

NORTHSHORE FIRE DEPARTMENT
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

SUBJECT: Board Meetings

Policy Number: 1400	Approved By: Board of Commissioners
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1 PURPOSE

1.1 Provides rules and guidelines for Commissioner Board meetings.

2 REFERENCES

2.1 RCW 52.14.090, *Office--Meetings*

2.2 RCW 52.14.100, *Meetings--Powers and duties of Board*

2.3 Ch. 42.30 RCW, *Open Public Meetings Act*

3 RESPONSIBILITY

3.1 It is the responsibility of the Board Chair to conduct meetings in an orderly and businesslike manner according to the policies of this section. The District's legal counsel will assist as needed. All Commissioners, the Fire Chief and participating members shall comply with the conduct guidelines contained in this policy.

4 DEFINITIONS

5 POLICY

5.1 Board meetings will be scheduled in compliance with Ch. 42.30 RCW (Open Public Meetings Act) and RCW 52.14.100 (Fire Commissioners – Meetings). The Act broadly defines meetings to include the transaction of the official business of the Board including, but not limited to, “receipt of public testimony, deliberations, discussions, considerations, reviews, evaluations and final actions”.

6 BOARD MEMBERSHIP

6.1 **Voting members** of the Board are restricted to sworn Fire Commissioners.

6.2

7 PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

7.1 The Board will function through regular, special, and emergency meetings.

- 7.1.1 REGULAR MEETINGS – The Board shall have at least one meeting per month. The date, time and place of the regular meeting must be established by written resolution.
- 7.1.2 SPECIAL MEETINGS – A special meeting is any meeting other than a regular meeting.
 - 7.1.2.1 Special meetings may be called by the Chair or upon a petition of a majority of the Commissioners. As a courtesy, prior to the establishment of the date, time and place of any special meeting, the Chair shall attempt to contact the other members of the Board to determine their availability for any such special meeting. The Board may not take final action on any item not specified in the special meeting notice, which shall be provided to the public pursuant to RCW 42.30.080
 - 7.1.2.2 While other items of business may be discussed at a special meeting, no action can be taken on topics which have not been identified on the printed agenda. If an item is to be discussed in executive session, the item of business must also appear on the agenda if final action is to be taken following the executive session.
 - 7.1.2.3 Notice of Special Meetings must be provided to the public at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.
- 7.1.3 EMERGENCY MEETINGS – An emergency meeting is a special board meeting held without the usual required notice. The Chair or a majority of the Board may call an emergency meeting when the conditions of RCW 42.30.070 are met.
- 7.2 NOTICES –
 - 7.2.1 All regular or special meetings of the Board must be advertised as meetings that are open to the public. If the Board wishes to devote all or most of a special meeting to an issue(s) to be discussed in executive session, the special meeting should be called to order and recessed to an executive session. The purpose and expected duration of the executive session should be announced and recorded in the minutes (e.g., personnel matters).
 - 7.2.2 A regular meeting does not require a public notice. If the Board does not meet at its regular location or time, the meeting should be treated as a special meeting with proper notice and announcements to the media stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting. The District will notify newspapers and radio and television stations which have filed a request for such notification.
- 7.3 ATTENDANCE – Meetings may be convened in-person and/or by conference call, online, or other alternative format as determined by the chair, subject to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, chapter 42.30 RCW.
- 7.4 AGENDA – The board shall provisionally establish the agenda for each subsequent meeting as a part of regular and special meeting business.
 - 7.4.1 Agenda items may be suggested by any commissioner or the fire chief. The board will assess the proposed agenda items including the time

needed for discussion, the required meeting materials and the priority of the topic. The board chair or designee and the fire chief will collaborate to assure that the appropriate meeting materials are provided in the meeting materials packet or other format as required. If during preparation of the meeting materials packet a lack of documentation or readiness prohibits discussion the agenda topic, that topic will remain on the agenda with a notation explaining the status of the item. When needed, agenda topics may be added at the discretion of the fire chief and the board chair.

