



FIRE DISTRICT 6 BOARD POLICY MANUAL

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FORWARD

The decisions that the administration makes for the operations of this District will be based on the policies determined by the Board as set forth in this policy manual.

This manual will be kept current as to revisions, additions and deletions. It will be available to the public and the staff at all times.

Flexibility in making policy changes means the Board is able to meet future needs and challenges. Accordingly, the Board reserves the right to amend, modify and eliminate any of these policies, procedures and benefits at any time.

This manual is subject to change and therefore not a complete statement of Board policies. It does not form a part of any employment contract or promise any specific treatment. It is simply a general summary of the Board's current policies, procedures and benefits.

The Board reserves full discretionary authority to interpret and apply all District policies and procedures and reserves exclusive authority to determine how those policies and procedures will apply to specific issues and specific circumstances. The Board's determination on all such matters is final and binding.

This manual supersedes any other oral or written provisions, descriptions or understandings of the District's policies, procedures and benefits.

Policies included in these manuals that are required by federal or state laws and regulations may be subject to change by those laws and regulations at any time.

GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

1.01 Responsibilities

Board members of Clark County Fire District 6 carry a great deal of responsibility such as the following:

- They must be aware of legal requirements in areas ranging from budgeting and taxation to holding public meetings and elections.
- They are responsible to the people of the District for the quality of service and the competency of those persons providing that service.
- They must be able to put aside self-interests in order to assure that the needs of the people are met.

1.02 Leadership

Effective leadership from the Board of Commissioners is essential if quality service is to be provided to their patrons. Board members should do the following:

- Recognize that the individual member has no legal status to act for the Board outside of an official meeting.
- Refuse to make commitments on any matter that should properly come before the Board as a whole.
- Respect the opinion of other members and graciously accept the principal of "majority rule" in Board decisions.
- Insist that all of the District's transactions be on an ethical and above board basis.
- Refuse to allow personal problems to be brought into Board consideration.
- Insist that personnel complaints go through the proper chain of command first and only to the Board if not resolved at these levels.

1.03 Policy Making

Policymaking is one of the most important responsibilities of a Board member. It is essential that the member thoroughly understand the goals, objectives and general operating policy of the District. Developing goals and policy is a two-step process.

- Planning - This begins with the Board, but is defined by the process of creating measurable goals and objectives for the District that adapt to changing conditions. Identifying and analyzing potential opportunities and selecting the best option available. Flexibility is central to the development of plans that this activity results in.
- Policy - After goals and objectives are identified, the Board must develop specific strategies or policies to achieve these goals. Policy simplifies decision-making. By developing defined steps and guidelines to steer the Board's actions, objectives can

be more easily realized. Policies should be evaluated periodically to see if they lead toward stated goals. If not, they should be modified.

1.04 Management Techniques

A Board member's time is limited. The following techniques assist in utilizing time efficiently and lead to more effective decision-making.

- Set Priorities - List projects in order of importance and act on accordingly.
- Develop Study Plans - List steps that must be followed and completion dates for each project.
- Delegate Responsibility - Do not get involved in every activity of the District.
- Preparation - Stay current of the District's activities.
- Project Completion - Use your own leadership and authority to make sure good ideas are actually implemented.

1.05 Legal Qualifications

A Commissioner of the Board must reside within the District and be a registered voter of the District.

1.06 Policy Decisions

The following policy decisions should be reviewed annually:

- Personnel evaluations and contracts.
- Mutual aid or mutual responses with adjacent fire protection agencies or fire departments.
- Responses outside the District (excluding mutual aid or response areas - consider fees).
- Contracts with other agencies.
- The regular board meeting schedule.
- Contracts with administrative employees outside the bargaining unit.
- Activities (Rules and Regulations) permitted within the fire stations.
- Participation of staff and Board members in Fire District related educational sessions.
- Accident insurance coverage for personnel (paid and/or volunteers) and assessment of overall insurance needs.
- Membership with the Washington Fire Commissioners Association, Southwest Washington Fire Commissioners Association, the Clark County Fire Commissioners Association and the National Association for Elected Fire Officials (NAEFO).
- Fire District Budget.
- Fire District goals.

- Fire District capital needs.
- Current local, regional and national issues and their impacts on the Fire District.
- Legal issues addressed during the past year and evaluation of the legal representation.

POWERS OF THE BOARD

2.01 RCW

The Board of Commissioners possesses the power and authority as set forth in Title 52 RCW and other applicable provisions of the Revised Code of Washington.

