


East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District	
	<i>SOG 101.2 Fire Commissioner Standard Operating Guidelines</i>
	Implementation Date: 05/26/2015
	Revision Date(s): 07/28/2015, 02/26/2019, 8/25/2020
	Reviewed Date(s): 1/15/2019, 8/17/2020
Forms or Attachments: None	

Administration of the Board:

1.0 Commissioners should use applicable laws in the State of Florida and existing bylaws adopted by the District to guide their actions and activities in carrying out their duties.

1.1 Commissioners should adhere to existing bylaws adopted by the Fire District with regard to meeting attendance and meeting rules of order. Courtesy and respect during meetings should be maintained at all times and should be monitored by the Board Chairman. Public comments during meetings are encouraged and can be on any topic.

1.2 Commissioners should come prepared to each meeting having read Board material, reports and/or correspondence on matters to be discussed at meetings. Commissioners should attend Board workshops, if applicable, as part of their preparation. At the Fire Chief’s invitation, Commissioners may meet with the Fire Chief or his/her designee prior to each meeting to fully understand matters on the monthly agenda.

1.3 New Business and/or Old Business that remains open during the meeting should be carried forward by the Recording Secretary as Old Business on the monthly agenda for the next meeting.

1.4 New Business for a meeting should be presented to the Fire Chief by the Friday preceding a meeting and managed by the Board Chairman for inclusion in that meeting’s agenda. Last minute items (Monday or Tuesday of the meeting week) must be approved by Board Chairman.

1.5 New Business, requests and comments not on the meeting agenda should be brought up at the end of each meeting for future action by Commissioners or the Fire Chief. The Recording Secretary should ensure that such New Business, requests or comments are recorded in the meeting minutes and placed on the subsequent agenda, if applicable.

Involvement with Department Personnel:

2.0 Commissioners should adhere to existing bylaws and labor contracts adopted by the District with regard to involvement with Department personnel.

2.1 New Business, requests or comments outside of a meeting, should be directed to an Administrative Chief with a copy to or notification of the Fire Chief.

2.2 Administrative support requests should be directed to the Office Administrator or Financial Administrator with a copy to or notification of the Fire Chief.

2.3 Communications on policy, procedure or incident matters should be directed to a Chief Officer with notification of the Fire Chief.

2.4 Communications of a general nature may be directed to any Department personnel through stop-ins, coffees, lunches or other informal means. Responses to any Department personnel requests are encouraged; however, if the request is to initiate or intercede with a complaint, the response should be coordinated with the Fire Chief. Other conversations of a general nature or casual and unofficial conversations require no notification.

2.5 Communications not of a general nature should be coordinated with the Fire Chief and scheduled through the Division Chief.

2.6 Ride-alongs should be coordinated with and approved by the Division Chief.

Commissioner Access to Materials:

3.0 Commissioners are compensated according to existing bylaws adopted by the Fire District. All materials, except as described herein, requested by a Commissioner are at his/her own expense.

3.1 Materials to disseminate information to the public, except campaign or election information are at the expense of the Fire District.

3.2 Badges and Identification Cards are issued to Commissioners and may be used for the duration of their term of office, subject to constraints laid out in existing bylaws, and must be returned upon nonelection or resignation.

3.3 Clothing, helmets, shields and memorabilia may be ordered through the Office Administrator at the Commissioner's own expense. All such material should use Department-approved language, logos and shields, and should properly use the title "Commissioner". Use of such items are subject to the constraints laid out in existing bylaws, which should be strictly adhered to.

3.4 No Department equipment should be borrowed by a Commissioner for personal or election use. Equipment, except for the Antique Fire Truck as described herein, may be used for official purposes but only with the consent of the Fire Chief.

Commissioner Travel:

4.0 Commissioner travel that does not include an overnight stay is at the Commissioner's own expense.

4.1 Commissioner travel for official purposes that includes an overnight stay is reimbursed by the Fire District at a per diem rate in accordance with Florida State Statute 112-061.

4.2 Registration fees or attendance fees for Department-approved meetings, seminars and programs are at the expense of the Fire District, provided that the Commissioner is accompanied by an Administrative Chief.

4.3 Ad-hoc meetings, socials or updates that include beverages or food are at the expense of each attendee.

Commissioner-Sponsored Events:

5.0 Department events sanctioned by the entire Board which are initiated by the Fire Department staff may involve or include Commissioner Participation. Events initiated by a Commissioner that represent the Department to the Community at Large and that use Department

facilities or equipment should be approved by the Board with the consent of the Fire Chief, and are subject to the constraints in existing bylaws regarding communications on behalf of the District and the Board of Commissioners.

5.1 Qualifications for a Commissioner to drive the Antique Fire Truck include training by an Administrative Chief, annual refresher training, and proper approval by the Fire Chief for each use. The Antique Fire Truck should never be used for election purposes.

Commissioner Third Party Communications:

6.0 All communications representing the Board of Commissioners as a whole are signed by the Chairman once approved by a majority of the Board and after the Board has authorized the Chairman to sign such communications. Per existing bylaws, all communications in written or verbal form representing a Commissioner's individual views, opinions or positions should include a disclosure stating such representation. All verbal communications of the same nature should also include such a disclosure.

6.1 The written disclosure should be on all manual and electronic communications and should include the following language:

“The view, opinions or positions expressed herein are those of this Commissioner and do not represent those of the Board of Commissioners”.

6.2 Verbal communications should include similar language that makes such distinction clear.

6.3 Individual communications or Commissioners are not subject to public records laws unless an additional Commissioner or Commissioners are included in such communications.

6.4 Communications by individual Commissioners, either written or verbal, to media outlets or those representing themselves as media outlets require a notification to all other Commissioners including a copy of the written communication or, if verbal, the nature of the communication. This notification should be in written form and is subject to public records law.

6.5 All communications described herein applies to Commissioner-initiated communications or responses or replies to media-initiated communications.

6.6 Materials used by Commissioners before meetings and to be used during meetings should be included in the Board packet, or if timing does not permit such inclusion, should be made available to Commissioners and the public before the meeting begins.

6.7 All materials written, assembled or otherwise recorded during a meeting, either handwritten or electronically captured are subject to public records laws and should be given to the Recording Secretary for public access immediately after such meeting but no later than the day following such Meeting.

Commissioner Access to Benefits:

7.0 Benefits made available to Department employees that do not result in an incremental cost to the District, and if permitted by law, may also be accessed by Commissioners.