decisions

There are three types of decisions that are made at our organizations:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Top Management</b></p>	<p>Nonprogrammed and uncertain decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repetitive/routine - Ex. Budget constraints, codes, capital improvement plans</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Middle Management</b></p>	<p>Nonprogrammed and programmed decisions; risky and certain decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrequent, unstructured - Ex. Employee termination due to cause</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lower Management</b></p>	<p>Programmed and certain decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ex. Schedules, routine operational tasks (Billing, Payroll, Water tests, and checks, etc.)</li> </ul>

# CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND AWARENESS

## Raising Awareness

The Town of Bridgeville strives to increase awareness and sensitivity to culture and gender consciousness. Whether you are working with the public or internally, cultural competencies are essential to successful leadership. The staff and administration to date have a 15% female-to-male ratio, with 5% of those individuals being of color. Per the 2020 Census, Bridgeville itself consists of a population that is 56.0% White, 25.6% Black, 16.4% Hispanic, .4% Asian, .1% Native American, and .5% undefined. To understand the people we serve, we must be aware of and respectful of gender and cultural differences. Along with increased efforts at regular future training for staff, some guidelines allow for increased cultural competencies.

## Cultural Competencies

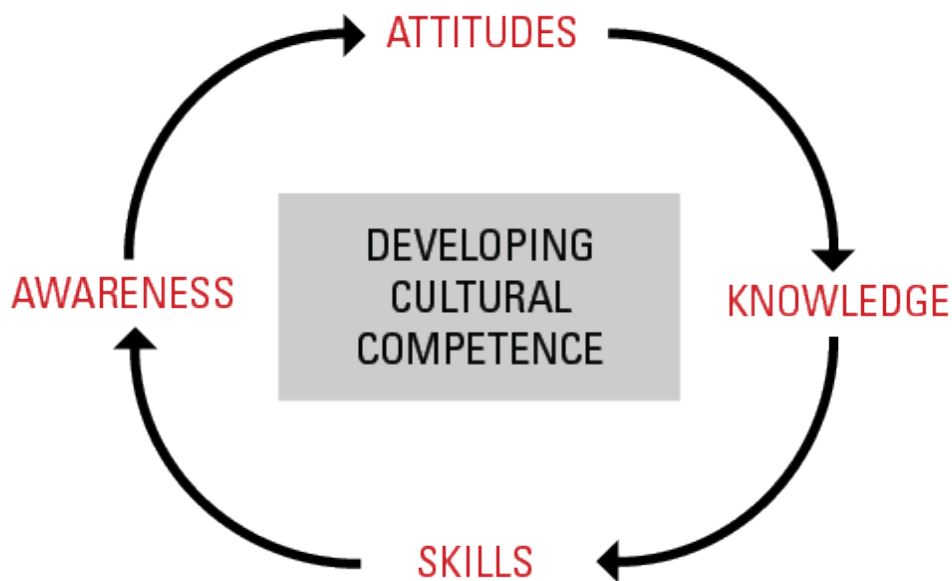
Cultural competencies are a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. The following will help you as leaders to adapt to existing, new, and changing culture and gender norms.

- **Awareness and Acceptance of differences** - We must not only be aware of gender and cultural differences, but we have to accept them. Without accepting differences, conflict is likely to arise among peers, which is detrimental to the workplace and also to the residents of the Town.
- **Self-awareness** - To appreciate the cultural differences of others, we must have a strong sense of self-awareness. Take time to understand your cultural norms so that you may more easily appreciate and interact with others.
- **Dynamics of differences** - This refers to potential cultural miscommunications due to a misunderstanding of cultural differences. We must be as knowledgeable and respectful of others as possible at all times.
- **Knowledge of the client's culture** - Along the lines of sensitivity and awareness, knowledge of the resident's culture enables us as public servants to better understand and communicate with the people.
- **Adaptation of skills** - We must learn to adjust and adapt our skills that have become generic and limited in the face of diversity.

## Tips for Appropriate Behavior

- Effective, meaningful communication
- Recognition of barriers that inhibit communication
- Practice supportive communication
- Consider your audience and make sure that content, tone, and approach are appropriate for the situation
- Consider your credibility when trying to persuade others to accept your position
- Listen, listen, listen!
- Be conscious of your body language and what it communicates
- Take advantage of technology - modern forms of communication can be effective in prohibiting barriers in short forms of communication but can create problems for complex topics
- Always consider the audience of your communications and their expectations
- Always consider the ethics of communication.

Along with providing opportunities for diversity training, the Town of Bridgeville fully expects you to seek opportunities to practice your cultural competency skills so that effective communication becomes the standard in the organization.



# STRESS CONTROL

## Factors

Many factors can lead to stress in our lives. Stress due to work seems to have become the accepted norm - but it shouldn't be. If you're feeling stressed out at work, think about the ways that it can impact your health, your performance, and your relationships with staff. To deal with the problem, we need to identify the cause. A useful tool to start with is the Holmes and Rahe stress indicator test, as shown below.