Each Commissioner is an elected representative of the residents of Clark County Fire Protection District No. 6. Commissioners are entitled to vote on all matters coming before the Board, and to make and second motions regardless of whether the Commissioner is serving as the chair. Commissioners shall, however, be governed by the provisions of Chapter 42.23 RCW in respect to any matter in which the Commissioner may have a conflict of interest.

RCW 52.14.010 provides that the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Fire Protection District is the legislative body of the District. Chapter 42.30 RCW, the Open Public Meeting Act, and RCW 52.14.100 provide that actions of the Board of Fire Commissioners may only take place at meetings authorized by statute. Individual Commissioners do not have authority to manage or direct the affairs of the District. Administrative and managerial powers may only be exercised by those persons to whom such powers are delegated by action of the Board. The principal executive and administrative officer of the District is the Fire Chief, who has the responsibility for the management of the daily affairs of the District, the supervision of District personnel, and the establishment of a chain of command to carry out such supervision. Commissioners are encouraged to become familiar with the District operations and to meet the paid and volunteer personnel of the District. It is a policy of the District, however, that individual Commissioners shall not supervise, direct or discipline District personnel. In the event a Commissioner shall be dissatisfied with the operation or any action of the District or its personnel, the Commissioner shall bring such dissatisfaction to the attention of the Fire Chief.

2.02 Committees

The Board is authorized to appoint committees as needed. Current standing committees are Washington Fire Commissioners Association, National Association of Elected Fire Officials, Risk Management, Awards, Fairground Fire Facility Board, Negotiations, Rules and Regulations and Board for Volunteer Firefighters.

2.03 Board Membership

Number of Members - The Board shall be composed of three (3) members elected by voting members of the District and in accordance with RCW Title 52. Employees of the District are not eligible to serve as members of the Board except in accordance with RCW Title 52 concerning volunteer membership.

Vacancies - Should a vacancy occur on the Board, that vacancy will be advertised and the Board will select an individual from among those indicating their interest in accordance with RCW Title 52.

Non-Excused Absence - If a Commissioner is absent from the District for three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings, unless excused by the Board, the Office shall be declared vacant by the Board of Commissioners and the vacancy shall be filled as provided by law. RCW 52.14.050 requires that written notice be provided to the absent commissioner.

2.04 Officers of the Board

Officers - The officers of the Board shall consist of:

- Chair
- Vice Chair

Term of Office - The term for officers of the Board shall be for one year starting January 1.

Election - Election of officers shall be held at the first meeting of each year.

Board Secretary - The Board Secretary shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Board and serve at the discretion of the Board

2.05 Officers Duties

Duties of the Chair - The duties of the Chair shall be as follows:

- To preside at all meetings of the Board with the right to make motions, second motions, discuss questions and the option to vote on any issue.
- To sign any documentation that requires an official signature on behalf of the Board.
- To represent the Board in deliberation with other Boards, Districts, or agencies unless another member has been appointed by a majority of the Board to do so.
- To appoint all committees, subject to approval of a majority of the Board; call special meetings and perform all other duties prescribed by law or set forth in the Board's policies and rules.

Duties of the Vice-Chair - In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall perform that the duties and the rights and obligations of the Chair.

FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD

3.01 Policy

The following are Board functions:

- Policy Making - the Board will establish policy, reserving itself all authority and responsibility not otherwise assigned to the Fire Chief or others.

The Board will engage in discussions and reach agreements with recognized employee groups, as required in the Washington Collective Bargaining Laws of the Public Employment Relations Commissioner; reserving to itself or its designees the responsibility to negotiate with employee groups.

- Executive - The Board will select a Fire Chief and delegate to said Chief the responsibility for implementing goals and policies. The board will provide the financial means to implement Board policies and accomplish organizational goals and objectives as adopted by the board of Commissioners.
- New Members - The Board and its staff shall assist each new member-elect to understand the Board's functions, policies and procedures before he/she takes office. The following methods shall be employed:
 1. The member elect shall be given selected materials on the role of a Board member.
 2. The member-elect shall be invited to attend and participate in meetings prior to being sworn in.
 3. The Chief shall provide material pertinent to meetings and be responsive to questions regarding said material.
 4. The member elect shall be invited to meet with the Fire Chief and other administrative personnel to discuss services each performs for the Board.
 5. The Chief will give each member elect:
 - A copy of the Board Policy Manual
 - A copy of the Department's Rules and Regulations
 - A copy of the laws relating to fire protection districts

3.02 Formulation of Policies

Policies of the Board shall meet the following guidelines:

- Recognize the need to delegate authority to staff. The Board will formulate and adopt written policies to assist staff in its discretionary use of said authority.
- Policies adopted and recorded in the minutes of the Board shall be regarded as official.
- The Board shall authorize reports and studies it deems necessary to insure its policies have been properly executed.

