

ST. LUCIE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT
BYLAWS, POLICIES & PROCEDURES

I. **AUTHORITY**

The Board of Commissioners of the St. Lucie County Fire District adopts the following Bylaws, Policies and Procedures in accordance with its authority vested under Section 10 of the Special Act creating the St. Lucie County Fire District and Chapter 191, Florida Statutes.

II. **DEFINITIONS**

- A. For the purposes of these Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, the following definitions shall apply:
1. "Commissioner" shall refer to a member of the Board of Commissioners of the St. Lucie County Fire District.
 2. "District" shall refer to the St. Lucie County Fire District.
 3. "Emergency Meeting" is a meeting held on the call of the Chair to address a matter of a bonafide emergency, as determined by the Fire Board.
 4. "Fire Board" shall refer to the Board of Commissioners of the St. Lucie County Fire District.
 5. "Quorum" for any meeting of the Fire Board shall mean the presence of at least four (4) members of the Fire Board.
 5. "Regular Meeting" shall mean any meeting of the Fire Board that is not a special meeting or emergency meeting, as defined herein.
 6. "Special Meeting" is a meeting held on the call of the Chair, or of the majority of the Commissioners, for the purpose of addressing matters requiring immediate attention, or the singular attention of the Fire Board.
- B. Defined terms shall have the same meanings when used herein as when used in the Special Act creating the District, or Chapter 191, Florida Statutes, as amended from time to time.

III. MEMBERSHIP

- A. The District shall be governed by the Fire Board, which shall be comprised of seven (7) members named and selected as provided by Section 6 of the Special Act creating the District.
- B. Each member shall have one vote. All seven members of the Fire Board shall have an equal voice and vote on all matters relating to District business. All powers, privileges and duties vested in or imposed upon the District shall be exercised and performed by and through its Fire Board acting as a quorum; provided, however, that the exercise of any and all executive, administrative and ministerial powers may be delegated by the Fire Board to any of its officers, employees or agents. Any such delegation may be re-delegated or withdrawn by the Fire Board. No member may authorize another person or persons to vote on their behalf by proxy.

IV. FIRE BOARD OFFICERS

A. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Fire Board shall elect one of its members as Chair and one member as Vice-Chair. Election of officers shall be held at a regular meeting of the Fire Board in December of each year as the last order of business on the agenda. The newly elected Chair will take office in January of each year.

B. CHAIR

The Chair shall be elected for a term of one (1) year. If the Chair ceases to be a member of the Fire Board or shall for any reason not serve as Chair, a successor shall be elected for the unexpired portion of the term. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Fire Board and shall have the general control over the acts of the business and the affairs of the District, subject to the directions of the Fire Board. The Chair shall preserve order and decorum at all meetings of the Fire Board.

C. VICE-CHAIR

The Vice-Chair shall be elected for a term of one (1) year and shall assume all the duties of the Chair in his or her absence.

V. REGULAR MEETINGS

- A. The Fire Board shall hold a regular meeting on the third Wednesday of each month beginning at 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise designated by majority vote of the Fire Board.

- B. When the date for a regular meeting falls on a legal holiday, said regular meeting shall be rescheduled.
- C. A schedule of regular meetings shall be filed annually with the Clerk to the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners with a copy to the Fire Board.
- D. Said regular meetings shall be held in Counsel Chambers at the Milner Administrative Complex. The Chair of the Fire Board may authorize other locations for said regular meetings when it is deemed necessary.

VI. SPECIAL OR EMERGENCY MEETINGS

Special or emergency meetings of the Fire Board shall be held when called by the Chair or by vote of a majority of the members of the Fire Board.

VII. NOTICES

- A. A notice of any rescheduled, Special or Emergency meeting of the Fire Board shall be provided to each member of the Fire Board electronically via email upon publication.
- B. A notice of any special or emergency meetings of the Fire Board shall state the date, time, and location of the meeting and the purpose of said meeting. Every effort shall be made to give as much advance notice of special or emergency Fire Board meetings as possible.
- C. In all instances, meeting notices shall be given in compliance with Section 286.011, *Florida Statutes*, as amended.

VIII. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

- A. To the greatest extent possible, meetings shall be conducted in accordance with ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER as may be amended by these Fire Board Bylaws, Policies and Procedures.
- B. Roll call votes shall be at the discretion of the Chair.
- C. Any comments by Commissioners on any motion should be made during the debate thereon, in order that other Commissioners may have the benefit of those comments prior to the casting of their vote on the matter.

IX. AGENDA

- A. At the direction of the Chair, the Clerk Treasurer or designee shall prepare an agenda for each regular or special meeting of the Fire Board no less than seven (7) days prior to the Fire Board meeting date, for distribution to each Fire Board member and posted on the Fire District website. Further, copies of the agenda shall be available to any member of the public upon request, and shall be provided at the meeting room prior to the commencement of the meeting.
- B. The agenda shall specify the items and order of business to be conducted at the meeting.
- C. At every such meeting, time shall be allotted for public discussion on matters within the scope of the jurisdiction of the District.

X. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. All meetings of the Fire Board shall substantially follow the following order of business:
 - 1. Meeting called to order.
 - 2. Roll call of members present and determination of quorum.
 - 3. Invocation.
 - 4. Pledge of Allegiance.
 - 5. Proclamations and special presentations.
 - 6. Approval of minutes of previous meetings.
 - 7. Additions or deletions to agenda.
 - 8. Approval of consent agenda.
 - 9. Monthly financial statements.
 - 10. Public comments.
 - 11. Comments from Union representative.
 - 12. Public hearings.
 - 13. Unfinished business.