Scores lower than 150 are considered to carry a low risk of illness with low susceptibility to stress-induced health breakdown in the following 24 months after assessment.

Scores between 150 and 299 carry a moderate risk with a 50% chance of adverse health outcomes.

Scores equal to or greater than 300 carry a high risk of illness with an 80% chance of major health breakdown.

Stressor	LCU	Stressor	LCU
1. Death of a spouse	100	23. Child leaving home	29
2. Divorce	73	24. Trouble with in-laws	29
3. Marital separation	65	25. Outstanding personal achievement	28
4. Imprisonment	63	26. Spouse starts or stops work	26
5. Death of a close family member	63	27. Beginning or end school	26
6. Personal injury or illness	53	28. Change in living conditions	25
7. Marriage	50	29. Revision of personal habits	24
8. Dismissal from work	47	30. Trouble with boss	23
9. Marital reconciliation	45	31. Change in working hours or conditions	20
10. Retirement	45	32. Change in residence	20
11. Change in health of family member	44	33. Change in schools	20
12. Pregnancy	40	34. Change in recreation	19
13. Sexual difficulties	39	35. Change in church activities	19
14. Gain a new family member	39	36. Change in social activities	18
15. Business readjustment	39	37. Minor mortgage or loan	17
16. Change in financial state	38	38. Change in sleeping habits	16
17. Death of a close friend	37	39. Change in number of family reunions	15
18. Change to different line of work	36	40. Change in eating habits	15
19. Change in frequency of arguments	35	41. Vacation	13
20. Major mortgage	32	42. Major Holiday	12
21. Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30	43. Minor violation of law	11
22. Change in responsibilities at work	29		

If this test results in a high score - maybe it's time to talk about a leave of absence to give you time to cope with external stressors. However, if you scored low, then evaluate your role in the Town and see if you can identify and pinpoint any of the following factors:

- **Interpersonal relationships** - Are there any conflicts between you and your peers?
- **Role ambiguity and Conflict** - Are you unsure about your role or having difficulty meeting the needs of competing demands?
- **Workload** - Do you find yourself overburdened with or unable to tackle the difficulty of assigned tasks?
- **Intrinsic Nature of the Work** - Do you feel out of control of your role, or are you facing stress due to high levels of responsibility or dangers?
- **Working Conditions** - Is there an aspect of your workspace that causes concern? (noise, light, smells, temperature, etc.)
- **Organizational Justice** - Do you feel as if you are being treated unfairly?



- **Organizational Environment** - Are office politics or lack of organization and communication causing problems for you?
- **Home to Work and Back** - Are you bringing personal problems into the workplace and vice versa?

If you find you are unable to pinpoint your stressors, consider talking to someone about your concerns - the Commission President, Town Manager, etc. Open communication may lead to a better understanding of the situation and help identify the issues at hand.

If you can identify your stressors, then you can begin to sort out problems that can be solved immediately or problems that must be solved through conflict resolution or change.

## Tips and Tricks

There is a fine line between too little and too much stress. We don't want too little because it can lead to boredom, impaired attention, and apathy - but on the opposite end, too much can be catastrophic to your health.

There are many steps to take to reduce stress in the workplace. This infographic shows seven steps to help reduce stress at work - sometimes, it's as simple as stepping outside and going for a short walk - or listening to some relaxing music. The key is to find a routine that works for you and stick with it.

The more you find yourself relaxed and energized, the more open-minded creativity you will be able to discover and apply to work-related problems. Give it a try!



# CONCLUSION

*"Leadership is not about titles, positions or flowcharts. It is about one life influencing another."  
John C. Maxwell*

As public servants, it is important to adopt a philosophy of public service. We must have a strong code of ethics and clear working policies that guide our daily interactions with the organizations, the public, and each other. Passion is the steam engine of public service, and becoming a public servant requires passion to positively impact another's life. Becoming a public servant is a higher calling...There is a never-ending thirst to help others, and it is required that public servants place others above themselves. Public servants must remain accountable for their actions while providing services to the people that they serve. And who better to drive that passion than the leaders within our organization?

There is no direct guide to becoming a leader. Some excel at it, and others will never be suited for it. *These are the facts.* The good news is that in your position, you've already made it far enough to be considered by your peers to possess valuable leadership skills. The task at hand is to focus on constantly understanding and bettering yourself and your skill sets so that you can help lead the Town of Bridgeville into a happier, more efficient, and sustainable future that proudly serves the needs of the residents and partner organizations.

And remember, we strive to work as a team here in Bridgeville, so congratulations and welcome. Know that we look forward to working together with you!



If You Lived Here, You Would Be Home Now

# ATTACHMENTS

Town Charter

Town Code

Bridgeville's Comprehensive Plan

Employee Personnel Manual

Ethics Policy

FOIA

Delaware Code on Municipalities

Delaware Code on Public Officers and Employees

ICMA Council-Manager Form of Government Brochure

Survival Tips for Newly Elected Officials