

**EAST LAKE TARPON SPECIAL FIRE CONTROL DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BY-LAWS**

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization is the East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District.

ARTICLE II: AUTHORITY

Section 1, **Constituting Authority**: The Constituting Authority for the District is Chapter 2000-477, House Bill 1783, Laws of Florida, June 7, 2000, and as amended from time to time, and hereinafter referred to as the "Act."

Section 2, **Operating Authority**: The Board of Commissioners is the governing Board of the East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District. The Board has the power to supervise, control, regulate and manage the Fire Department that provides service to the District and to promulgate and enforce all necessary and desirable rules and regulations. The Board is authorized to undertake any action required to accomplish this directive including, without limitation to make contracts, borrow money, levy assessments and ad valorem taxes, and collect same, build necessary facilities, acquire firefighting equipment, hire a Fire Chief and other such personnel as are required; to inspect property, or provide administrative support. The board shall adopt a Fire Code and adopt ordinances for the District and such rules and regulations as it deems necessary to transact its business and carry out the provisions of the Act.

ARTICLE III: LOCATION

Headquarters for the Commission shall be in the offices of the administrative headquarters of the East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District, located at 3375 Tarpon Lake Boulevard, Palm Harbor, Florida, 34685.

ARTICLE IV: ELECTIONS

The Board of Commissioners shall be comprised of five individuals who have been elected by registered voters from the East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District voting districts. The Board of Commissioners will abide by procedures outlined in Roberts Rules of Order whenever possible.

Section 1, **Seats**: The office of each Commissioner is distinguished from each other seat by a numeral: 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5. The terms of office are staggered with elections for Seats 1, 3 and 5 beginning in 2000 and every 4 years thereafter; election for Seats 2 and 4 beginning in 2002 and every 4 years thereafter.

Section 2, **Term of Office**: Each Commissioner shall hold office until his/her successor is elected and qualifies, unless he/she ceases to be qualified, resigns or is removed from office.

Section 3, **Elections**: Each commissioner shall be elected to serve for a term of 4 years by a majority vote of the electors voting to fill such office, except that ONLY in the 2000 election, seats 2 and 4 will be elected for a term of 2 years. Voting for Commissioners shall be district-wide and non-partisan. Elections for Commissioners shall be held at the same time as scheduled elections for the

office of State Representative. Any Commissioner may succeed himself. Each Commissioner, whenever elected, shall assume his/her office within 10 days following his/her election. Any expense of holding elections for Commissioner Seats at the elections shall be paid for out of the funds of the District if required by proper authority.

Section 4, **Residency Requirement:** All Commissioners must reside within the boundaries of the District as defined in the Act. If any Commissioner ceases to reside within the district, his/her office shall be declared vacant as of the date he/she ceases to reside in the District and he/she shall be disqualified from further service. Commissioners may not be current, active employees of the East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District nor an active member of the union local representing said employees.

Section 5, **Filling of Vacancies:** Vacancies on the Board shall be filled by appointment by the remaining members of the Board. All such vacancies shall be filled as expeditiously as possible, but no later than sixty (60) days from the receipt of the vacating commissioner's notice of resignation or other causes.

(A) Filling of vacancies shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures:

- 1) The Board shall solicit applications to fill a Commissioner's position for a period not to exceed 30 days. The selection to fill the vacancy shall be made from the list of applicants, although, the majority of the Board of Commissioners at their sole discretion may extend the time period for applications or request a new group of applicants be solicited prior to the selection of the applicant to fill the vacancy.
- 2) Upon receipt of all applications, each Board Member shall rank the applicants in order of preference with the top applicant receiving the numerical value of one (1) and the next highest applicant receiving the numerical value of two (2) and the ranking process continuing through the remaining number of applicants.
- 3) At a scheduled meeting, the rankings shall be provided by the Board of Commissioners to the Board Secretary who will tally each Board Members ranking and apply the numerical value to each candidate.
- 4) The candidate receiving the lowest total numerical value (by averaging all Board of Commissioners' numerical rankings) shall be selected upon motion, second and approval by a majority of the Board of Commissioners.

ARTICLE V: PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization is to provide residents of the East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District with the highest quality and most cost effective fire prevention, fire suppression and emergency medical service possible in a manner commensurate with Fair Labor practices and as set forth in the Act and to manage the assets of the District in the best interest of the residents of East Lake.