7.4.2 The meeting materials packet will typically include; the agenda, draft minutes of the previous meeting and relevant supplementary information. The meeting materials packet will be available to each Commissioner by the end of business at least six days in advance of the meeting and will be available to any interested citizen via the department website and at the district headquarters as early as possible but no less than twenty-four hours prior to the meeting. Late edits to the meeting agenda or meeting materials will be provided to board members and the public as soon as possible.

7.4.3 The general format for the agenda document will include:

- 7.4.3.1 I. Open Meeting
- 7.4.3.2 II. Approval of Agenda
- 7.4.3.3 III. Public Comment
- 7.4.3.4 IV. Board Discussion and Possible Action Items
- 7.4.3.5 V. Board Resolutions
- 7.4.3.6 VI. Reports
- 7.4.3.7 VII. Fire Commissioner Compensation Request Review (1st meeting of the month)(may be included as part of the Consent Agenda)
- 7.4.3.8 VIII. Meeting Minutes Review and Approval (May be included as part of the Consent Agenda)
- 7.4.3.9 IX. Consent Agenda
- 7.4.3.10 X. Executive Session
- 7.4.3.11 XI. Next Meeting Agenda
- 7.4.3.12 XII. Adjournment
- 7.4.3.13 Notation of the next scheduled Regular meeting and or Special meeting date and time.

7.5 QUORUM – Three Commission members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business. Quorum shall be determined by counting each Commissioner present for the call for the vote.

7.6 CONDUCT – All Board meetings will be conducted in an orderly and businesslike manner, and when necessary using simplified parliamentary procedures as described in Policy 1410.

7.6.1 The order of business will be indicated in the agenda. Any amendments to the agenda will be voted on at the beginning of the meeting.

7.6.2 All votes on motions and resolutions shall be by “voice” vote unless a roll call vote is requested by a member of the Board.

7.6.3 Meetings should be conducted in accordance with the following ground

rules:

- 7.6.3.1 Members are to listen actively and respect others when they are talking. Refrain from side conversations during discussions. Wait until the presenter has finished before asking questions.
- 7.6.3.2 Consider ideas with an open mind. Ideas may be respectfully challenged by asking questions – focus on ideas and refrain from personal attacks.
- 7.6.3.3 Members wishing to bring items for discussion should provide background information to other members in advance of the meeting, in conjunction with the meeting materials packet.
- 7.6.3.4 Each member should actively participate in discussions. There may be times when members do not agree 100% with an idea. Members should share their thoughts if they can't accept a proposal, but also consider what they can accept even without 100% agreement.
- 7.6.3.5 Each member should try to keep discussions on task and efficient.
- 7.6.3.6 Instead of invalidating others' suggestions, share your own new idea or contribution.
- 7.6.3.7 Issues which have been decided will only be reopened in rare instances and with agreement of the majority of the Board.
- 7.6.3.8 Prior to the Board voting on a motion the Chair or District Secretary will restate the motion.
- 7.6.3.9 Decisions made by the Board will be summarized by the Chair or District Secretary prior to moving to the next topic.

7.7 VOTING –

- 7.7.1 The vote on all matters shall be oral. Results will be announced immediately and recorded in the minutes.
- 7.7.2 When the vote is not unanimous the meeting minutes shall record the yeah, nay and abstentions by name for each commissioner.
- 7.7.3 A Commissioner may change his/her vote if the change is announced before the Chair announces the results of the vote.
- 7.7.4 Any Commissioner may abstain from voting at any call for the vote. The reason for the abstention should be stated and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

7.8 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – The Board recognizes the value of public comment on fire and emergency medical services issues and the importance of involving members of the public in its meetings.

- 7.8.1 A period for public comment shall be included in the agenda.
- 7.8.2 Individuals wishing to be heard by the Board may participate in person, by virtual attendance using the 'hand raise' function, or by written comment submitted to the board secretary in advance of the meeting. Individuals shall first be recognized by the Chair. After identifying themselves, each commenter will have up to three minutes to address the board. Commenters are encouraged to make comments as briefly as the subject permits. The Chair shall maintain order and ensure the appropriateness of

discussion.

- 7.8.3 For meetings with virtual attendance (online/Zoom) enabled, the “chat” function shall only be turned on during the public comment portion of the agenda