

What's what?

Bylaws, Policies, Procedures, Ordinances, Motions, Resolutions,

All six of these things are ways that the Board of Directors of a Special District can take action and/or give direction. If you are confused by these terms you are not alone!

Bylaws:

- Pertain specifically to the organization itself.
- Define the organization: what it is, its authority, what it does in the broadest terms.
- Lay-out the governing rules of the organization and method of proceedings.
- Explain the roles and duties of the Directors and Officers.
- May also include such things as: code of conduct and conflict of interest code.

Policies:

- Pertain to specific duties or situations
- Define a desired or required course of action.
- Allows the board and management to operate efficiently by making a single decision (policy) that applies across time, situations and individuals.
- Provide guidance regarding applicable laws and mandated requirements.
- Delegate responsibility/authority or provide the means to do so.

Procedures:

- Procedures explain how the corresponding policy will be implemented.
- In other words: Procedures are the "instructions" that go with the Policy.

Ordinances:

- Formal regulations that apply to the residents/customers and/or constituents of the District.
- Carry more weight than Policies, as they are "law" (violation is a misdemeanor in most cases).
- Similar to policies, they often contain "procedures" or instructions as to how they will be carried out.
- The process for adoption and repeal requires two meetings and public postings. (Requirements vary by the type of district and may also vary depending on the subject of the ordinance. For example: Calif. prop. 218 regulates changes to water rates).
- They require two signatures and document the vote of the board similar to resolutions.

All four things listed above are important because they help the District establish consistency and fairness both within the organization and in its dealings with the public.

What's what? Continued

Motion: A motion is the process by which a Board Member submits a proposed action for deliberation and voting during a board meeting.

Resolution: "A formal expression of the opinion or will of an official body" *Black's Law Dictionary*. A resolution provides documentation as to why the action is necessary or desired in addition to documenting the action itself. They usually require the signature of both the Presiding Officer and the Clerk-of-the-Board. Legal council may sign as well.

Resolutions are often required in specific situations such as: signing leases or executing contracts. They are also often used for things such as showing appreciation, making an appointment, adopting policies or amending bylaws.

A resolution provides a stand-alone document; whereas, motions are incorporated into the entity's meeting minutes.