ARTICLE VI: COMMISSIONERS

The Board of Commissioners shall have the overall responsibility and authority for the operation of the district, and for ensuring that its purpose as set forth in the Act are properly carried out. The Board shall know the needs of the organization and shall work with the Fire Chief in fulfilling them as required. The Board shall exercise all the powers and duties set forth in Chapters 189 and 191, Florida Statutes, as they may be amended from time to time, and shall exercise the powers described in the Act in a manner consistent with the policies and regulations of the Pinellas County Fire Protection Authority, which was created pursuant to chapter 73-600, Laws of Florida, and shall maintain liaison with cognizant municipal, county, and state offices.

The Board may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of its meetings as it may deem proper. The Board shall employ a Fire Chief who is directly responsible to the Board and who has responsibility for and authority over all departments' personnel, property and activities of the District.

Section 1. **Oath of Office:** All Commissioners shall be required to take an oath of Office prior to assuming their duties on the Board.

Section 2. **Bonding:** Each Commissioner, before he/she enters upon his/her duties as Commissioner, shall execute with a qualified corporate surety, a good and sufficient bond to be approved by the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Pinellas County in the sum of \$5,000. All premiums for such surety on all such bond shall be paid from the funds of the District.

Section 3. **Duty of Loyalty:** Board members have an obligation to act only on what is believed to be in the best interest of the District. Board members shall abide by decisions made by the Board. Board members must disclose any conflicts of interest to ensure that the Board's results are fair and accomplished in good faith.

Section 4. **Performance of Duties:** Each Board member shall discharge his/her duties with the care a prudent person, in a similar position would exercise in similar circumstances. Board members shall manage district funds wisely and in accordance with the purposes of the District.

ARTICLE VII: OFFICERS

At the November regular meeting, the Commission shall elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, all of whom shall serve for a period of one year or until replaced.

The **Chairman:** Shall preside at all meetings of the Commission and shall serve as coordinator of the Commission's general activities. He/she has the authority to call special and emergency meetings and is authorized by the Board to sign all documents approved by the Board. The Chairman shall make the final approval of all monthly meeting agenda items, including all handouts to be presented at the meeting, in advance of the meeting. He/she shall maintain liaison with the Fire Chief and keep other members of the Board advised of items of general concern. The Chairman presides at all other functions and speaks for the board when so authorized. He/she has the authority to appoint committees as required and shall fulfill any other assignments the Board deems necessary.

The **Vice-Chairman**: Shall preside at all meetings in place of the Chairman and perform such other of his/her duties that may arise in the Chairman's absence.

The **Secretary**: Shall:

(A) Perform such duties as are herein specifically set forth, in addition to such other duties as are customarily incident to the office of Secretary, or as may be assigned by the Board.

(B) Conduct all correspondence not otherwise specifically delegated.

The **Treasurer**: Shall:

(A) Be current on the District's financial status and work closely with the Chief or his/her designee in the preparation of the annual budget.

(B) The Treasurer, or his/her designee, shall be one of the signers on all checks prepared for payment of the District's expenses.

(C) Perform such other duties as are customarily incident to the office of Treasurer, or may be assigned by the Board.

ARTICLE VIII: MEETINGS

Section 1, **Regular Monthly Meetings**: of the Board shall be held on such Day and Time of each month as voted upon annually by the Board at the December meeting.

Section 2, **Special Meetings**: of the Board may be held at any time agreeable to the Board to resolve issues that must be resolved prior to the next regular meeting, provided that reasonable notice is given of such meetings. Minutes will be kept of Special Meetings and all actions taken will have the same force and effect as those of regular meetings.

Section 3, **Emergency Meetings**: may be called to consider matters of such urgency that they must be resolved before a Regular Monthly Meeting may be called. The agenda for such meetings must be restricted solely to the item or items considered to be of an emergency nature.

Section 4, *Left blank intentionally*

Section 5, **Open Meeting Policy**: Meetings of the Board shall be held in accordance with the provision of the Florida Open Government Laws (Sunshine Law Section 286.011 and Chapter 119, "Public Records Law") and accordingly, are open to the public. Correspondence between and among the Board shall be carried out in accordance with the provision of the Florida Open Government Laws (Sunshine Law Section 286.011 and Chapter 119, "Public Records Law").

Section 6, **Notification**: A schedule of the Board's Regular Monthly Meeting shall be published annually in a local publication of general circulation and the department's website. The schedule shall include the date, time and location of each regularly scheduled meeting. Notice of Special Meetings will be advertised in a local publication of general circulation. Emergency Meetings will be posted with as much advance notice as time allows.

Section 7, **Place of Meetings**: All meetings of the Board shall be held in a place that is available to the public. Meetings shall be held in a space provided for meetings at Station 57 located at 3375 Tarpon Lake Blvd, Palm Harbor, FL 34685, but at the direction of the Board, may be held in any other suitable location provided that all Board members and the public are properly notified.

