



Conducting Board Meetings

Question:

What determines the format for conducting school board meetings in Idaho? In other words, what law, statute, edict or rule governs the way a school board meeting is conducted? I am aware of the open meeting law and understand its restrictions. However, is there a law that indicates Roberts Rules of Order or some other format must be used to conduct meetings, elect board chair, and vice chair, establish rules of presentation, etc.? Does each district decide the format for conducting board meetings through board policy? Does the State require a specific template?

Answer:

First, there is no provision of the Idaho Code or Idaho Administrative Procedures that requires school boards to use Robert's Rules of Order. If a District follows Robert's Rules, such is done via board policy and a decision by the Board that this is going to be their choice for procedural process. The manner in which you phrased your question is the exact issue with this decision. Robert's Rules is extremely complicated. I have the 10th Edition, which is Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revisited, which I think is the most recent version and is cited as RONR. This version has 643 pages of text with additional 48 pages of charts, tables and lists. Quite frankly, I doubt that any District can comply with all of these requirements. However, this is an individual option of the District. Many Districts do have policies referencing that they generally follow the procedures and provisions of RONR to the extent applicable and practical to the setting and they modify to meet the needs of the Board's activities. Some Districts are simply silent on this issue in policy, which provides great leeway. As to the other questions:

Officer positions for the Board – this is addressed in Section 33-506, Idaho Code. This provision outlines the requirement of the Board to organize at the annual meeting and elect a chairman, vice chair, clerk and treasurer. It details that the clerk and treasurer may be members of the Board or other individuals selected by the Board. The general duties and obligations to be present at meetings are also addressed in this section of the Idaho Code.

The Idaho Code is silent on how these officers are elected, other than the fact that these are not issues for executive session. Thus, these decisions and votes must be made open and to the public and by public vote.

Later sections of the Idaho Code (Section 33-508 and 33-509) define the duties of the Clerk and the Treasurer. There is no provision of the Idaho Code that details specific duties of the other board positions.

There is no provision of the Idaho Code that details or establishes rules of presentation at board meetings. That is left to the District to decide in policy.

The state does not require any specific template for any of these presentation or determination issues. That is left to the Board's discretion.

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