

Tracy Rural County Fire Protection District

Board of Directors

John Muniz
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TRACY RURAL COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BROWN ACT COMPLIANCE POLICY

SUBJECT: Brown Act Compliance Policy

DATE UPDATED: March 6, 2020

SECTION 1: PURPOSE

To comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act (Brown Act) as codified in California Government Code §54950, et seq.

SECTION 2: POLICY

It is the policy of the Tracy Rural County Fire Protection District (District) that all applicable meetings and writings of District officials will be open to the public and conducted in compliance with the Brown Act. This includes noticed meetings and any communication medium through which a quorum of the District Board discusses, deliberates, or takes action on an item of District business. The Brown Act does not apply to the independent conduct of individual decision-makers or to social, ceremonial, educational, or other gatherings unless a majority of a decision-making body discusses official business.

SECTION 3: PROCEDURES

I. Agendas

The Board Clerk, in cooperation with the Tracy Rural County Fire Protection District (District) Board of Directors (Board) Chair, shall prepare an agenda for each Regular and Special meeting of the Board in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code Section 54950). Any Director may request any item to be placed on the agenda by contacting the Administrative Assistant at least fourteen business days prior to the date of the meeting.

Any member of the public may request that a matter directly related to District business be placed on the agenda of a regularly scheduled Board meeting, subject to the following conditions:

1. The request must be in writing and be submitted to the Clerk of the Board, together with supporting documents and information, if any, at least fourteen business days prior to the date of the meeting.

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2. The Board Chairman shall be the sole judge of whether the public request is or is not a "matter directly related to District business." The public member requesting the agenda item may appeal the Board Chairman's decision at the next regular board meeting. Any Director may request that the item be placed on the agenda of the Board's next regular meeting.

3. No matter which is legally a proper subject for consideration by the Board in closed session will be accepted for a public meeting.

4. The Board may place limitations on the total time to be devoted to a public request issue at any meeting, and may limit the time allowed for any one person to speak on the issue at the meeting.

This policy does not prevent the Board from receiving public comments at regular and special meetings of the Board on matters which are not on the agenda that a member of the public may wish to bring before the Board. However, the Board shall not discuss or take action on such matters at that meeting, other than providing brief general directions to staff regarding the matter, if appropriate.

At least 72 hours prior to the time of all regular meetings, an agenda, which includes but is not limited to all matters on which there may be discussion and/or action by the Board, shall be posted in a place that is freely accessible to members of the public (California Government Code 54954.2 (a)(1)). The District maintains a website and the agenda shall be posted on the website for public information at the same time. All information made available to the Board (except confidential information restricted by State law per legal counsel advice) shall be available for public review prior to the board meeting.

The agenda for a special meeting shall be posted at least 24 hours before the meeting in the same location as for regular meeting agendas (California Government Code Section 54956).

The Board Chairman of the meetings described herein shall determine the order in which agenda items shall be considered for discussion and/or action by the Board, subject to re-ordering of the agenda by the Board at the meeting.

II. Types of Meetings:

1. Regular meetings of the District Board of Directors shall be held on the third Tuesday of each calendar month at 1:00 p.m. in the District boardroom, located at 835 Central Ave. Tracy, CA 95378.

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2. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Board Chair or by a majority of the Board by delivering written notice to each member of the legislative body and to each local newspaper of general circulation and radio or television stations, requesting notice, in writing and posting a notice on the District's web site. The notice shall be delivered personally or by any other means at least 24 hours before the time of the meeting as specified in the notice. The call and notice shall specify the time and place of the special meeting and the business to be transacted or discussed. No other business shall be considered by the Board at these meetings.

3. Emergency meetings. In the event of an emergency situation involving matters upon which prompt action is necessary due to the disruption or threatened disruption of public facilities, the Board may hold an emergency special meeting without complying with the 24-hour notice. An emergency situation means a crippling disaster which severely impairs public health, safety, or both, as determined by the Board Chair or a majority of the Board. Newspapers of general circulation in the District, radio and television stations which have requested notice of Special meetings shall be notified by at least one hour prior to the emergency meeting. In the event that telephone services are not functioning, the notice requirement of one hour is waived, but the Board, or its designee, shall notify such newspapers, radio stations, or television stations of the fact of the holding of the emergency special meeting, and of any action taken by the Board, as soon after the meeting as possible. Closed session may be held during an emergency meeting by a unanimous vote of the members present, and all other rules governing special meetings shall be observed with the exception of the 24-hour notice. The minutes of the emergency meeting, a list of persons the Board or designee notified or attempted to notify, a copy of the roll call vote(s), and any actions taken at such meeting shall be posted for a minimum of ten days in the District office as soon after the meeting as possible.

4. Adjourned meetings. A majority vote by the Board of Directors may terminate any Board meeting at any place in the agenda and adjourn the to any time and place specified in the order of adjournment, except that if no Directors are present at any regular or adjourned regular meeting, the Clerk of the Board may declare the meeting adjourned to a stated time and place, and he/she shall cause a written notice of adjournment to be given.

5. Advisory committees. The meetings of Advisory committees (comprised of two Board members less than a quorum), created for a specific task and not a standing committee, are not subject to the notice and open meeting provision of the Brown Act.

6. Closed sessions. The Brown Act includes limited exceptions for closed sessions. The agenda must cite the Brown Act section authorizing the closed session. Following the closed session, the Board must provide a written or oral report on certain actions taken during the closed session and the vote of every Board member present during the discussion.

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The Clerk of the Board shall ensure that all required and appropriate information is available for the audience at meetings of the Board of Directors, and that physical facilities for said meetings are functional and appropriate for all persons.

The Board shall participate in continuing education as required by law to remain informed about the application of the Brown Act to the Board’s activities.

Approved as to form:

Policy/Procedure approved by:
