

BELGIUM COLD SPRINGS FIRE DISTRICT

Fire District Elections Policy

PURPOSE

Pursuant to the powers granted to the Board of Fire Commissioners by New York State Law, and in the interest of fairness and orderly process, the following procedures shall remain in force and effect until amended by the Board of Fire Commissioners.

DEFINITIONS

- A. *Ballot Clerks and Election Inspectors*: shall mean those individuals designated by the Board of Fire Commissioners at the Annual Organizational meeting each January or by resolution at least 40 days prior to the election, and shall be familiar with election law, rules and regulations.
- B. *Election Chairperson*: shall mean one Ballot Clerk or Election Inspector, or his/her designee as designated by the District Secretary.
- C. *Polling Hours*: shall mean the hours during which the Fire District Election shall be conducted as designated by the Board of Fire Commissioners, in accordance with the regulations set forth in Town Law §171 (1).
- D. *Polling Place*: - shall mean the place (or places) designated by the Board of Fire Commissioners as the location(s) where a Fire District election is to be held and any area within 100 feet of such location as determined by the Election Chairperson.
- E. *Registered Voter*: - shall mean a resident Fire District elector who shall be registered to vote with the County Board of Elections no later than twenty-three (23) days prior to the date of the election, in accordance with New York State Town Law, § 175 a(2)(a).
- F. *Poll Watchers* - shall mean individuals, other than a candidate, who have been designated by a candidate to observe the conduct of the Election for regularity.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. The Election Chairperson shall have overall charge and supervision of all District elections and will be assisted by the Ballot Clerks and Election Inspectors. Members of the Board of Fire Commissioners shall have no interest in the conduct/supervision of the Election Committee Chair or Ballot Clerks and Election Inspectors in the conduct of their duties.
2. The District Secretary shall be available onsite to answer questions, assist if needed and/or provide the contact information for legal counsel to the Election Chairperson.
3. A candidate who wishes to run for District office must file their name in writing with the Fire District Secretary at least 20 days prior to the date of the fire district election and must include the office and the term for which they wish to run. The Fire District Secretary shall review the letter for accuracy and completeness; any letter not accurately filed shall be rejected by the Fire District Secretary and

- returned via mail to the candidate.
4. Candidates, at their discretion, may supply the Fire District Secretary at the time of filing of the letter, with a brief narrative regarding their candidacy that will be placed on the Fire District website for public viewing. The narrative shall be no more than 100 words and shall be reviewed by the Fire District Secretary for appropriateness prior to website posting; if rejected, the narrative shall be returned via mail to the candidate.
 5. A letter shall be deemed timely filed with the Fire District Secretary provided that it is actually in his/her possession no later than 5:00 PM on the date so designated.
 6. The Fire District Secretary shall prepare the ballot for the election. Names of Candidates shall be placed on the ballot in alphabetical order by last name, listed on the ballot as written on their letter with first name, middle initial (if noted), last name, with a space reserved for potential write-in candidates.
 7. Upon the holding of an election, the Elections Chairperson shall direct the Election Inspectors and Ballot Clerks in their duties. The Election Chairperson shall also supervise the Polling Place and its environments to make sure that no Electioneering is conducted within the Polling Place or within one hundred (100') feet of same. The Election Chairperson shall cause to be placed, at least one-half hour before the opening of the polls, distance markers, at a distance of one hundred feet from the polling place. Such distance markers shall be so placed and shall remain until such polls are closed. The one-hundred-foot distance shall be deemed to include a one-hundred-foot radial measured from the entrances, designated by the Election Chairman, to the building(s) where such election is being held. While the polls are open no person shall do any electioneering within the polling place or in any public street within the one-hundred-foot radial, or within such distance in any place in a public manner. Electioneering includes, but is not limited to, the display of a banner, button, poster or placard on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate or issue to be voted upon. The decision as to whether conduct constitutes Electioneering shall be solely that of the Election Chairperson, and any activity which shall be deemed improper shall be promptly stopped or the matter shall be immediately reported by the Election Chairman to the Police. People should be reminded that willful violation of these Electioneering rules constitutes a crime under New York State Law Town Law §175(4). Telephone calls encouraging people to vote for a particular candidate or ballot item shall not be made from within the polling place.
 8. Poll Watchers, when permitted, may observe the election proceedings subject to the approval of the Election Chairman. Each candidate may select one individual to act as a Poll Watcher on his/her behalf. That person must sit where directed by the Election Chairman and not communicate with anyone in the vicinity other than the Election Chairman. In the event that a Poll Watcher shall act in a manner which is inappropriate in the opinion of the Election Chairman, then that Poll Watcher must leave the Polling Place and may not be replaced.
 9. The Election Chairperson, Ballot Clerks, and Election Inspectors must not engage in any electioneering or provide information about the election to those in attendance. No phone calls shall be made from within the polling place.
 10. At the close of polling hours, the Election Chairperson shall cause the polling place to be closed. Any registered voters then present shall be permitted to cast their ballots. After the last ballot is cast, the Election Chairperson shall then reopen the polling place so that the ballots may be canvassed publicly, the results of which shall be publicly announced. Within seventy-two hours thereafter, the Election

Chairperson, Election Inspectors file a certificate of the result of the canvass with the Board of Fire Commissioners and with the Town Clerks of each town in which said District is located.

Effective Date: November 17, 2025