

## **DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

Conservation District Director term of service:

A director officially takes office when the election results have been certified and a notarized oath of office is on file with the Michigan Department of Agriculture. This applies to an incumbent as well as an appointee and a director elected for the first term. Rights and Privileges Conservation District Directors are Entitled.

As an elected official of a unit of government, a director:

- Is covered by workers' compensation while performing District director duties.
- May receive a per diem of up to \$50 per official meeting.
- Must be responsible for all withholding taxes per IRS requirements.
- Is not personally liable for actions of the board while performing duties of director.

Duties of District Board Members:

A Conservation District is a governmental subdivision of this state with statutory powers and responsibilities to carry out a program of natural resources conservation and encourage wise land management. As locally elected public officials, District directors are responsible for the operation and management of the Conservation District. District directors develop policy, which is carried out by employees and resource personnel available to the District. An effective District board uses all the resources available to the District to carry out programs. Such resources include District employees, governmental agencies, private groups, individuals, industry, the natural resources of the District, and more.

Listed are basic duties performed by Conservation District directors, either as an individual or as a member of a District board of directors:

1. Attend and participate in all board meetings and functions.
2. Make decisions in response to all proposals presented to the board.
3. Cooperate with fellow board members in establishing District policies.
4. Establish, review, and understand Conservation District policies
5. Participate in setting District priorities in providing technical assistance to land users.
6. Employ personnel and determine their qualifications, duties, and compensation. Keep abreast of performance and provide administrative supervision. Understand working agreements established with personnel and comply with all conditions.
7. Participate in developing annual plans of work.
8. Participate in developing, publishing, and distributing annual reports.
9. Keep informed on legislation and policies of local, state, and federal government pertaining to conservation problems. This includes maintaining contacts with local, state, and national

public officials to keep them informed of the District's activities and the District residents' conservation needs.

10. Prepare for, conduct, and participate in Conservation District board meetings and attend Michigan Association of Conservation District (MACD) state and area meetings, and state and regional training sessions conducted by the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) and partners.
11. To be fully effective, directors should miss no more than three (3) District board meetings per year. (See "Recommended List of District Policies".)
12. Encourage land users and public entities to become aware of and utilize the services of the District.
13. Serve as the "up-front" person for the District by representing the District at public functions sponsored by the District and at functions related to natural resource conservation activities.
14. Sponsor and actively participate in educational activities to inform people about natural resource conservation programs and to enlist their support.
15. Cooperate with fellow board members to secure adequate operating funds for the District. Examples: county appropriations; state appropriations; tree seedling retail sales; etc.
16. Establish and maintain communications with public and private leaders within the Conservation District who can support the District program.
17. Cooperate with fellow board members in establishing sound business practices required for adequate accounting and financial management of the District's fiscal affairs in accordance with state law.
18. Cooperate with fellow board members in publishing information articles, newsletters, etc.
19. Know the functions of other agencies that operate in the District.
20. Be familiar with the Directors' Handbook.

Section 9307 of Public Act 463 of 1998, as amended, states: "The directors shall designate a chairperson annually." The chairperson is the only office that a Conservation District must have. Nevertheless, Conservation Districts have found it necessary (and MDA strongly recommends) to provide the other offices and designations to cover the District work load in a systematic fashion.

In addition to the chair, most Districts have found it necessary to designate the officers of vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary. Districts may wish to combine certain offices (secretary/treasurer) or leave the offices separate. It is the District's prerogative and responsibility to assign the duties of the offices designated by the board. Typically, the duties and responsibilities are as follows:

#### **Duties of the Chair**

1. Leads all District meetings in accordance with the District's locally accepted practices.
2. Calls the meeting to order at the appointed time.
3. Presides over all District meetings.
4. Announces the business before the board in its proper order.
5. Preserves order and decorum.

6. When necessary, authenticates by his/her signature all acts, orders, and proceedings of the District.
7. Calls for a vote on all properly presented motions.
8. Votes in case of a tie vote, roll call vote, or vote by ballot.
9. Receives input from other board members, administrative/executive director, NRCS Conservationist and others to assemble topics for the agenda for the next meeting.
10. Acts as, or appoints, a liaison to the board and the Conservation District employees.

#### **Duties of the Vice-Chair**

1. Is familiar with the duties of the chairperson.
2. Presides as chairperson in his/her absence.

#### **Duties of the Secretary**

1. Is familiar with the duties of the chairperson.
2. Presides as chairperson in absence of vice-chairperson and chairperson. (Note: A quorum, a majority of directors, must be present.)
3. Supervises all written reports.
4. Supervises the recording of the minutes of all District meetings for their accuracy and compliance with the Open Meetings Act. (See Section 7 of Public Act 267 of 1976 for details concerning the Open Meetings Act or <http://www.michiganlegislature.org/mileg.asp?page=PublicActs> to view a copy of the Act.)
5. Supervises the preparation of the Annual Report. Attends planning meeting for annual report with the administrator/executive director and reviews the final draft before publication.

#### **Duties of the Treasurer**

1. Supervises the paying of all bills of the District.
2. Verifies the District's financial standing.
3. Deposits the District funds in compliance with Public Act 500 of 1978.
4. Presents treasurer's report at board meetings.
5. Signs and verifies all bank statements.
6. Ensures that the Conservation District is in compliance with all aspects of the Michigan Conservation District Uniform Accounting Procedures Manual.