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|--------------|---------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| SUBJECT:     | Board of Fire Commissioners     | Version:    | Revision 1   |
| SECTION:     | 1 General                       | Chair:      | Harry Miller |
| SUB-SECTION: | 1.4 Board of Fire Commissioners | Fire Chief: | Mark Gregory |
| EFFECTIVE:   | 2019-11-14                      |             |              |

## 1 POLICY

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- 1.1 The Board of Fire Commissioners, consisting of three members, elected by the registered voters of the Fire District, is empowered to conduct the affairs of the District as prescribed in Washington state laws governing Fire Protection Districts.

## 2 DEFINITIONS

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- 2.1 **Fire Commissioner:** A person given official charge and authority to represent the interests of the citizens and manage the affairs of the Fire Protection District.
- 2.2 **Board of Fire Commissioners (or Board):** The governing body of the Fire Protection District, comprised of elected or appointed fire commissioners.
- 2.3 **Fire Protection District (or District):** The government district established for the provision of fire prevention services, fire suppression services, emergency medical services, and for the protection of life and property as authorized by RCW 52.

## 3 RESPONSIBILITIES

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- 3.1 The Board of Fire Commissioners is responsible for establishing key policy, setting levies, developing and adopting the annual budget, reviewing and approving contracts, and appointing a Fire Chief.
- 3.2 The Board of Fire Commissioners is responsible for representing the residents of Bald Hills Fire Protection District 17 in all matters pertaining to fire protection, emergency service, and disaster preparedness.
- 3.3 The Board has the power and duty to adopt a seal of the district, to manage and conduct the business affairs of the district, to make and execute all necessary contracts, to employ any necessary services, and to adopt reasonable rules to govern the district and to perform its functions, and generally to perform all such acts as may be necessary to carry out the objects of the creation of the district.
- 3.4 The Board of Fire Commissioners will institute a formal set of District policies which are reviewed on a periodic basis (see Policy 1.3 Fire District Policy).
- 3.5 The Board of Fire Commissioners shall elect a Chair from their number and shall appoint a District Secretary, who may or may not be a member of the Board, for such term as they

shall by resolution determine.

- 3.6 The District Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Board, shall perform other duties as prescribed by the Board or by law, and shall take and subscribe an official oath similar to that of the fire commissioners which oath shall be filed in the same office as that of the commissioners.
- 3.7 The Board shall hold regular monthly meetings at a place and date as it determines by resolution and may adjourn its meetings as required for the proper transaction of business. Special meetings of the Board shall be called at any time under the provisions of RCW 42.30.080.
- 3.8 All meetings of the Board shall be conducted in accordance with RCW 42.30 and a majority constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.
- 3.9 All records of the Board shall be open to inspection in accordance with RCW 42.56.
- 3.10 If a Commissioner is unable to continue to serve as Chair, a replacement shall be elected immediately.
- 3.11 The Chair shall appoint Board members to represent the Board on committees as deemed necessary and appropriate. Where two or more Board members are appointed, committee meetings must comply with RCW 42.30 Open Public Meetings Act.
- 3.12 The Board shall fix the compensation to be paid the Secretary and all other agents and employees of the District. The Secretary, if a member of the Board, shall not receive additional compensation for serving as Secretary.
- 3.13 The authority of Fire Commissioners is limited to participating in action taken by the Board when legally in session. Commissioners shall not assume responsibilities of the Chief or other staff members.
- 3.14 The Board, or staff, shall not be bound in any way by any action taken or statement made by any individual Commissioner except when such statement or action is pursuant to official action taken by the Board.
- 3.15 Each Commissioner is obligated to regularly attend Board meetings. Commissioners should give notice to the Chair and Secretary of their inability to attend a Board meeting.

## 4 GUIDELINES

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- 4.1 The board may authorize any of its members to serve as volunteers without compensation by unanimous resolution. All commissioners serving as volunteers may enjoy the rights and benefits of a volunteer (see Policy 5.4.1 Commissioner Compensation).
- 4.2 Regular meetings are held as established by Resolution, unless a quorum is not available. In that event, the meeting may be rescheduled.

- 4.3 Special Meetings are any Board meeting other than the Regular Board meeting. A Special meeting may be called by the Chair or majority of the Board. The minutes shall indicate the reason for the special meeting. Notice shall be given in writing at least 24-hours in advance to Board members, the Public, and any media that requested to receive notice.
- 4.4 Emergency Meetings are any special meeting called to deal with an emergency involving injury or damage to persons or property or the likelihood of such injury or damage, when the time requirements of special meeting notice would be impractical and increase the likelihood of such injury or damage.
- 4.5 Study Sessions are a Special Meeting of the Board to discuss issues, provide input to the Fire Chief, and to keep the Board informed on critical issues. Study sessions allow for discussion and input only; no final actions are taken. Items requiring a decision by the Board shall normally be brought forward at a Regular or Special Board meeting for final action. Study sessions may be called in the same manner as other special meetings.
- 4.6 The actions of the Board 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 for the supervision of District members and for the establishment of a chain of command to carry out such supervision.
- 4.7 As public officials, the Commissioners and District Secretary have limited immunity for discretionary acts provided by RCW 4.24.470. When the District Secretary or Commissioners sign any District legal document, the signature block should show that the individual is signing in a representative capacity and not in an individual capacity.
- 4.8 The Board may, by resolution adopted by unanimous vote, authorize any of its members to serve as volunteer firefighters without compensation. A commissioner serving as a volunteer firefighter may enjoy the rights and benefits of a volunteer firefighter.

## 5 APPLICABILITY

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- 5.1 This policy applies to the Board of Fire Commissioners.

## 6 DISCUSSION

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- 6.1 The Board of Fire Commissioners is responsible for managing the affairs of the District, including comprehensive planning, budgeting, organizational design, and general policies for guiding the delivery of services. To accomplish these responsibilities, the Board may appoint and delegate certain authorities to a District Secretary and Fire Chief.

## 7 REFERENCES

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RCW 4 Civil Procedure

RCW 29A Elections

RCW 42 Public Officers and Agencies

RCW 52 Fire Protection Districts

Policy 1.3 Fire District Policy

Policy 1.4.1 Ethics

Policy 5.4.1 Commissioner Compensation

Washington Fire Commissioners Handbook