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# TEMPLETON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

## POLICY HANDBOOK / BYLAWS

POLICY TITLE: Operating Principles of the Board (Norms)  
POLICY NUMBER: 4005

### 4005.1 IMPLEMENTATION

- The Templeton Community Services District, hereinafter referred to as TCSD, is committed to practice these norms, whereupon we will evaluate, learn, and adjust according to what we learn.
- Upon the occasion of the occurrence of what appears to be a breach of these norms, we are committed to addressing this perception first to the individual(s) involved, before raising the issue with the Board itself. As an example, the Board President may call a break during the meeting for the purpose of privately discussing an apparent breach with another member of the Board. Because we value learning and improvement, we are committed to debriefing each of these at each of our Board meetings.
- Revisit and display these norms at each Board meeting.

### 4005.2 COMMUNICATION NORMS

- All communication will be accurate and to the point.
- Listen respectfully and actively when communicated with.
- Always Check Your Assumptions.
- Articulate thoughts professionally and respectfully.

### 4005.3 PROCESS NORMS

- The Board shall address and resolve policy issues and set priorities by building consensus through orderly conduct.
- The Board and Staff are committed to TCSD's mission and to work as a team.
- The Board and Staff need to be responsive to the community.
- Staff needs to make available all information and analysis of alternatives so that the Board can make "reasoned decisions."
- The Board is committed to a high level of public engagement, public participation, and

transparency.

- The Board will promote educational opportunities for continued learning, new technologies and best practices for the Board and Staff.
- All requests from the Board for information/agenda items will be directed to the General Manager and provided to all Board members.

#### **4005.4 RELATIONSHIP NORMS**

- Create an environment that promotes trust, respect and appreciation between the Board, Staff, Consultants, and citizens.
- Fundamental agreement that the focus of TCSD's mission is its accomplishments and future vision that meets the needs of its customers.
- Establish, accept and support common purpose and vision, and not undermine the authority of the Board after decisions are made.

#### **4005.5 CAPACITY NORMS**

- Encourage creative decision-making.

Michael Thomas [REDACTED]

7/27/2023 5:37 PM

## For What It's Worth

To JAMES TOWNSEND [REDACTED]

As an interested observer, here are my comments regarding topic the TCSD Operating Principles of the Board (Norms) Policy # 4005, for your consideration:

- The capitalization is a bit capricious. Suggest you follow standard capitalization grammar.
- Recommend numbers instead of bullets to make it easier to refer to.
- Process Norms, 1st bullet: what on earth does “set priorities by building consensus through orderly conduct” mean? In other words, this is vague and unclear. I would encourage the ad hoc committee to ensure each line is behaviorally specific. Here is the test I always use to ensure behavior descriptions are clear and specific:
  - Observable – something an observer can see or hear.
  - Reliable – a description of the behavior that different independent observers are likely to agree on.
  - Measurable - if you can tell how many times the individual engaged in the behavior, it lends credibility and helps to establish the “strength of the signal”. Regardless of whether we measure the behavior, if we articulate the behavior in terms which are measurable, odds of being able to observe it are much better.
- Process Norms, 2nd bullet: “The Board and Staff are committed to work as a team.” This is just plain fluff. It sounds nice, and we want staff to work as a team, but the Board is an entity separate from staff. For the Board and staff to work together as a team violates the Board Bylaws, specifically Article 7, Board Member Guidelines.
- Delete anything that is already covered by the Board Bylaws. Covering the same content in 2 different places creates document management nightmares. Specifically, delete the last bullet under Process Norms.
- Revise or delete any reference to vision, since CCSD has a mission but not a vision.
- I recommend adding a section titled “Decision Making Norms” with content something like:
  - Has the issue been properly framed?
  - Have all appropriate alternatives been given the proper consideration?
  - Do we have meaningful, reliable information sufficient to evaluate each of the alternatives?
  - Do we have clarity on the values and trade-offs between the various alternatives?
  - Do we have adequate, unbiased analysis?
  - Considering the different perspectives of all decision makers and stakeholders, is there sufficient commitment to the recommended course of action?

Respectfully,

**FOR PURPOSES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION, EDITS HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE FORM OF SUGGESTIONS. YELLOW HIGHLIGHTED WORDS ARE SUGGESTED TO BE DELETED, RED TYPED WORDS ARE SUGGESTED TO BE ADDED. THE BOARD REQUESTED THAT THE POLICY COMMITTEE EDIT THE TEMPLETON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT OPERATING PRINCIPLES OF THE BOARD TO BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE CCSD. SOME OF THE PRINCIPLES APPLY ONLY TO THE BOARD, SOME APPLY ONLY TO STAFF, AND SOME APPLY TO ALL—THE BOARD, THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS, AND STAFF.**

**DRAFT Edits to Templeton Community Services District Operating Principles of the Board**

**Cambria Community Services District Operating Principles for the Board of Directors, Standing Committee members, and Staff**

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

The Cambria Community Services District (CCSD) is committed to adhering to these Operating Principles (Principles), and will evaluate, learn and adjust our operating norms based on what we learn.

Upon the occurrence of what appears to be a breach of these Principles, The Board is We are committed to addressing the perceived breach with the individual involved, prior to the full Board or committee taking up the issue. At the request of any Board member, the Board President or Committee Chair may call a break in the meeting to privately discuss the potential breach with the individual involved. In order to avoid any potential Brown Act violation, any private discussion must be limited to the breach of these Principles and not include any discussion of CCSD business.

These Operating Principles shall be included in every Board CCSD public meeting agenda packet.

**COMMUNICATION Operating Principles**

All communication from Board members, Standing Committee Members and staff shall be accurate and to the point.

Board members and Committee Members shall respectfully practice active listening when fellow Board members, staff, or members of the public are speaking.

All comments from Board members and staff shall be made in a professional and respectful manner.

**PROCESS Operating Principles**

The Board **and Committee Members** shall seek, whenever possible, to resolve policy issues and set priorities by building consensus.

The Board, **Committee Members** and staff are committed to implementing CCSD's Mission Statement.

Staff are committed to making all available information and analysis of alternatives available to Board members well in advance of decision points, allowing the Board to make thoughtful and informed decisions.

#### DECISION MAKING Operating Principles

When making policy, setting priorities or initiating major capital projects, the Board and staff shall:

Ensure the issue has been properly framed.

Considered **all** appropriate alternatives.

Ensured **that** the analysis is adequate and unbiased.

Consider the perspective of all the Board members, **Standing Committee members**, staff, members of the public and other stakeholders.

#### RELATIONSHIP Operating Principles

The Board, **Standing Committee members**, and staff shall strive to create an environment that promotes trust, respect and appreciation **between the** **among** Board **members**, **Standing Committee Members**, **staff and members of the public**.

The Board, **Standing Committee Members**, **and** staff shall accept and support CCSD's mission, and refrain from undermining the authority of the Board after decisions are made.