

Rule

Meetings of the District's Board are open to the public. Sometimes portions of a meeting will be closed to the public in accordance with the Missouri Sunshine Law (Revised Statutes of Missouri, Chapter 610).

The Board recognizes the importance of protecting the rights of all citizens to make comment, ask questions, and express their concerns or opinions on any aspect of District and encourages citizen input and participation in the local government process.

However, the Board also recognizes the necessity for conducting orderly and efficient meetings to complete District business in a timely manner. Citizens should also strive to work through problems at the staff level before appearing before the Board.

At regularly scheduled Board meetings, the Secretary will provide a comment period for any citizen to give their input to the Board on any topic within the subject matter jurisdiction of fire protection districts. This public comment period shall be denoted on the agenda as "Public Appearances/Comments." If necessary, the Chair of the Board will explain the rules of citizen input and participation at the beginning of a meeting.

Speakers during this comment period will be limited to no more than three (3) minutes per topic or inquiry, unless extended by the Chair. Speakers can submit supplemental or detailed written remarks to the Board. No one may speak more than once on the same topic or inquiry unless specifically granted permission by the Chair.

The Chair or Secretary will notify speakers when their allotted time has expired, and speakers shall promptly conclude their remarks. The Chair has the discretion to either extend or reduce time limits, based on the number of speakers and/or the business of the Board. A speaker's time may not be transferred to another speaker.

The Chair may limit citizen input to the Board if the topic or inquiry consists of the disclosure of information involving a closed record under provisions of the Sunshine Law. The Chair should explain to the audience how the Sunshine Law applies to the information that limited citizen input.

To make a record of public appearances and to ensure the District has citizen contact information to respond to an inquiry or to provide subsequent information, speakers at a Board meeting will be directed by the Secretary to voluntarily indicate their presence by signing-in on **Public Appearance/Comments Sign-In Form 007-1**. Minutes are taken of all meetings of the Board; however, only the names of

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speakers and the topics they addressed or the inquiries they made may be included in the minutes.

The Chair may change the order of speakers so that comments or inquiries are heard in the most logical groupings. In the interest of hearing from as many citizens as possible, if subsequent citizens' comments or inquiries are the same as previous comment or inquiry, the subsequent citizens need only to state that fact and indicate their presence by signing-in on **Public Appearance/Comments Sign-In Form 007-1**.

If requested by the Chair, speakers may be required to state whether they speak for a group of citizens present or a third party, if they represent an organization, whether the view expressed by them represents an established policy or position approved by the organization, and whether they are compensated by the organization. Only attorneys will be allowed to speak on behalf of a citizen client or group of citizen clients that are not present.

Speakers should make their comments concise and to the point and present any data or evidence they wish the Board to consider. Speakers should address the Board as a whole and not individual Directors, audience members, or staff. Unless the Chair specifies otherwise, no discussion or debate will take place on speakers' topics or inquiries. No one, other than a Director, and speaker, may be permitted to enter into any discussion, either directly or through a Director, without permission of the Chair.

At the Chair's discretion, the public may have the opportunity to speak regarding an action to be taken by the Board even though it is outside of the "Public Appearances/Comments" portion of a meeting.

A speaker making personal, impertinent, or slanderous remarks, or who becomes boisterous, threatening, or personally abusive while addressing the Board, may be ordered by the Chair to leave the meeting. The Chair (or their appointed sergeant of arms) has the authority and duty to preserve order at all meetings of the Board, to cause the removal of any person from any meeting for disorderly conduct and to enforce the rules of the Board.

A person whose comments have been ruled out of order by the Chair shall immediately cease and refrain from further improper comments. The refusal of a person to desist from personal, inappropriate, slanderous, or otherwise disruptive remarks after being ruled out of order by the Chair may subject the person to removal from the meeting and property of the meeting location.

Citizen Inquiries

Citizens should make their inquiries to staff prior to appearing before meetings of the Board. The Chair, or staff at the direction of the Chair, may respond to citizen

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inquiries if time and simplicity permits. Unanswered inquiries will be addressed by staff in the ensuing days, and the District Manager or Chief shall report back to the Board by written report or memorandum. The written report or memorandum will be made public by the Secretary, subject to provisions of the Sunshine Law.

If the inquiry is unable to be addressed or resolved by staff, an appropriate agenda item will be prepared by the District Manager or Chief if a change in policy, procedures, or ordinances is required and recommended by staff to address the general subject matter of the inquiry. The citizen(s) making the inquiry will be notified by the Secretary when the item will be on the agenda.

A citizen inquiry will not be allowed if "appeal" mechanisms already exist to address the inquiry.

Decorum

Order must be preserved during meetings of the Board. No person shall, by speech or otherwise, delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of a meeting of the Board, or disturb any speaker recognized by the Chair. No person shall refuse to obey the orders of the Chair or the Board.

Anyone refusing to obey the orders of the Chair or the Board shall not be considered orderly or decorous. Any person making irrelevant, impertinent, or slanderous remarks or who becomes boisterous while addressing or querying the Board shall not be considered orderly or decorous. Any person who becomes disorderly or who fails to confine remarks to the identified subject or business at hand shall be cautioned by the Chair and given the opportunity to conclude remarks on the subject in a decorous manner and within the designated time limit.

Any person failing to comply as cautioned shall be barred by the Chair from making any additional comments or inquiries during the meeting, unless permission to continue or again address or query the Board is granted by a majority of the Directors present.

If the Chair declares a person out of order, he or she will be requested to become orderly and decorous.

Any person who becomes disruptive or interferes with the orderly business of the Board may be removed from the meeting and property of the meeting location for the remainder of the meeting.

Any person not considered orderly or decorous shall be subject to removal from the meeting and property of the meeting location and may be subject to arrest.

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The Chair may appoint a sergeant of arms to preserve order during meetings of the Board and to remove from the meeting and property of the meeting location any person not considered orderly or decorous.

STATUTORY REFERENCES

RSMo §610

REVISION HISTORY

Revision Date	Author	Revision Details
April 6, 2022	Monte Olsen	Initial version and repeals the first sentence of Section 6.3 of the District's <i>Board of Directors' Policy and Procedures Manual</i>

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