Section 8, **Quorum:** A majority of the Commission members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business at any duly called Regular, Special or Emergency Meeting.

Section 9, **Voting:** All Commission members must vote on each issue unless a conflict of interest exists under Florida state laws. All voting shall be done by voice, a show of hands, or by signed ballot.

Section 10, **Minutes:** All meetings of the Board of Commissioners shall be recorded as defined in §286.011(1). All motions and resolutions adopted shall be prepared in written or typed form and presented to the Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting for their review and acceptance. Minutes of Official Meetings are permanent records. Retention of recordings has a 2 year anniversary after adoption of the Official Minutes or certification of transcript.

Section 11, **Emails:** All electronic communication between Commissioners acting in their capacity as Commissioners shall be forwarded to Administration at eastlakefirerescue@gmail.com.

ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEES

Committees may be appointed by the Chairman from time to time to do research and report on special projects or problems. Up to two Commissioners may serve on a committee, and those committee meetings must be advertised and open to the public according to the Sunshine law.

ARTICLE X: RULES OF CONDUCT

Section 1, **Interference:** No individual Commissioner, officer or the Board as a whole shall interfere with the daily operation of the Fire Department or the Emergency Medical Service department, except that the Board as a whole may bring to the attention of the Fire Chief an area of the daily operation in which the Board deems is not fit and proper.

Section 2, **Labor Negotiations:** All labor negotiations shall be conducted through established procedures as from time to time may be amended and no individual Commissioner or officer shall negotiate with any employee of the District or his representative unless directed by the Board.

Section 3, **Administration:** All orders for personnel will only be issued on the authority of the Fire Chief who is solely responsible to the Commission for his actions and decisions. Requests by Board members for administrative services and information shall be made through the Fire Chief or his designee, except that the Fire Department Office Administrator may be used by Commissioners or officers for administrative support, provided that the operations of the Fire Department are not adversely affected.

Section 4, **Complaints:** All complaints of any nature made by a Commissioner against an employee of the District shall be made to the Chief in a timely manner. The Chief shall investigate said complaint and present said complaint in writing to the Board for action.

Section 5, **Actions:** Commissioners and officers shall not represent their personal positions as those of the entire Board and may not make binding agreements with any individual or organization, unless authorized by the Board to do so. Commissioners may represent their personal positions with any individual or organization provided that such said individuals or organizations are made aware of said representation.

Section 6, **Meeting Attendance:**

Commissioners shall attend all regular meetings unless excused. Commissioners shall notify the Fire Chief, with copy to the Chairman, by email or telephone, as soon as possible, if they are unable to attend a regular meeting and the reason for their absence. Commissioners may attend all regular meetings by legally permissible electronic means up to twice in a fiscal year. Attendance by electronic means may only occur if a quorum of commissioners is present at the public meeting. Electronic means shall mean electronic media technology which provides for interactive video and audio feed. All Commissioners shall be granted one (1) excused absence for a regular meeting per fiscal year. The determination of an excused absence shall be made at the next regular meeting by a majority vote of the remaining Commissioners. Absences not determined by said process to be excused or absences beyond the one granted excused absence per fiscal year will reduce that Commissioner's monthly salary from \$500.00 to \$5.00 in future pay periods for each month of said determination. Any Commissioner who is absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings shall be removed from office by the Board, pursuant to Florida Statute Chapter 191.005(5). Special and emergency meetings, by their nature do not always permit advance notice. Commissioners shall make prudent effort to attend special or emergency meetings. Commissioners may attend special or emergency meetings by telephone or video link, however if a vote is required or called, said Commissioner may not participate in such vote if such attendance is by telephone. Voting by video link shall be permitted. The discretion of the Chairman under Article VII shall be exercised with consideration to the ability of Commissioners to attend special or emergency meetings. Annual budget hearings are an integral part of the budget approval process. Commissioners shall make a prudent effort to attend annual budget hearings. All Commissioners shall be granted one (1) excused absence for a budget hearing per fiscal year. All applicable provisions of the determination of an excused absence for regular meetings shall apply to annual budget hearings.

Section 7, **Conflict of Interest:** Board members must abstain from voting on any contract, action or decision that may be presented to the Board from a Commissioner's family member or business associate for consideration. No Board member shall personally benefit from any action or decision made by the Board of Commissioners. Any opportunity, benefit or advantage shall accrue only to the District and not to any individual Commissioner.

