

What is the Boundary Review Board?

Boundary Review Boards were created in 1967 by the legislature in part to "...provide a method of guiding and controlling the growth of municipalities..."(RCW 36.93.010). There are seventeen such boards in the State of Washington. The Board is a quasi-judicial, administrative body empowered to make decisions on such issues as incorporation, annexation, mergers, etc., by cities, towns and special purpose districts.

Who is on the Board?

Five members serve on the Boundary Review Board for Whatcom County. Two members are appointed by the governor, one by the mayors of the city and towns in Whatcom County, one by the Whatcom County Council and one by the special purpose districts. Pat Atkinson serves as the Chief Clerk of the Board.

Compensation for Board members is \$50 per day for work on Board business. Members may not properly discuss proposals under their consideration outside of the public hearing (ex parte communications).

When does the Board meet?

The regular meeting of the Board is on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM , as needed. Meetings are generally held at 600 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham, WA in the first floor conference room.

How does the Board make decisions?

In general, decision-makers such as Board members must not only be fair in their actions (i.e., have no conflicts of interest), but must also, to the ordinary citizen, appear to be free of any position or influence which would impair their ability to decide a case fairly. The State Supreme Court has held that if a person is of the opinion that a decision-maker is so impaired, that opinion must be stated at the first available opportunity.

The Board bases its decisions on specific factors and objectives listed in the state law (RCW 36.93.170 and .180). The Board is required to determine which objectives are met or not met by each proposal. In addition, the Board's decisions must be consistent with the Growth Management Act, adopted County plans and policies, and State environmental laws and policies.

The Board can approve, deny, or modify a proposal. Its decisions are final unless appealed to the County Superior Court.

What positions will be available?

Boundary Review Board members are appointed for 4-year terms, which expire in odd-numbered years. Nominations are being accepted for a position beginning on February 1, 2011. The appointment will be made by the Governor.

What requirements are there for Board members?

Requirements for Boundary Review Board members include attending the regular monthly meeting at 7:00 PM on the second Thursday of each month, as well as attending public hearings and special meetings held as needed. Board members are residents of the County, serve for four-year terms, and must be able to evaluate technical planning and environmental documents and economic reports as well as testimony from the public in making their decisions.

Another requirement for BRB members is that "no appointee may be an official or employee of the county or a governmental unit in the county, or a consultant or advisor on a contractual or regular retained basis of the county, any governmental unit in the county, or any agency thereof" (RCW 36.93.061).

Whom do I contact?

The application form is available at:
<http://www.governor.wa.gov/boards/application/application.asp>.

Please contact the Boundary Review Board Office if you have any questions:

Boundary Review Board Office

600 Lakeway Drive, Suite 100

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http://nwrcwa.org/review_board.htm#Section2