

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Board Policy Manual

Board Correspondence	Policy 1.05 Chapter 1 – Administration & Government
Effective Date:	Revised Date: 8/11/21
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Purpose

So that the public may perceive that any correspondence or forms of recognition from the Board President or Board of Directors has the support of a majority of the Board of Directors, it is necessary to establish guidelines for the issuance of correspondence and forms of recognition.

Policy

The District Clerk is authorized to receive and open all mail (including email) addressed to the Board of Directors from members of the public. Any such written communication addressed to the Board shall be provided to all Board members and to members of the press and public who have requested supporting materials as soon as possible.

District staff shall respond to the member of the public submitting a correspondence, and the Board of Directors will be copied on the response. The General Manager, or a majority of the Board of Directors may request that a draft Board response to written communication be placed on the agenda for consideration and Board approval prior to issuing a response that is addressed by the Board and sent directly by either the Board President or the Board Director who was directly contacted by the recipient..

A written communication addressed to an individual Director may, at the discretion of the individual Director, be considered a personal letter, a written communication or may be relayed to the members of the Board as an informational item.

Procedures for Handling Board Correspondence

a. Board President Signing on Behalf of the Board

The Board President will sign all letters sent on behalf of the Board of Directors. Routine letters from the Board President, or designee in his/her absence, do not need to be listed as consent items on the Board agenda. Such letters shall include:

1. Thank you letters to individuals or organizations for involvement in events or activities that benefit the District

2. Letters of recognition or appreciation in honor of distinctive service to the District, such as those sent to District volunteers or staff and letters of recognition for donations given to the District.

b. Written Correspondence Regarding Established Policy or Request for New Policy

The General Manager shall make the determination if a written correspondence received from a member of the public is related to Board policy or general administration of the District.

1. When a written communication involves the enforcement of previously set Board policy or established procedures of the District, the communication is directed to the appropriate department for response by staff. A copy of the response will be distributed to the Board.
2. When a written communication involves a request to change Board policy or a consideration for a new policy direction, the General Manager shall discuss an appropriate response with the Board President and direct the appropriate department to respond to the requestor. The Board shall be copied on the response, and a majority of the Board of Directors may request that the Board also send a separate response.
3. When a written communication involves a future Board action, it shall be referred to the appropriate department for review and response. A copy of the comment and response will be added to the appropriate project file. The Board shall receive a copy of the comment and response, and a majority of the Board of Directors may request that the Board also send a separate response.

c. Written Correspondence Related to Agenda Items

Correspondence related to an item on the agenda may be distributed with the agenda and supporting materials and considered by the Board at the forthcoming meeting. Correspondence received after distribution of the agenda packet shall be provided to Board members and members of the public at the Board meeting. Acknowledgement or response is optional. Staff may respond orally, if necessary, to clarify information or District policy, but will not typically provide a written response unless requested by a majority of the Board. Written communications related to agenda items shall be maintained with the official records of the District for that Board or Committee meeting. Copies of the public comments and responses shall also be added to the appropriate project file.

d. Written Correspondence at Board Meetings

Written communications received at a Board meeting shall be maintained with the official records of the District for that Board meeting.

e. Distribution of Written Correspondence

Written communications which are distributed to the Board at a time other than a regular mailing shall be distributed to members of the press who have requested supporting materials.

f. Written Correspondence with Large Attachments

Written communications accompanied by an extraordinary quantity of attachments may, at the discretion of the General Manager, be duplicated and distributed with some or all the attachments excluded. The General Manager shall note on the written communication or in an accompanying memorandum that the entire written communication, including attachments is available at the District office for public review. Copies of the excluded attachments will be made available on the same basis as any other public record.

Communications to the Public from Individual Directors

Any written or oral communication from a Director to the public or Board, or other agencies or organizations in any way related to the Director's capacity as an elected District official shall be distributed to the Board as a public informational item by the Director unless it is made clear in the communication that the communication is the opinion of the individual Director and not the opinion of the District or Board of Directors as a whole, unless the Board has approved the communication in advance.