

# Groveland Community Services District

## Board of Directors Norms for Effective Deliberations

Adopted: January 8, 2019

Ratified or Updated: December 8, 2020

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE GROVELAND COMMUNITY  
SERVICES DISTRICT AGREE TO:

### Relationship Norms

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- *Create an environment that promotes respect and appreciation (never dismiss/devalue others)*
  - *Listen openly, trying to really hear what other people are saying*
  - *Ask probing - not challenging - questions to further understanding and gain knowledge*
  - *Address process, not personalities*
  - *Use "I" messages (no blame)*
  - *Look for common ground/build consensus*
  - *Each be responsible for the success of the meeting (participate equally)*
  - *Maintain appropriate body language*
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### Capacity Norms

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- *Hire sufficiently qualified personnel to meet the needs of the District*
  - *Expand education for the Board and staff*
  - *Expect creative decisionmaking*
  - *Maintain a high level of service and responsiveness by adhering to a policy of updating technology and resources*
  - *Ensure a cooperative and open work and Board meeting environment*
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### Process Norms

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- *Be committed to the mission of the District*
  - *Monitor and respond to the changing needs of the community*
  - *Address and resolve policy issues, and set priorities*
  - *Maintain confidentiality (builds trust)*
  - *Work toward the future - learning from the past*
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## Communication Norms

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- *Request information through the General Manager*
  - *Be respectful of staff time and priorities when requesting information*
  - *Paraphrase for understanding*
  - *Be accurate and brief*
  - *Actively listen*
  - *Not guess if we aren't certain of the answer*
  - *Understand that we will not know every aspect of daily District operations*
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# GROVELAND CSD BOARD MEETING AND DIRECTOR PROTOCOL

Adopted January 8, 2019, Ratified December 8, 2020

## PREPARATION FOR BOARD MEETINGS

### 1) Placing staff generated items on the agenda

- a) The District's General Manager places these items on the draft agenda, and the agenda is reviewed by the GM and Board President for final approval.

### 2) Placing a Board member item on the agenda

- a) The Board President and GM ultimately decides if the item is appropriate to be placed on the agenda and if so, when. If it is decided that the item is not appropriate to be placed on the agenda, the Director may take the issue up with the full Board wherein the Board by consensus may direct the GM to place the item on a future agenda for discussion.

### 3) Placing a public item on the agenda

- a) The Board President and GM ultimately decides if the item is appropriate to be placed on the agenda and if so, when. If it is decided that the item is not appropriate to be placed on the agenda, the public member may take the issue up with the full Board in Public Comment wherein the Board by consensus may direct the GM to place the item on a future agenda for discussion.

### 4) Standard Agenda Action Item Wording

- a) The Board agreed to add a "Discussion and Action Items" section to the agenda with clear wording provided on the anticipated action to be taken by the Board.

### 5) Structure and order of agenda

- a) The Board agreed to the following:
  - i) Approve the Order of the Agenda
  - ii) Public Comment
  - iii) Information Items/Staff Reports
  - iv) Consent Calendar
  - v) Old Business/Continued Business
  - vi) Discussion and Action Items
  - vii) Adjournment
- b) The Board also agreed to provide for "fixed time" agenda items to allow for items to be considered at a specific time under certain circumstances. The Board recommends that interested members of the public show up at the beginning of

the meeting as the exact time an item will be heard on the agenda cannot be guaranteed.

#### **6) Use of Consent Calendar**

- a) The Board agreed to use the Consent Calendar to approve minutes, payables, waive reading of Ordinances and Resolutions except by title and other non-controversial items as determined appropriate for effective meeting time management by the GM and Board President.

#### **7) Board agenda packet content, preparation and distribution**

- a) The Board agreed that the goal is to receive the agenda packet by the Friday before the meeting at the latest. The Board would further like to retain receiving the agenda and packet via paper and email copy for the time being with the potential of going fully paperless in the future.

#### **8) Getting questions answered about agenda items prior to meeting**

- a) The Board agreed to continue to seek answers to questions from the GM or Board Secretary as appropriate and needed; in advance of Board meetings.