- Any formal motion or action, which amends or supplements existing policy, shall be called to the Board's attention before a vote to adopt is taken.
- To insure its policies are flexible, the Board will review its policies at regular meetings when deemed necessary.
- If a policy is found to be in conflict with state or federal law or the rules and regulations of a higher authority, such policy is automatically null and void without Board action.
- In the event of disagreement over the application, extent or interpretation of a policy, the conflict will be decided by a majority of the Board.
- Board Rules, designed to explain, detail or otherwise organize the application of a policy, once adopted, are considered to be a part of the policy.
- Proposals to adopt, change, delete, add to or repeal a policy may originate from several sources including a Board member, Fire Chief, taxpayer, employee, employee organization, consultant, civic group etc.
- Proposed new policies may be reviewed in draft form by the groups affected or by an attorney(s) hired by the district and/or by the Chief before Board action.

3.03 Adopting or Changing Policy

Adopting of new policies, changes, additions to, deletions from and repeal of established policies require a two-step procedure separated by not less than 7 days:

- Included in the public agenda with introduction, discussion and deliberation at one meeting and, deliberation at one meeting and included in the public agenda with further deliberation and a vote held at a second meeting.
- Exception - In the event of an emergency, with said emergency being recorded in the official minutes and agreed to by at least two members, a policy can be adopted, changed or suspended, in a single meeting.

3.04 Policy Amendments or Suspensions

- Amendments - Policies may only be amended by a majority vote after the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing and been placed on the agenda.
- Suspension - Policies may be suspended by a majority vote of members in the meeting when the proposed suspension has been submitted in writing.

3.05 Advance Information Required

Except in emergencies, the Board shall not decide issues before examining and evaluating available information in advance, which is pertinent to the action being proposed. The Chief shall examine and evaluate such information and recommend action before the Board makes its decision.

3.06 Disputed Items

Whenever possible, disputed items should be discussed with the Chief and other parties to the dispute prior to action being requested at a meeting. If a satisfactory conclusion cannot be reached, the disputed items may be placed on the agenda of a future meeting at the

discretion of the Board. All relative information shall be provided to Board members. The Collective Bargaining Agreement will be followed in cases involving grievances and unfair labor practices claims.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETINGS

4.01 Agenda Content

The Chief shall draft the agenda after conferring with the Chair in general accordance with the order listed below:

- Call the meeting to order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Additions to the Agenda
- Approval of the minutes of previous meeting
- Correspondence received
- Citizen Communication
- Committee Reports
- Consent Agenda (includes Financial Report & Response Report)
- Chief's Report
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Good of the Order
- Approval of vouchers and payroll
- Adjournment or Recess

4.02 Preparation of the Agenda

Agendas for public meetings shall be prepared in the following manner:

- Board members shall submit their input for agenda items by 5:00 p.m. the day prior to the agenda being approved by the Chair. The Chief, after contacting the Chair via telephone or electronically, will discuss the proposed Agenda with the Chair. The Chief shall see that the agenda is prepared and forwarded to the Chair for his/her final approval.
- When the Agenda has been approved by the Chair, it shall be delivered, either via printed copy or electronically or both, at the Board member's discretion, to the Board members at least four days prior to a board meeting. The agenda may be revised as needed as issues arise before scheduled board meetings.
- The District Secretary shall provide input regarding the agenda to the Fire Chief. Agendas shall be accompanied with detailed information relative to the agenda, including existing Board policy pertinent to agenda item.

4.03 Minutes

The Board shall require published minutes of all its meetings. Neither a full transcript nor a recording of the meeting is required, except as otherwise provided by law. The written

minutes must be published after Board approval and shall include at least the following information:

- Members of the governing body present.
- Motions, proposals, resolutions, orders and measures proposed and their disposition.
- Results of all votes, including the vote of each member by name, if not unanimous.
- The substance of any discussion on any matter.

Published minutes will be maintained.

4.04 Executive Sessions

No minutes shall be recorded in executive session.

4.05 Rules of Order

Except as otherwise provided by State Law and/or Board Policy, the rules of parliamentary procedure shall govern the Board in its deliberations. Rules may be amended at any meeting by majority vote. The order of business may be suspended at any meeting by a majority vote of the Board.