14. New business.
 15. Fire Board Resolutions.
 16. Comments by the Fire Chief.
 17. Comments by the Clerk Treasurer.
 18. Comments by the Attorney.
 19. Comments from Commissioners.
 20. Determination of (insert month of prior meeting here) excused absences.
 21. Adjournment.
- B. Any person desiring to have a particular matter placed upon an agenda may so request through the Clerk Treasurer or designee. Any request shall include all information and documents concerning the subject matter to be presented to the Fire Board, and shall indicate the approximate length of time required for presentation of the subject matter.
- C. Appropriate administrative staff members shall have the opportunity to submit their comments to the Fire Board upon any item requested to be placed upon an agenda.

XI. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

- A. The Chair, or the Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair, shall preserve order and decorum at all meetings.
- B. Every Commissioner desiring to speak shall address the Chair, and upon recognition by the chair, shall confine their comments to the question under debate. Each Commissioner desiring to be recognized shall be recognized once before that Commissioner shall be recognized a second time.
- C. Every Commissioner desiring to question the administrative staff shall address his question to the appropriate staff member, who shall be entitled either to answer the inquiry or designate some other member of the staff for that purpose.
- D. A Commissioner once recognized, shall not be interrupted while speaking unless called to order by the Chair, unless point of order is raised by another member, or unless the speaker chooses to yield to questions of another member.

- E. All members of the Fire Board shall accord the utmost courtesy to each other, the District employees and the members of the public appearing before the Fire Board. All members of the Fire Board shall refrain from rude and derogatory remarks or abusive comments.
- F. Members of the administrative staff and employees of the Fire District shall observe the same rules of procedure and decorum applicable to Commissioners.
- G. Members of the public attending Fire Board meetings shall also observe the same rules of propriety, decorum and good conduct applicable to Commissioners.
- H. The Chair may interrupt, warn, or request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum; and request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting.
- H. Any person who willfully interrupts or disturbs any meeting of the Fire Board, in violation of Section 871.01, *Florida Statutes*, may be subject to arrest and prosecution pursuant to said Statute.
- I. As the Fire Board considers public hearing items, the Chair shall accept comments from those in attendance, pursuant to the following rules:
 - 1. All persons addressing the Fire Board, other than Commissioners, staff or Board Attorney, shall first state their name and current address prior to speaking.
 - 2. Comments by the public shall be limited to three minutes each, unless extended by majority vote of the Fire Board.
 - 3. Once the Chair closes public comment, all further discussion on the pending matter shall be limited to members of the Fire Board.

XII. VOTING

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 286.012, Florida Statutes, no Fire Board member who is present at any Board meeting at which an official vote is to be taken may abstain from voting in regard to that matter, and a vote shall be recorded or counted for each such member present, except when any such member declares a possible conflict of interest. Voting members will be determined by roll call at the beginning of each meeting. In the event that a member arrives late, the Fire Board will determine who shall vote from that point.

XIII. MINUTES & RECORDS

Unless otherwise provided by Florida law, all minutes of the meetings of the Fire Board and its records shall be properly filed at the Clerk Treasurer or designee's Office, and shall be open for inspection to any member of the Fire Board and the general public.

XIV. ATTENDANCE

- A. The Fire Chief, Clerk Treasurer or designee, Board Attorney, and such other members of the staff as may be deemed necessary, shall attend the Fire Board meetings to assist, advise, and report to the Fire Board.
- B. Suitable seating arrangements will be provided for guests, visitors, and press.
- C. Fire Board members shall notify the Clerk Treasurer or designee if they will not be in attendance at any regular, special, or emergency Fire Board meeting.
- D. Any member of the Fire Board who has more than three unexcused absences from regular meetings of the Fire Board during any calendar year shall be deemed to have abandoned said membership. The Clerk Treasurer or designee shall notify the appropriate appointing board for appropriate action. Whether the absence of any member is to be deemed unexcused shall be determined by majority vote of the Fire Board.

XV. ANNUAL REPORTS

The Fire Board shall cause to be made at least once each fiscal year such reports as required under Section 11 of the Special Act creating the District. Copies of such reports shall be forwarded to the Clerk of the Circuit Court of St. Lucie County, Florida and shall constitute a public record. The Clerk Treasurer or designee shall also take such steps as necessary to ensure that the Fire Board complies with any reporting requirements under Chapter 191, Florida Statutes.

XVI. EXECUTION OF FORMAL DOCUMENTS

All District resolutions and any instruments of sale, lease, release, or conveyance shall be executed in the name of the District by the Chair or the Vice-Chair of the Board, acting on behalf of the Fire Board, and attested to by the Clerk Treasurer or designee.

XVII. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No member shall participate in the discussion or vote upon any matter under consideration wherein he or she has a conflict of interest as defined in Chapter 112, *Florida Statutes*, as amended. Such a conflict of interest must be made known on the record or in writing.

XVIII. FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

Each Fire Board member shall be required to file a full and public disclosure of financial interests, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 112, Florida Statutes, as applicable.

XIX. AMENDMENTS AND WAIVER

- A. These procedures and policies may be changed or amended at any regular or special meeting by the Fire Board by a majority vote of all members of the Fire Board present at a meeting.
- B. The Fire Board may waive any of the provisions of these procedures and policies upon a majority vote of all members of the Fire Board present at a meeting.

DONE AND ADOPTED this 22nd day of March, 2023.

ATTEST:

ST. LUCIE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT

By: Patricia Marston-Duva
Patricia Marston-Duva, Clerk

By: Stephanie Morgan
Stephanie Morgan, Chair