#### **9) Scheduling Board workshops or study sessions**

- a) The Board agreed to scheduling special/workshop meetings for items that will garner public interest and/or require broad public input, taking into account best day, time, and location appropriate when scheduling.

#### **10) Agenda items heard in committee prior to placement on agenda**

- a) Board agreed that normally agenda items do not need to be reviewed by a committee prior to being placed on a meeting agenda.

#### **11) Detail and content of Board meeting minutes**

- a) The Board agreed that the practice of having the District Secretary transcribe portions of the meeting minutes to include a summary of what was said, in addition to the actions taken put the District at risk of liability by permanently maintaining potentially inaccurate and irrelevant information. Preparing summary Minutes further put the Secretary in the position of determining what statements or portions thereof were important and unimportant to include; and to understand and frame the issues from the perspective of the speaker.
  - i) The Board agreed to follow the existing policy and to have the minutes reflect only the actions taken by the Board.

### **BOARD MEETING CONDUCT**

#### **12) Board room layout**

- a) The Board agreed to rearrange the Board table to move the president to the middle, in an L shape.

#### **13) Board meeting length**

- a) The Board agreed to try and keep the Board meetings to a 3 hour maximum.

#### **14) Board meeting date and time**

- a) The Board agreed to change the Board meeting date and time to the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00am.

#### **15) Role of the president**

- The Board agreed that the President presides over meetings, works with the GM in establishing the final agenda, and has no more authority than other Directors, beside chairing responsibility/duty.

#### **16) Public Input at Board Meetings and Board expectation of response to public comments**

- a) The Board developed the following procedure regarding all public comment:

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)**

##### Three Minutes Per Speaker

- Board President will open Public Comment and explain its purpose
- The Board cannot have discussion or debate with those commenting or asking questions (except for clarification)
- Public Comments that require lengthy discussion or where answers are requested:
  - Simple "Yes or No" type factual answers may be given by the President or General Manager
  - The issue may be referred to Board President and GM to discuss for future agenda
- The Board President will formally close public comment

\*\*The GM may briefly address questions from public comment in the (informational) staff report agenda item later in the meeting

#### **INFORMATIONAL REPORTS**

##### **(General Manager, Fire, Operations and Administration)**

Provided for transparency purposes; to inform the Board and public with updates on critical projects, timely issues, legislation and other matters not requiring immediate Board action

- Board and Public Comments are taken on Reports at the conclusion of each staff report
- Staff may respond to questions with brief clarification
- No Board discussion or deliberation will be conducted for items discussed in reports
  - Report topics are not specifically listed on the agenda with enough detail for Board discussion

#### **BOARD PRESIDENT STATEMENT PRIOR TO AGENDA ACTION ITEMS**

- *The Board of Directors intends to consider each of the following items and may take action at this meeting. Public comment will be received on each individual agenda item listed below, prior to Board action.*
- *At the conclusion of a public comment on an agenda item, the President may ask a speaker a question for clarification if necessary, and may ask staff to respond to issues or questions raised. Responses will be polite, respectful, and factual.*
- *If Board members want to respond to public comments or questions on agenda action items, I ask that you wait until after staff has provided the factual responses, and do so in the course of deliberation on the decision.*

#### **ITEMS LISTED ON THE AGENDA**

- Board President Introduces the Agenda Item
  - Staff Report is Provided
  - Board President may seek Initial Board Input or Thoughts to Ensure Clarity
  - Board initial deliberation; motion/second
  - Open and Receive Public Comment or questions on the Agenda Item and Motion
  - Board President will Close Public Comment
  - Staff will Provide Answers to Public Questions Raised if Directed by the Board President
  - Board final Deliberation and Vote
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#### **17)Board member reports during meetings**

- a) The Board agreed to potentially amend the Board Policy and agenda format to include a section regarding Board member reports, with the understanding that there will be established time limits and that there shall be no criticism of other Board members or staff members during such reports.

#### **18)Staff reports to the Board at meetings**

- a) The Board agreed that brief reports on staff actions and activities was important and should be provided in writing for the Board meeting when possible.

#### **19)Rules of Order of Board meetings**

- a) The Board agreed that it will continue to use a flexible rule of order at this time.

