

Board of County Commissioners

Okaloosa County, Florida

Title: Board Appointed Advisory and Decision Making Boards, Commissions, Councils and Committees

Date Adopted: February 20, 2018

Effective Date: February 20, 2018

SECTION I: PURPOSE

To establish a standardized policy and procedure to govern Board appointed advisory and decision making boards, commissions, councils and committees in existence on the effective date of the policy and to any thereafter established.

SECTION II: POLICY

It shall be the policy of the County to maintain a standardized application and appointment process for volunteer citizens who are willing to serve on Board appointed advisory and decision making boards, commissions, councils and committees; to assure that all advisory and decision making boards, commissions, councils and committees appointed by the Board comply with all applicable Government-in-the-Sunshine, public records, Code of Ethics laws, and applicable codes of conduct; to ensure that all citizens, who volunteer their time to serve on boards, commissions, councils and committees following the effective date of the policy, are appointed following completion of a satisfactory criminal history and background investigation.

SECTION III: AUTHORITY

To the extent the policy delegates any authority, it is so delegated to the County Administrator. The County Attorney shall be responsible for providing any legal guidance necessary for the County Administrator to carry out his/her responsibilities under the policy.

SECTION IV: DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the following terms shall have the meanings set forth below:

Advisory Boards, Commissions, Councils and Committees: any Board, Commission, Council or Committee, or group previously or hereafter established by the Board, to provide input, advice, and/or recommendations regarding matters to be brought before the Board for approval. For example: Aviation Advisory Committee; Aviation Board; Commission on the Status of Women; Parks Advisory Committee; Tourist Development Council; Affordable Housing Board.

Applicant: a person who is interested in serving on an advisory or decision making board, commission, council or committee and who submits an application, completed in accordance with the policy.

Application: the form to be completed and submitted by those persons interested in serving on an advisory or decision making board, commission, council or committee, other than those persons whose public positions are specifically identified by statute, ordinance, resolution, policy, or other law as a required or allowable member of the board, commission, council or committee as identified in such law or regulation. For example: a County Commissioner, Building Official, Chief Correctional Officer.

Board: the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner: a member of the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners.

County: Okaloosa County, Florida, a political subdivision of the State of Florida.

Decision Making Boards, Commissions, Councils and Committees: any board, commission, council or committee, or group previously or hereafter established, to make decisions pursuant to statute, ordinance, resolution, Board approved by laws, policy or rule promulgated by federal, state or local law, as may be amended from time to time. For example: Board of Adjustment; Code Enforcement Board; Construction, Electrical, Mechanical and Plumbing Competency Boards; Planning Commission; Value Adjustment Board; Board of Trustees of the Law Library; Okaloosa Gas District Board¹.

Liaison Department: the county department who serves as coordinator and provides staff support for the board, commission, council or committee.

SECTION V: PROCEDURES

1. Responsible Departments: The County Administrator, or designee, shall be responsible for compliance of the policy, and shall be charged with the following responsibilities to be carried out in accordance with the policy:
 - a. Developing and implementing a process for the selection and appointment of members to boards, commissions, councils and committees;
 - b. Developing and implementing a centralized custodial system for retention of minutes and bylaws of boards, commissions, councils and committees.
 - c. The Office Supervisor will be responsible for maintaining a database of the members of all boards, commissions, councils and committees, the points of contact for each, and the term expiration dates.
 - d. Where a liaison department is assigned to a board, commission, council or committee, the liaison department director and staff support will assist with compliance of the policy.

2. Vacancies to Boards, Commissions, Councils and Committees:

¹ Okaloosa Gas District is an Independent Special District formed by Legislative Act, as amended by Chapter 2000-443 Laws of Florida, with one member appointed by the Board to represent the interests of unincorporated areas and the interests of non-member cities. While the Gas District is a decision making board, they are independent and not making decisions on behalf of the County. Accordingly, there would be no prohibition of a county employee serving on this board.

- a. The office Supervisor will notify the Commissioners, County and Deputy Administrators, the Public Information Officer and department liaison ninety days in advance of a term ending.
 - b. The Public Information Officer will issue a press release and provide an announcement of the vacancy on the County web site at least sixty days prior to a term ending.
 - c. For appointments made by individual Commissioners and not the full Board, the press release and announcement will be at the discretion of the Commissioner.
3. Application Process for Boards, Commissions, Councils and Committees - The County Administrator shall develop and maintain an application in a form to include:
 - a. An inquiry sufficient to establish the applicant's experience, qualifications, and experience for the purpose of determining qualifications and suitability for boards, commissions, councils and committees;
 - b. An inquiry sufficient to confirm whether the applicant is a resident of Okaloosa County;
 - c. A notice to the applicant which will inform the applicant of his/her obligation, if appointed to a board, commission, council or committee, to follow the applicable Sunshine Laws, Code of Ethics, Public Records Laws, and applicable code of conduct.
 - d. Applications will be maintained, on file, for a period of two years from date of completion or two years following applicant's term on the board, commission, council or committee, whichever is longer.
 4. Preliminary Application Review - The County Administrator, or designee, shall review all applications for completeness, notifying the applicant of any deficiency in the application.
 5. Appointment of Members to Boards, Commissions, Councils and Committees -
 - a. The County Administrator, or designee, shall work with the liaison department to collectively review the applications.
 - b. Where members are appointed by individual Commissioners, the County Administrator, or designee, together with the liaison department, shall provide the list of eligible applications to the Commissioner. Upon selection, a criminal background investigation will be conducted to determine suitability. The matter shall be placed on the Board's agenda, where applicable, for appointment of the selection to the board, commission, council or committee.
 - c. Where members are appointed by the full Board, the County Administrator, or designee, shall, following completion of successful criminal background investigations, provide the eligible applications to the Commissioners as part of their regular meeting agenda for review and appointment at a Board meeting.
 - d. County employees may not serve on decision making boards, commissions, councils or committees, except where their public positions are specifically identified by statute, ordinance, resolution, policy, or other law as a required or allowable member of the board, commission, council or committee as identified in such law or regulation.
 6. Orientation - All newly appointed members shall participate in an orientation process, which shall include, but is not limited to, an overview of Sunshine Law, public records laws, ethics (financial disclosure, gifts law, conflicts of interest) and relevant statutes, ordinances and policies. From time-to-time, a refresher briefing will be held on the topics included in the

orientation. The County Attorney or designee shall be responsible for developing and implementing an orientation program.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Florida Statute Chap. 112, Part III, Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees

Florida Statute Chap 119, Public Records

Florida Statute 286.011, Government-in-the-Sunshine Law

Okaloosa County Human Resources Policy Manual, Chap XIII, Code of Conduct