

Kentfield Fire Protection District



Board of Directors Policy and Procedure Manual

**POLICIES and PROCEDURES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MANUAL**

SECTION I PURPOSE

To establish general guidelines for roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors as a group and its members as individuals.

SECTION II BOARD MEMBERS

Board members are elected for four-year terms. Mid-term vacancies may be filled as allowed by law.

A. BASIS OF AUTHORITY

The Kentfield Fire Protection District is an independent governmental unit established as a special district of the State of California. The purpose of the district is to provide fire protection, emergency medical and related services as authorized by law to the District and the surrounding area. The District's legal authority and responsibility are contained in the State of California Health and Safety code, Fire Protection District Law of 1987.

B. MEETINGS

1. Members of the Board of Directors shall attend all regular and special meetings of the Board unless there is good cause for absence. Regular meetings shall normally be held on the second Wednesday of each month. Change of date must be approved by a majority of the Board.
2. The Fire Chief shall prepare an agenda for each regular and special meeting of the Board of Directors. Any Director may call the Chief and request any item be placed on the agenda no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday prior to the meeting date.
3. Any member of the public may request that a matter directly related to District business be placed on the agenda of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The Fire Chief shall have authority to open mail directed to the Board even though it be addressed to the Board, Board President, or Board Member unless it is marked 'personal' before forwarding said correspondence to the addressee in a timely manner.
 - b. The Fire Chief shall determine whether a public request is or is not a 'matter directly related to District business'.

- c. No matter that is legally a proper subject for consideration by the Board in closed session will be accepted under this portion of the policy regarding an agenda item.
4. The Board of Directors may place limitations on the total time to be devoted to a public request issue at any meeting and may limit the time allowed for any one person to speak on the issue at the meeting. The standard time may be limited to three (3) minutes per person.
5. This does not prevent the Board from taking testimony at regular and special meetings of the Board on matters that are not on the agenda that a member of the public may wish to bring before the Board. However, the Board shall not discuss or take action on such matters at that meeting.
6. At least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the time of all regular meetings, an agenda that includes, but is not limited to, all matters on which there may be discussion and/or action by the Board, shall be posted conspicuously for public review at the Fire District office.
7. The Board shall comply with all provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act.
8. Meeting procedure will endeavor to follow Roberts Rules of Order as guideline for meeting procedure.
9. Voting Practices shall be:
 - a. Roll Call Votes (3 of 5)

Ordinances
Resolutions
 - b. Simple Majority (of those present)

Routine agenda items not specified above
 - c. Quorum

Action may only be taken by a vote of the majority of the Board of Directors. Three (3) Directors represent a quorum for the conduct of business, therefore, all three (3) votes are required to be effective (unless 4/5 vote is required by policy of other law).

C. REMUNERATION AND REIMBURSEMENT

Members of the Board of Directors shall be reimbursed for all legitimate expenses incurred in attending meetings or in making any trips on official business of the Board when so authorized.

D. BOARD OFFICERS

Officers shall serve a one-year term with nominations/elections generally held at the regular December meeting. Any vacancies in the Board officers shall result in a special nomination/election with the newly elected officer to fill the balance of the term in question.

There is no assumed right of succession in Board officers.

1. CHAIRMAN

The Chairman of the Board of Directors shall serve as Chairperson at all Board meetings. The Chairman has the same rights and responsibilities as any Director. The Chairman serves as spokesperson for the Board of Directors. The Chairman conducts meetings in accordance with the Brown Act and the parameters set forth in this document. The Chairman enforces the agreed-to rules on the meeting process. The chairman disseminates information to all directors. The chairman reviews the agenda with the Fire Chief prior to the meeting date. The Chairman signs/executes board actions.

2. VICE-CHAIRMAN

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors shall serve as chairperson over all meetings of the Board. The Vice-Chairman has the same rights and responsibilities as any Director. The Vice-Chairman conducts meetings in accordance with the Brown Act and parameters set forth in this document and in the absence of the Chairman. The Vice-Chairman signs/executes Board actions in the absence of the Chairman.