#### **20)Tabling agenda items**

- a) The Board agreed that Board meetings take much preparation time and time/effort for public attendance. Considering this, the Board will strive to act on all agenda items and try to avoid tabling items if at all possible; but to use when needed as determined by a vote of the Board.

The Board ultimately decided to eliminate all standing committees until such time as formation was deemed needed and appropriate, and that each committee would have a clear task/goal and time frame at the time of formation. The Board agreed that the following will be determined at the time a committee is formed:

- Role and authority of the committee formed
- Committee procedure - recommendations versus voting
- Preparation and distribution of committee agendas
- Verbal committee reports to the Board in meeting, or (Written) committee meeting report, preparation, dissemination

## BOARD MEMBER CONDUCT AND RELATIONS IN WITH COMMUNITY

**21) Board would like to potentially create policy regarding the election of Board officers annually.**

**22) Expectations of Board member representation of the District in public/meetings**

- a) The Board agreed that Directors will not make comments that tend to discredit the District or its employees
- b) The Board agreed and possible policy implementation “that Board members make it clear what is *their* personal opinion, and what the opinion of the Board as a whole. It was also agreed that Board member’s will make statements that although they may not have voted a particular way on an issue, that they support the Board’s decision.

**23) Communication with the media – contact person/training**

- a) The Board agreed that this communication will be left as sole responsibility of the GM, and that Board members may only confirm facts or statements they made are accurate. Possible policy creation in the future if needed.

**24) Board member attendance at local functions and other agency meetings**

- a) The Board agreed that there was no concern with Board member attendance and participation, knowing that they must state that they are attending as a non-Board member, unless approved otherwise by the Board.

**25) Board member attendance of industry conferences**

- a) The Board agreed to strongly encourage Board member attendance to include the CSDA Leadership Academy and Annual Conference, with a goal of sending 1 to 2 directors annually.

**26) Board training expectations**

- a) The Board agreed that Ethics and Harassment training are mandatory and must be kept current, and that attendance at industry training and conferences is encouraged and supported. The District will budget for Director attendance at

training functions.

**27) District recognition for good governance**

- a) The Board agreed that it would like to achieve the CSDA District of Distinction Designation and Transparency Certifications

**COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS**

**28) Management and content of district website**

- a) The Board agreed that it would like to see more frequent updates to add new relevant items and to remove older non-relevant items.

**29) Information to public related to budgets, policies, projects**

- a) The Board requested that such current information be available on the website with simple descriptions and links for more information

**30) How much does the Board want to know and how should it be distributed?**

- a) Legislation
  - i) Through signing up on CSDA or in a GM report if needed
- b) Other Board member requests for info
  - i) The Board would like to be provided information that is requested and provided to an individual director
- c) Awards, certifications, accomplishments, cost savings, start and end of projects, milestones, etc
  - i) To be presented in reports at Board meetings

**31) How ideas are brought up**

- a) Ideas are to be presented to the General Manager, who can present them in meeting reports as appropriate

**32) Handling complaints or comments from the public outside of meetings**

- a) The Board agreed that public complaints or concerns should be routed through the GM, who will bring to the Board as needed.

**33) Handling complaints from staff**

- a) The Board agreed these would be handled by the GM or through the use of outside consultants if related to the GM.

**34) Individual director requests for action during meeting - Clear direction to staff**

- a) The Board agreed that it would clarify the request and seek consensus of the Board prior to providing the GM direction

**35) GM to Board communication**

- a) The Board agreed that meeting reports and agenda items should be adequate

communication from the GM to the Board. The GM may generate memos or emails to communicate items of critical, immediate importance to the Board, with the understanding that there shall be no Board reply unless at a meeting

**36) Board member to staff communication outside of meetings**

- a) The Board acknowledged that direct communication with staff members below the GM can be misconstrued, but is certainly not prohibited

**37) Arranging and conducting Board member site visits**

- a) The Board agreed that site visits are a beneficial component of the orientation process and should be arranged by the GM for each new director or directors. Site visits by individual Board members are to be coordinated through the GM.

**38) Document management, confidential**

- a) The Board agreed that it would return all confidential documentation to the GM or Board Secretary for handling. The Board further agreed that no confidential information will ever be disclosed in any manner.