

HOCKLEY COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS POLICYS AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

It shall be the policy of the Board of Directors of the Hockley County Appraisal District to welcome public input, comments and complaints regarding the operations of the appraisal district and the appraisal review board.

FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The board of directors is the governing body of the appraisal district. The board's principal responsibilities are the appointment of the chief appraiser, the appointment of the appraisal review board, the appointment of the taxpayer liaison officer if applicable and the approval of the budget under which the appraisal district's and the review board's activities are funded.

The board also has various other functions that relate to the financial and administrative functions of the district. These include the selection of the district's depository, the approval of any contracts for outside appraisal services, the approval of all contracts pertaining to the administration of the district and the resolution of any litigation to which the district is a party.

The Texas Legislature has defined the responsibilities of the board of directors in the Texas Property Tax Code (Section 6). The legislature has also defined the responsibilities of others in the taxation process. The chief appraiser, for example, is the only person empowered to make decisions about the value of property and whether the property qualifies for exemption or some special appraisal status, such as agricultural use valuation. The appraisal review board is the only board empowered to review the decisions of the chief appraiser regarding the values and taxability of individual properties. The board of directors may not alter a decision by either the chief appraiser or the review board in such matters. The board of directors sets the general policies of the district regarding appraisal matters, such as the frequency with which a reappraisal is performed. (State law requires a reappraisal every three years.)

The legislature has also relegated the power to hire appraisal district staff to the chief appraiser. Thus, the decision to dismiss or retain an individual employee rests with the chief appraiser, not the board of directors.

While the board has very little authority over the matters of hiring or appraisals, the board welcomes public input about the fairness and courtesy with which these functions are performed by the appraisal staff and the review board.

POLICY REGARDING PUBLIC COMMENTS AT BOARD MEETINGS

It is the policy of the board of directors that members of the public are afforded the opportunity of appearing before the board to comment on any issue under the jurisdiction of the board. This will include the opportunity to comment on the policies and procedures of the appraisal district and the appraisal review board.

The agenda of each regularly scheduled meeting of the board of directors will contain an agenda item for public comments and a report by the taxpayer liaison officer when required by law.

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

When a written complaint is filed with the board of directors, the board shall review the complaint and determine whether the complaint is one that the board has authority to resolve. If the board determines that the complaint is one that must be resolved by the chief appraiser or the appraisal review board, the board will refer the complaint to the appropriate authority.

If the complaint is one that the board does have authority to resolve, the board will first determine the means for investigation and resolution of the complaint. The options for investigation and resolution of the complaint include: assigning a committee of the board to investigate, assigning a single board member to investigate, obtaining outside assistance to investigate the complaint, or requesting a report on the matter from the chief appraiser.

The board will also determine the means of reporting the results of the investigation, whether a written report or an oral report, to the board. The board will provide for notice to the complainant of the results of the investigation. If an oral report to the board is scheduled, the complainant will be notified of the date and time of the meeting at which the report is scheduled. If a written complaint is filed with the board, the board chairman will notify the parties to the complaint at least quarterly of the status of the complaint, unless in the opinion of the board, such notice would jeopardize an ongoing undercover investigation.

The complaint procedure is to provide access to the board of directors of the appraisal district for members of the taxpaying public. This policy is not a grievance procedure for employees of the appraisal district and is not intended as an alteration of the districts at will employment policy.

ACCESS TO THE BOARD BY NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING OR DISABLED PERSONS

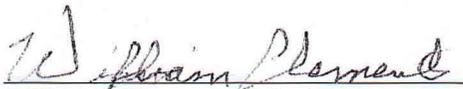
It is the policy of the board of directors that every reasonable effort will be made to assist all persons in obtaining access to the board of directors regardless of the person's ability

to speak English and regardless of any physical, mental or developmental disability of any person wishing to communicate with the board.

If a person who does not speak English expresses a desire to communicate with the board, the board shall seek to obtain a translator from the members of the board, the appraisal staff, or the community at large to assist the person in communicating with the board.

If a person with a physical, mental or developmental disability expresses a desire to communicate with the board, the board will seek to obtain the appropriate professional assistance to help the person in communicating with the board.

DATE: 2-9-2010

APPROVED: 
William Clements, Chairman

ATTEST: 
Iris Keeling, Secretary