



# Sherwood Forest Lake District

## Prudential Committee Chair Responsibilities

This memo focuses on the roles and responsibilities required to build and maintain strong leadership within the prudential committee and to give members within the direction they need to be successful. Leadership in the prudential committee means providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the goals of the District consistent with the provisions specified in the Special Act.

District policy may designate any duties and obligations of the chair, so it is important for the chair to periodically review this policy for clarification on the chair's role. In reality, the chair has few statutory responsibilities.

**NOTE: The authority to chair is conferred by a vote of the members of the committee any time there is a reorganization of the committee – therefore, the chair is no more powerful than any other committee member. The chair can be overruled at any time by a simple majority vote of the board. Generally, the district's prudential committee leadership is reorganized immediately after the election of new officers, however, reorganization can occur anytime the prudential committee entertains and passes a motion for reorganization.**

### Principal Duties of the Chair:

1. In consultation with other board or committee members, schedule dates, times and location for meetings
2. Call special or emergency prudential committee meetings when required
3. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all board meetings;
4. Ensure meeting are called and held in accordance with the districts' by-laws, the Special Act and the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
5. In consultation with other board or committee members establish and confirm the monthly meeting agenda for each meeting
6. Ensure the meeting agenda and if possible any relevant documents are circulated to the members of the committee three days in advance of the meeting
7. Officiate and conduct meetings in accordance with the provisions found in the Open Meeting Law and parliamentary procedures designated in the most recent *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised edition*
8. Provide leadership & ensure committee members are aware of their obligations and that the committee complies with its responsibilities
9. Ensure there is sufficient time during the meeting to fully discuss agenda items

10. Ensure that discussion on agenda items is on topic, productive and professional
11. Ensure minutes are complete and accurate, retained, included and reviewed at the next meeting
12. Act as the District's Chief Procurement Officer under Chapter 30B
13. Coordinate appointed special subcommittee activities in an ex-officio capacity
14. Keep the vice-chair informed on all pertinent matters in case the chair is absent
15. Sign official documents that require the signature of the chair
16. Represent the district and the prudential committee at official functions, except when this responsibility is delegated to others
17. Assume other duties authorized by an official resolution of the committee.

**Note:** Committee meetings are generally informal but parliamentary procedures are used whenever motions are made to memorialize the action of the committee.

### **The chair and first amendment**

When the prudential committee chair speaks to an issue, the public and the media assume that the chair's statement is the opinion of the entire committee. Consequently, the chair must be careful and clear when commenting on any issue in public or to reporters; the chair must clarify whether he/she is speaking for the board or expressing his/her own opinion.

Since any discussion by the chair will be interpreted as official action. There is no such thing as an informal conversation with the chair. Everything will be considered an official statement. As in all cases, when in doubt, legal advice should be sought.

### **Additional/Special Prudential Committee meetings**

Special meetings may be convened by the chair, or in the chair's absence by the vice-chair or by common consent of four prudential committee members excluding the alternate. Special meetings are those meetings not on the calendar set by the board at the June organizational meeting of the prudential committee.

Work sessions are special meetings in which the board meets but does not intend to take any action. Work sessions enable the board to gather information and discuss and review various aspects of an issue.

Emergency meetings are called only in the event of an actual emergency, and no business other than that related to the emergency can be discussed. Appropriate notice will be given to the public and the media.

## **Principal Duties of Committee Members**

1. Attend scheduled meetings and such special meetings as may be called by the committee chair;
2. Prepare for meetings by studying agenda and related materials and become as well informed as possible on all agenda items;
3. Participate actively in committee deliberations, act on proposed policies, standards and plans in the committee's area of work;
4. Formulate and act on committee proposals for consideration by the chapter president and executive board on overall direction and/or change of direction in the area of the committee's work;
5. Represent the committee in meetings of district, as requested by the committee chair;
6. Work with groups or subcommittees on specific areas of the committee's responsibility, as requested by the committee chair;
7. Keep informed of the overall work of the organization;
8. Relate the trends and developments in the area of her specialized knowledge to the committee's work;
9. Give advice and guidance on work as requested; report to the committee chair on such consultations; suggest new areas for study, as appropriate; and
10. Promote and interpret the purpose and program of the SFLD, and work to increase the understanding of the District within and outside the community.

## **Additional Duties of the Chairman**

**To acquire a working knowledge of parliamentary law and procedure and a thorough understanding of the Constitution, By-laws, and standing rules of the organization.**

**To preside and maintain order.**

**To explain and decide all questions of order.**

**To entertain only one main motion at a time and state all motions properly.**

**To permit no one to debate motions before they are stated and seconded; to encourage debate and assign the floor to those properly entitled to it. (No member may speak twice on the same questions if there are others who wish to claim the floor.)**

**To stand while stating the question and taking the vote.**

**To remain seated while discussion is taking place or reports are being given.**

**To enforce the rules of decorum and discipline.**

**To talk no more than necessary when presiding.**

**To be absolutely fair and impartial.**

**To extend every courtesy to the opponents of a motion even though the motion is one that the presiding officer favors.**

**To perform such others duties as are prescribed in the bylaws.**

**The chairman should be careful to ABSTAIN from the appearance of partisanship, but he has the right to call another member to the chair while he addresses the assembly on a question.**

**Do not take part in debate while you are in the Chair. If you must speak, turn the chair over to the vice-chair. Do not return to the chair until the vote has been taken.**

**Do not allow members to deal in personalities while debating.**

## **Duties of all Members**

**To obtain the floor before speaking.**

**To stand when speaking and identify yourself before speaking.**

**To avoid speaking upon any matter until it is properly brought before the assembly by a motion.**

**To keep upon the question then pending.**

**To yield the floor to calls for order (also known as point of order)**

**To abstain from all personalities in debate.**

**To avoid disturbing, in any way, speakers of the assembly.**