4.06 Voting

Votes will be recorded. Any member may request a vote be changed if such request is made prior to consideration of the next order of business.

4.07 Quorum

Two members will constitute a quorum.

4.08 Record of Vote

Members may abstain to the record, at the time of voting, a statement indicating the reason for the vote or the reason abstaining.

4.09 Conflict of Interest

Members may declare a conflict of interest and abstain from voting.

4.10 Adjournment

The meeting will be adjourned or recessed at any time by a majority vote.

4.11 Regular Meeting

The Board shall hold regular meetings at Station 61 (Headquarters) on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Regular meetings, time and place, may change when it is determined by a majority of the Board members that the time and place is not in the best interest of the District or Board Members or that a quorum will not be present.

4.12 Meeting Attendance

Members of the Board should make every effort to attend each regularly scheduled meeting of the Board. If a Fire Commissioner is absent from three regularly scheduled Board meetings unless given permission by the Board, the office shall be declared vacant by the Board of Commissioners in accordance with the provision of Washington State Law. However, such an action shall not be taken unless the Commissioner is notified by mail after two consecutive unexcused absences that the position will be declared vacant if the Commissioner is absent without being excused from the next regularly scheduled meeting.

4.13 Special Meeting

The Board reserves the right to call and hold additional meetings as shall be deemed necessary in accordance with the provision of Washington State Law.

Actions taken during a special meeting must pertain to the subjects identified by the advertised agenda.

4.14 Emergency Meetings

The Board may call emergency meetings as deemed necessary in accordance with the provisions of Washington State Law.

Any two members of the Board may direct the Board Secretary to call an emergency meeting when determined by the Fire Chief or member of the Board that an emergency exists.

4.15 Executive Sessions Meeting

Executive Sessions meetings may be called by any two members of the Board or by the Chair during an official meeting in accordance with Washington State Law.

4.16 Meeting of the Local Board of Volunteers Firefighters

The Chair shall call meetings of the Local Board of Volunteers Firefighters during a regular meeting when the District Secretary determines there is volunteer business to be conducted.

4.17 Annual Meeting

The Board may meet at least once a year at a place and time determined by the Board to review the status of such items as the contracts, budgets, policies, personnel, goals, objectives and strategies.

DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

The Board shall enforce District personnel policies whenever necessary. Board members shall follow policies as described below where it applies to Board Members and when practical and where it is not in conflict with other provisions of this manual.

5.01 Personnel Policies

The following are District personnel policies:

- Substance Abuse
- Family and Medical leave
- Whistleblower
- Awards
- Meeting Room
- Funeral
- Parade Participation and Public Events
- Dress Uniform
- Safety Policies
- Discrimination
- Use of Computers
- Violence/Threats of Violence
- Personnel Files
- Electronic Mail
- Use of District Resources
- Records Policies and Procedures
- Rules and Regulations
- Discipline
- Employment and Placement of Relatives, Domestic Partners and Significant Others
- Privacy
- Private Bridge and Road Policy
- Travel / Reimbursement
- Volunteer Preference in Entry-Level Testing

Please refer to the Policies & Procedures Manual for full text of policies.

5.02 Duties of the District Fire Chief

It is the Fire Chiefs job to manage and supervise all the departmental business as provided in the official District job description. Work involves managing the protection of life and property from injury or damage by fire within the Fire District and contractual areas, responding and assuming command at all major emergencies. The Fire Chief is directly responsible to the Board of Commissioners of the Fire District.

5.03 Duties of the District Secretary

It shall be the duty of the District Secretary to perform the following functions as clerk of the Board:

- The Secretary must perform duties required by the state.
- Deal with correspondence of special interest to the Board consideration.
- Review all transmittals.
- Sign and seal official Board documents.
- Prepare for Board meetings as follows:
 1. Assist in the preparation of the Agenda.
 2. Maintain a calendar of the Board's unfinished business.
 3. Call to the attention of the Board legal requirements in those matters for which the District is responsible.
 4. Draft policy motions at the request of any Board member.
 5. Insure that agenda items are delivered to each Board member in a timely manner prior to each meeting.
- Attend all Board meetings or designate an alternative.
- Make all physical arrangements for Board meetings.
- Briefly record meeting discussions.
- Prepare, check and distribute minutes in advance for approval at the next meeting.
- Declare a Board meeting cancelled for lack of a quorum.
- Maintain official records of policies of the Board.
- Advise the Board of pertinent provisions of the RCW concerning duties.

