| Central Valley Fire District<br>Board of Trustees | |
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| Board of Trustees<br>Meeting Practices<br>Policy | EFFECTIVE DATE: _____<br>REVISED DATE:<br>APPROVED BY: |

## Central Valley Fire District
## Board Governance and Meeting Practices Policy

### I. Authority

**This policy is adopted by the Central Valley Fire District Board of Trustees pursuant to:**

- MCA §7-33-2105 — powers and duties of fire district trustees
- MCA §7-33-2001 — fire chief administrative and operational responsibilities
- MCA Title 2, Chapter 3 — open meetings and public participation

**Meetings shall be conducted consistent with:**

- Montana Code Annotated
- Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (as adopted by the Board)
- CVFD adopted Standards of Behavior and Standards of Conduct

Nothing in this policy limits the statutory authority of the Board of Trustees.

### II. Purpose

**This policy establishes governance-focused meeting practices to:**

- support effective Board decision-making
- clarify trustee and Fire Chief roles
- ensure transparency and public participation
- provide structure for reports, discussion, and action
- align with Montana governance standards

### III. Governance Roles

**Board of Trustees**

**The Board:**

- establishes policy and strategic direction
- adopts budgets and financial priorities
- provides oversight of district performance

- acts collectively through motions and votes

Individual trustees have no authority outside formal Board action.

No individual trustee may represent the position of the Board unless authorized by Board action.

**Board Officers:**

Board officers, including the Chair and any Vice Chair or Secretary/Treasurer roles, serve only to facilitate meeting governance and administrative coordination.

Board officers do not possess independent decision-making authority outside of:
- duly noticed Board meetings, or
- authority specifically delegated by formal Board action, or
- responsibilities required by law or adopted Board policy

Officers shall not direct staff, commit the District to action, or establish policy outside collective Board authority.

**Fire Chief**

**The Fire Chief:**
- administers district operations
- supervises personnel
- implements Board policy
- provides professional recommendations and operational reports

Operational direction flows through the Fire Chief or designated channels.

Trustees may request information from staff through the Fire Chief.

## IV. Meeting Structure

**The Board conducts:**
- regular monthly meetings
- an annual strategic planning session with working advisory groups
- an annual Board–Chief goal alignment session
- quarterly meeting of the international fire code board of appeals
- special meetings as authorized by law

## V. Agenda Development

- The agenda is developed collaboratively by the Fire Chief and the Board.
- The agenda is finalized by the Fire Chief and Board Chair prior to public notice as required by law.
- Trustees may request items for future agendas.
- The Board approves and may amend the agenda at the meeting consistent with open-meeting requirements.

## VI. Board Packet

**Distributed prior to meetings and may include:**
- agenda
- Fire Chief report
- financial report

- advisory or working group updates
- stakeholder or partner reports
- draft motions or resolutions when appropriate

Trustees are expected to review materials in advance.

## VII. Order of Business

**Typical meeting flow:**

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge
3. Roll Call / Quorum
4. Approval of Minutes
5. Financial Review and Approval
6. Consent Agenda, as needed
7. Communications
8. General Public Comment (time limited)
9. Fire Chief Report
10. Stakeholder / Expert Reports (as applicable)
11. Trustee Reports
12. Public Comment
13. Information Items
14. Discussion Items
15. Action Items with Action Item Specific Public Comment (time limited)
16. Board Comments and Future Agenda Planning
17. Executive Session (if authorized)
18. Adjournment

## VIII. Trustee Conduct During Meetings

**Trustees:**
- focus on policy, finance, strategy, and oversight
- ask clarifying questions
- act collectively

Trustees do not supervise staff directly; operational matters are directed through the Fire Chief or designated channels.

Trustees may request information from staff through the Fire Chief.

## IX. Reports to the Board

**The following may provide reports to support governance decision-making:**
- Fire Chief
- stakeholders and partner agencies
- subject-matter experts
- Trustees serving on advisory or working groups

Reports are informational unless scheduled as action items.

## X. Public Participation

**Public participation is structured and respectful and conducted:**
- consistent with MCA Title 2, Chapter 3
- consistent with CVFD adopted Standards of Behavior and Standards of Conduct

**Public comment opportunities shall be provided:**
- during general public comment
- during action items prior to Board vote

A general three-minute time limit will be applied consistently to maintain meeting efficiency.

Board deliberation, discussion and debate occurs separately from all public comment.

## XI. Decision-Making Standards

**Board decisions occur through:**
- motion
- discussion
- public comment on action items
- vote

**Complex matters may be:**
- tabled
- referred for additional analysis
- scheduled for future action

## XII. Executive Session

Executive sessions occur only as authorized by statute. No final action will be taken in the executive session.

## XIII. Post-Meeting Follow-Up

**During which time:**
- draft minutes prepared
- Board actions documented
- operational follow-up coordinated by the Fire Chief

**Trustees participating in advisory or working groups operating outside a quorum shall:**
- report back to the Board
- avoid decision-making outside public meetings
- operate consistent with open-meeting laws

## XIV. Annual Review

This policy shall be reviewed in the annual organizational meeting and updated by Board action as needed.