

**Soil and Water
Conservation Program**
Department of Natural
Resources



Soil and Water Conservation District Boards



Definition of a SWCD Board

- Consists of five members
- Four of the five are elected
 - elected members serve four-year terms
- Fifth member is an ex-officio member appointed by the University of Missouri Extension
 - serves as official board secretary



SWCD Board Member

- Office qualifications:
 - land representative in the district
 - taxpaying citizen in the district for the past two years
- Each elected member represents one of four territories established at the time of district's organization
- Elected by a majority vote of land representatives within that district



SWCD Board Duties

- Assess district needs and prioritize goals
- Establish district policies and procedures
- Manage district personnel
- Approve or deny cost-share forms
- Manage district finances



Voting Eligibility

- Board members are eligible to vote on all matters of the district except in the following situations.
- Board members need to abstain from any issues when they have a conflict of interest.
 - Any cost-share forms of which that board member is an owner or operator
 - Any cost-share forms of which that board member is the contractor or provides materials through personal business
 - Any cost-share forms of which that board member or immediate family member would receive a monetary benefit



Nepotism

- Definition: patronage bestowed or favoritism shown on the basis of family relationship in business
- The Missouri Constitution, in Article VII, Section 6: “Any public officer or employee in this state who by virtue of his office or employment names or appoints to public office or employment any relative within the fourth degree, by consanguinity or affinity, shall thereby forfeit his office or employment.”
- The section forbids appointments of relatives within the fourth degree. An official who abstains from voting when a relative is under consideration is not in violation, however if the relative is hired the board member must resign.



Relations to the 4th Degree

Self or Spouse

First Degree

Child Parents

Second Degree

Grandchild Brother/Sister Grandparents

Third Degree

Aunt/Uncle Niece/Nephew
Great Grandparents Great Grandchild

Fourth Degree

Great Great Grandchild Grand Niece/Nephew
First Cousin Great Aunt/Uncle
Great Great Grandparents



Nepotism

- If a board member who is a relative is elected and a relative within the 4th degree is already working for the SWCD, the board member should abstain from any personnel decisions regarding that individual.
- If a board member is already part of the SWCD board and a relative to the 4th degree is hired, that board member should resign their position on the board.



Chairman

- Preside at all meetings or arrange for the Vice-Chairman to preside
- Open and close all meetings on time
- Call the meeting to order
- Handle discussions in an orderly matter
- State each motion before it is discussed and voted upon
- Put all motions to a vote and announce the outcome
- Suggest motions but *do not* make them
- Set an example by observing parliamentary procedure
- Appoint committees



Vice-Chairman

- Acts in place of the Chairman when needed
- Succeeds the former chair in case of resignation or death, until the board is reorganized
- Consults with and advises the chair on matters of program and policy
- Guides and directs activities of various committees as needed

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Treasurer

- Ensure that financial records are complete, accurate and properly maintained
- Ensure that all checks issued are legitimate district expenses
- Ensure receipts are issued for money received, monies are deposited and bills paid are authorized and approved by the board
- Review Treasurer's report with board on a monthly basis
- Review and reconcile bank statements with another member or staff monthly
- Ensure that all bills are authorized for payment by the board and are recorded in the minutes of the meeting
 - This can be done by attaching the Treasurer's report to the minutes and indicating board approval
- Sign checks only after all information is completed
 - Never sign a blank check
- Ensure accurate records for district



Treasurer (cont.)

- It is suggested that the Treasurer ensures that audits are conducted quarterly.
 - Balance checkbook (ensure that balance matches the Treasurer's report)
 - Verify expenditures
 - Balance deposits made for the month with receipt log for the district income
 - Verify withdrawals



Treasurer (cont.)

- Problem Indicators
 - Large number of outstanding checks
 - Salary checks not consistent with payroll time periods
 - Bills not being paid on time; several delinquent notices
 - Carelessness in bookkeeping and general office duties (check stubs not filled out properly or bank reconciliations not performed accurately)



Secretary

- Ex-officio member appointed by the University of Missouri Extension
 - Has all the same rights as elected board members
- Notifies members of each meeting and ensures the meeting is posted in accordance with the Sunshine Law
- Keeps minutes of each meeting (including closed sessions)
- Keeps a record of all committees
- Initiates correspondence on behalf of the board as the need arises
- Often district personnel handle many of these responsibilities although the Secretary is ultimately responsible for the duties

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Member

- This position is often held by the newest member of the board so they can learn and gain an understanding of the district and the issues
- Assumes duties and carries out tasks assigned by the Chairman
- Suggests compromises and helps search for closure on matters important to business
- Assists other board members as requested
- Prepares to serve in one or more of the other board offices
- Maintains confidentiality of board/committee matters and ensures they are kept that way