5.04 Delegation of Responsibility

The Board shall delegate to the Chief and the Rules and Regulations Committee the responsibility of developing and maintaining rules and regulations. All District rules and regulations proposed by the Chief and the Rules & Regulations Committee shall be approved by the Board prior to implementation. Standard Operating Procedures are to be approved by the Chief.

BUDGET ADMINISTRATION

6.01 Purpose

The budget is the financial plan developed to carry out the programs supporting the District's goals and objectives.

6.02 Responsibilities

The Chief and his designees will be responsible for preparing a draft preliminary budget to be submitted and reviewed by the Board. The draft preliminary budget shall be prepared and submitted to the Board for review prior to October 15 each year. The preliminary budget shall be submitted to the Board for approval by November 30 each year. The final budget is reviewed and approved by the Board by the first Board meeting in March of the following year. However, before the budget is finalized; the district must have final financial information forwarded by the County Treasurer.

6.03 Spending Limitations

The Chief is authorized to approve expenditures for any supply and equipment items valued under \$10,000, provided they are within approved budget line item.

6.04 Amendments

Proposed budget amendments may be recommended for approval by the Board as needed to reflect changes in budget categories.

6.05 Reports

The Chief upon request shall submit financial or budget reports to the Board. Any Board Member may request financial or budget reports.

COMPENSATION

7.01 Reimbursement for Expenses

Members shall be compensated for expenses incurred while working or attending meetings for the District. The following rules shall be applied:

- Expenses for such activities will be reimbursed by the District as provided for by RCW Title 52 and department policy.
- Reimbursement for expenses is to be considered public and shall be included in the monthly register of paid bills.
- Members are to report to the Board on their attendance at meetings for which reimbursement is received.

7.02 Compensation for Services Performed

Per RCW 52.14.010, a member of the Board shall receive \$104.00 for each day or portion thereof as compensation for services performed as a member of the governing body. Such compensation shall not be deemed lucrative and shall not exceed more than \$9984.00 per year. The compensation for Commissioners shall be adjusted for inflation by the Washington State Office of Financial Management every five years beginning July 1, 2008, as provided for in RCW 52.14.010.

Approval for services performed shall meet the following criteria:

- Services performed for other than attendance of public meetings.
- Request for compensation of services performed shall include the date the service was performed, the time involved and the purpose of the service.
- All requests shall be signed by the member requesting compensation and included in the monthly register of paid bills.
- Compensation for services performed shall be for authorized District business approved by the Board or Chair.

7.03 Educational Goal

It is the intentions of the Board to keep members informed of all pertinent information relative to the fire service and changes in fire district laws in the following manner:

- Members shall be provided subscriptions to publications designated by the Board.
- Members are encouraged to attend educational opportunities offered for the fire service.
- The Chief shall alert all members of conferences, meetings, and publications that are thought to be useful and informative.

7.04 Travel

Board members shall be authorized reimbursement for travel expenses to activities that are of direct benefit to the District provided such travel has been previously approved by the Board.

7.05 Per Diem and Travel Allowance

Reimbursement for expenses and per diem shall be in accordance with Resolution #2008-03.

LEGAL COUNSEL

8.01 Advice of Counsel

The Board can obtain legal counsel for legal advice when needed.

8.02 Authorization to Seek Counsel

Board Members, the Board Secretary and the Chief are authorized to seek legal counsel for District issues with Board approval and in accordance with District Resolution #258 (August 2, 1994).

PROPERTY INVENTORY, REVIEW AND DISPOSAL

9.01 Inventory Required

The District shall maintain a formalized program of accountability and controls over all inventories of furniture, fixtures and equipment. The purpose of the inventory will be to aid the administration in the insurance coverage, to aid the administration in the management and equipment and to assist in budgeting for replacement and to affix the control responsibility for the custody of equipment.

9.02 Review of Inventory

The Fire Chief or Chief designee shall review the inventory annually.

9.03 Lawful Disposal

The District shall dispose of surplus or non-usable property using the monetary policies required by Washington State Law; with sales being conducted in a manner that will not invite criticism.

Upon the recommendation of the Chief, the Board may declare items surplus or non-usable.

9.04 Sale to Other Agencies

Items declared surplus by the Board or non-usable items to the District may be sold or disposed of as authorized by the Board with fire departments or other government agencies receiving first option.

When possible, sale of surplus fire fighting equipment meeting NFPA Standards shall be made available to fire departments with which the District may expect to have mutual aid agreements and/or support.