

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District

POLICY MANUAL

Section	Governance
Policy Number	AG-4115-01
Policy Title	Town Hall Session

POLICY OBJECTIVE

The decision-making processes of local government are grounded in the fundamental principals of openness, accountability, accessibility, and transparency. Open public meetings enable the public to understand local government decisions and should allow for meaningful opportunities for participation and contribution. Public participation includes reasonable opportunities to be heard and or to present written submissions.

The purpose of this policy is to set clear directions for how Town Hall (Public Comment) sessions are to be conducted.

DEFINITIONS

“Board ” means the trustees holding office as provided under the Local Government Act including the trustee elected as chair.

“Chair” means the person elected by trustees to the position of chair, or the acting chair presiding at a meeting, as the context requires.

“Committee” means a Standing, Select or other committee of the Board but does not include Committee of the Whole.

“Committee of the Whole” means a meeting the Board that is limited to receiving information, deliberating, and making recommendations to the Board.

“Corporate Officer” means the person appointed by the Board whose position is established by bylaw is assigned the responsibility of corporate administration under the Local Government Act.

“District” means the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District.

“Member” means a person elected to the Board of Trustees of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District or a person appointed to a Committee of the Board.

“Regular Board Meeting” means a meeting of the Board where the date, time and place has been set out in a prepared schedule.

“Special Board Meeting” means a meeting of the Board other than a regular or inaugural meeting.

“Standing Committee” means a committee of the Board established pursuant to the Local Government Act.

“Select Committee” means a committee of the Board established pursuant to the Local Government Act.

“Town Hall Session” means the informal public comment session usually held before regular meetings of the *Board* where the public have an opportunity to express concerns that relate to the Fire Service, direct questions to the Board, or address the Board regarding a matter included on the agenda.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to: Committee of the Whole Meetings, Regular Meetings, Special Meetings, or Town Hall Meetings of the Board; and meetings of Committees.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

A period of fifteen minutes will be made available on each meeting agenda for a Town Hall Session. The time allocated for public comment may be extended at the discretion of the Chair.

An individual shall not speak more than once at a meeting for a period of one to three minutes except at the discretion of the Chair.

Individuals wishing to speak at a meeting may sign up in advance through the Corporate Officer by providing their name, contact information and the subject they wish to speak on. To be included on the speakers list, notification must be received at least one business day (twenty-four hours) before the scheduled start of the meeting.

The speakers list shall be on a first come, first served basis. Should there be time remaining, the Chair will invite public comment from those present at the meeting. Written copies of presentations will be handed to the Corporate Officer for inclusion with the records of the meeting.

Speaker's presentation must fall within the jurisdiction of the Board, relate to Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue operations, or address a matter that is on the meeting's agenda.

Speakers will begin their presentation after being recognized by the Chair. Speakers will state their name and advise whether they wish to be publicly identified in the meetings' minutes and, as applicable, audio or audio-visual recordings.

Speakers must address their questions and comments to the Chair and must use respectful language and adhere to expected standards of meeting decorum.

The Chair may interrupt a speaker's presentation at the end of their allotted period, otherwise no Member may not interrupt a speaker except on a point of order.

Members shall not respond to public comment or engage in debate. At the discretion of the Chair, a Member or staff may ask clarifying questions or to correct incorrect information.

Following a speaker, the Board may refer an issue to staff for a report or refer the issue to a committee.

The minutes of the meeting will summarize public comment and record whether matters were referred to staff or a committee.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES' DISCRETION

The provisions set out in this policy are subject to revision from time to time at the discretion of the Board.

CROSS REFERENCES

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District, *Officer Positions Establishment Bylaw No.85*
Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District *Meetings Procedures Bylaw No 146*

APPROVALS

Approval date:	21-Mar 2022	Approved by:	Board of Trustees
1. Amendment date:		Approved by:	
2. Amendment date:		Approved by:	
3. Amendment date:		Approved by:	