Section 8, **Violations (Discipline and Removal):** Any Commissioner violating the Rules of Conduct contained in these By-Laws shall be subject to action by the remaining Commissioners, who may take the following appropriate action: **First Offense – reprimand; Second Offense – publicly asked to resign.** The Board of Commissioners shall have the power to discipline or suspend (with or without pay) any Commissioner of the District for good cause, notwithstanding any other provision in these By-Laws to the contrary. The discipline, suspension, or in the case of Article X, Section 7 the removal, must be made by a unanimous vote of the Commissioners, excluding the vote of the Commissioner in question. This may only be done at a regular meeting of the Commission; **PROVIDED**, prior to such action, the Commissioner involved shall be informed of the general nature of the charges and given an opportunity to appear at the regular meeting to answer the charges.

ARTICLE XI: COMPENSATION

Commissioners are to receive monthly compensation in an amount determined by the resolution, but not to exceed \$500 monthly. An evaluation of this compensation shall be performed for each annual budget submission.

ARTICLE XII: FIRE CHIEF

The Board shall hire a Fire Chief to serve as the Administrative head of the District's Fire Department. As such, the Chief shall be responsible for all personnel, property and the operation of the Department. He/she shall conduct his/her administration in accordance with a specific set of rules and regulations approved by the Board and within policy framework established by the Board. He/she shall keep the Board advised of all non-routine matters that may arise and shall maintain close liaison with its members. He/she shall prepare the preliminary annual budget with close coordination with the Treasurer for the approval of the Board and provide such counsel and assistance as it may require from time to time.

ARTICLE XIII: STAFF

The Board shall provide for a staff which include the following:

Section 1, **Office Personnel:** Shall be hired and supervised by the Fire Chief and abide by the policies and procedures of the Department, including Article X, Section 3.

Section 2, **Legal Counsel:** Shall be retained to ensure the District's compliance with all applicable state laws, authenticate documents as required and attend such meetings as the Board may see fit.

Section 3, **Accounting Firm:** Shall be retained to audit the District's funds on an annual basis.

ARTICLE XIV: REPORTS

The Board shall ascertain that all required reports on the District's finances and activities are filed with all authorized agencies as required.

ARTICLE XV: FISCAL YEAR

The East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District's fiscal year shall run from October 1 through September 30.

ARTICLE XVI: AMENDMENTS

These By-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the Board at any regular or special meeting thereof, provided there is no conflict with existing pertinent law.

ARTICLE XVII: DURATION

The East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District and its Board of Commissioners shall remain in operation until replaced by legislative process.

ARTICLE XVIII: GOOD AND WELFARE FUND COMMITTEE

Section 1. Purpose

The primary function of the Good and Welfare Fund Committee (the “Committee”) is to assist the East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District Board of Commissioners in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities relating to the financial integrity of the District’s Good and Welfare Fund (the “Fund”) and the District’s compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. In so doing, it is the responsibility of the Committee to maintain free and open communication among the Committee, Fund beneficiaries and the Board of Commissioners.

Section 2. Membership

The Committee will consist of no less than three, and no more than seven members. Members of the Committee shall serve for a two year period. The Committee shall consist of at least one member of the Board of Commissioners. Members of the Committee must also be considered “independent”, in that they are not to accept any consulting, advisory, or other compensatory fee from the District. All meetings are subject to the requirements of the Government in the Sunshine Law, Florida Statute §286, and the Public Records Act, Florida Statute §119.

The Chair of the Committee shall preside over Committee meetings, and his/her designees shall serve in the Chair’s absence.

Section 3. Meetings

The Committee shall hold at least three (3) meetings each fiscal year.

Section 4. Duties and Responsibilities

The following shall be the principal duties and responsibilities of the Committee:

Develop and propose to the Board of Commissioners an annual Fund budget, including fundraising revenue, fundraising expenses and good and welfare expenses in sufficient time for consolidation into the District’s budgeting process.

Approve fundraising initiatives to be proposed to the Board of Commissioners.

Monitor the quarterly cash flows of the Fund for propriety, monitor fundraising expenses in comparison to fundraising revenue for reasonableness, approve the disbursements made to good and welfare expense beneficiaries, and ensure that fundraising expenses and good and welfare expenses do not exceed fundraising revenue.

Ensure that Fund records are adequately maintained and Fund balances are properly reconciled to bank balances on a monthly basis.

Report the Fund status to the Board of Commissioners on a quarterly basis. Such status shall include the results of prior quarter fundraising initiatives, the nature and benefit of future fundraising initiatives and a summary of Fund cash flows from prior quarter operations.

ARTICLE XIX: EFFECTIVE DATE

These By-Laws shall become effective upon adoption, by a super majority vote, of a resolution by the Board of Commissioners.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Randy Burr, Chairman

Kevin Kenney, Vice-Chairman

Jim Dalrymple, Secretary

David Root, Treasurer

Tom McQueen, Commissioner

7-23-2019

Date