3. SECRETARY

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors, the Secretary will act as chairperson. The Secretary will act as ‘Clerk’ of the Board to record/transcribe meeting minutes to be kept as permanent record. At the discretion of the Board, the District Administrative Secretary may be enlisted to record/transcribe meeting minutes to be kept as permanent record. The Secretary has the same rights and responsibilities as any Director. The Secretary conducts

meetings in accordance with the Brown Act and the parameters set forth in this document in the absence of the Vice-Chairman. The Secretary signs/executes Board actions in the absence of the Vice-Chairman.

E. MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

1. Directors shall thoroughly prepare themselves to discuss agenda items at meetings of the Board of Directors. Information may be requested from staff or exchanged between Directors before meeting.
2. Information that is exchanged before meetings shall be distributed through the Fire Chief preferably in the monthly agenda packet. All Directors will receive all information being distributed.
3. Directors shall conduct themselves with courtesy to each other, to staff and to members of the audience present at Board meetings.
4. Directors shall defer to the Chairman for conduct of meetings of the Board but shall be free to question items on the agenda. All comments should be brief and confined to the matter being discussed by the Board.
5. Directors may request for inclusion into minutes, brief comments pertinent to an agenda item only at the meeting that item is discussed (including, if desired, a position on abstention or dissenting vote).
6. Individual Directors, by themselves, have no independent authority. The voice of our citizens is derived from a majority of the Board of Directors. The majority of the Board of Directors has the authority to encumber District funds, enter into contracts, and provide direction to the Fire Chief about specific projects or tasks in which the Board sees as a priority. The Fire Chief will then direct his/her staff to complete such priorities within established timeframes and budget.
7. Directors are required to complete an Ethics Class every two years as stipulated by AB1234. Courses may be taken through the Fair Political Practices Commission on-line at www.fppc.ca.gov.
8. Individual Board members may use their name and title without implying that their opinions represent the opinion of the entire Board of the Fire District when endorsing issues or candidates.

The Board will not endorse candidates, and candidates requesting to address the Board will be advised of this policy.

Board endorsement of ballot measures may be considered if they support Fire District goals.

F. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. THE BOARD

The Board roles and responsibilities include:

- a. Representing interests of District residents
- b. Oversight of District expenditures
- c. Adoption of an annual budget
- d. Hiring the Fire Chief
- e. Assigning responsibility for policy implementation to Fire Chief
- f. Identifying issues to be addressed
- g. Familiarization with the Fire District's operational philosophy, personnel, services, programs and resources
- h. Insuring District staff complies with applicable State and Federal mandates
- i. Defining critical issues
- j. Developing a Mission Statement, goals and measurable objectives
- k. Steward District property; assets preservation
- l. Monitoring progress towards reaching established goals
- m. Developing policies which:
 - define responsibilities and eliminate ambiguities
 - give appropriate authority to staff members
 - provide organizational direction and guidance
- n. Insuring that District business is conducted in accordance with all applicable laws, statues, regulations, and codes, etc.

- o. Confirming hiring and promotions recommended by the Fire Chief
- p. Developing a list of qualifications, job description, and evaluation process for the Fire Chief

2. BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF INDIVIDUAL DIRECTORS

- a. To be familiar with the laws governing the District and to obey those laws
- b. To understand the nature of the fire service business
- c. To maintain regular attendance at Board meetings
- d. Familiarization with the Fire District's operational philosophy, personnel, services, programs, and resources
- e. To understand the nature of organizational design
- f. To support decisions made by the Board, even if there is individual disagreement with those decisions
- g. To refrain from involvement in the day-to-day operations of the District
- h. To actively participate in Board appointed committees
- i. To be familiar with District financing
- j. To be an ambassador of the District, accurately supporting District issues and concerns
- k. To practice open and timely communications
- l. To be familiar with policies governing the operation of the District
- m. Individual Board members do not have the authority to encumber District funds, enter the District into any contract or arrangement without the express consent of the full Board
- n. Individual Board members do not have the authority to direct, assign, order or otherwise supervise District staff without the express consent of the full Board

3. THE FIRE CHIEF

- a. Oversees the management of daily operations
- b. Implements Board policy and directives
- c. Implements and reviews budget expenditures and oversees transfer of funds on deposit with Marin County Auditor's office
- d. Educates, informs, and communicates important information to the Board – both positive and negative
- e. Keeps abreast of all political, legal, and technological changes that may impact the District
- f. Develops operational policy and procedures
- g. Oversees staff including hiring, evaluation, promotion, and discipline of all line and management staff
- h. Analyzes needs, develops appropriate work-plans and an annual budget
- i. Controls resources
- j. Serves as one of the District's official ambassadors and as liaison to the public
- k. Provides organizational leadership on a day-to-day basis
- l. Cultivates interagency and intergovernmental relationships
- m. Tracks and preserves the District's assets

G. DELEGATION

The implementation of policies and programs adopted by the Board of Directors shall be clearly delegated to the Chief or his/her designee.

H. COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL DIRECTORS AND STAFF

1. All significant requests of staff will be made at Board meetings so that all Directors may have an opportunity to comment and revise the request

2. If a Director's request requires a significant investment of time, the Fire Chief will place the item on the next agenda
3. Any Director may request an item to be added to the agenda
4. The Fire Chief may review all agenda items with the Board Chairman at his/her request prior to the meeting

I. COMMITTEES ON THE BOARD

1. There shall be no standing committees, and all committees will be ad-hoc committees designed to exist for a specific purpose
2. All committees will work under a specific purpose defined at a Board meeting and will exist or meet for no other purpose
4. All committees will provide oral reports in addition to sharing minutes and agendas (if applicable) at each Board meeting while they are in existence
5. Committee members will be determined by nomination of the Board Chairman and ratification by a vote of the full Board
6. Committee members shall not be compensated for committee meetings except as allowed under 'Remuneration and Reimbursement'

J. FINANCE

1. On or before June 30th of each year, the Board shall adopt a Preliminary Budget which shall conform to the accounting and budgeting procedures for special districts contained in subchapter 3 of, and Article 1 of subchapter 4 of, Chapter 2 of division 2 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations.
2. On or before July 1st of each year, the amounts set forth in the Preliminary Budget are deemed appropriated until the District Board adopts the Final Budget.
3. After July 1st each year, the Board shall adopt a Final Budget. The Final Budget shall establish its appropriation limit pursuant to California Proposition 4, the Gann Initiative.
4. Upon adoption of the Final Budget, the Board may set the special tax rate as determined necessary.

5. At any regular meeting or properly noticed special meeting, the Board, by three (3) out of five (5) majority vote of the membership of the Board, may make available for appropriation any of the following:
 - a. Balances in appropriations for contingency/reserve categories
 - b. Amounts in excess of \$10,000.00 not specifically set forth in the Budget

K. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES

1. Conflicts of Interest (Financial) – Political Reform Act of 1974 requires:
 - a. Disclosure of reportable economic interests shall be filed by Directors annually by completion of California FPPC Form 700 that the Administrative Secretary shall then file with the California Fair Political Practices Commission. Filing will also be completed by new Board members upon initial appointment or election as well as any Board member leaving office. The Fire Chief will also complete California FPPC Form 700 upon assuming and leaving office.
 - b. Disqualification from making or participating in a decision or using official position to influence or attempt to influence a decision in which there is a conflict of interest as defined in the Political Act of 1974.
2. Conflicts of Interest (Contracts) – Government Code Section 1909, et seq. prohibits a public official from being financially interested in a contract or sale in both public and private capacities.

L. OFFICIAL PRESENTATIONS

The Board will make acknowledgements or presentations for a variety of reasons including employee recognition, promotions, valor, and citizen achievements. The Board Chairman will announce the agenda item and turn the presentation over to the Fire Chief who will give the background on the subject. The Fire Chief will then introduce the person receiving the award to the Board Chairman who will then make the presentation. The recipient will be given the opportunity to speak.