

## CHAPTER III: DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

### Section I: Duties of District Board Members

A Conservation District is a local unit of state government 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 implemented 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 below are basic duties performed by Conservation District Directors, either as an individual or as a member of a District Board of Directors:

- Attend and participate in all board meetings and functions.
- Prepare for, conduct, and participate in Conservation District Board meetings and events.
- Attend Michigan Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) state and regional meetings.
- Take part in training sessions conducted by the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) and partners.
- Make decisions in response to all proposals presented to the board.
- Cooperate with fellow board members in establishing District policies.
- Establish, review, and understand Conservation District policies.
- Read and understand **ALL** grant requirements for which the District is responsible.
- Participate in setting District priorities in providing technical assistance to land users.
- Provide oversight for personnel:
  - Employ personnel and determine their qualifications, duties, and compensation.
  - Review staff's performance on a yearly basis and provide administrative supervision.
  - Understand working agreements established with personnel and comply with all conditions.
  - Ensure that all staff are working from a signed contract that outlines duties and compensation.
- Participate in developing annual plans of work.
- Participate in developing, publishing, and distributing Annual Reports.
- Stay informed of legislation and policies of local, state, and federal government pertaining to conservation issues. 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.
- To be fully effective, directors should miss no more than three (3) District board meetings per year.
- Encourage resource users and public entities to become aware of and use the services of the District.
- Serve as District spokesperson by representing the District at public functions sponsored by the District and at functions related to natural resource conservation activities.
- Sponsor and actively participate in educational activities to inform people about natural resource conservation programs and to enlist their support.
- Cooperate with fellow board members to secure adequate operating funds for the District.
- Establish and maintain communications with public and private leaders within the Conservation District.
- 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 and MDA guidelines.
- Cooperate with fellow board members in publishing information articles, newsletters, etc.
- Know the functions of other natural resource agencies that operate in the District.
- Understand and implement proper "Hiring and Employment" guidelines as outlined in this Manual.

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 in order to cover the District work load in a systematic fashion.

In addition to the chair, most Districts 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

- Leads all District meetings in accordance with the District's locally accepted practices. (Refer to *Appendix C* for Parliamentary Procedures)
- Calls the meeting to order at the appointed time.
- Presides over all District meetings.
- Announces the business before the board in its proper order.
- Preserves order and decorum.
- When necessary, authenticates by his/her signature all acts, orders, and proceedings of the District.
- Calls for a vote on all properly presented motions.
- Votes in case of a tie vote, roll call vote, or vote by ballot.
- Receives input from other board members, administrative/executive director, NRCS Conservationist and others to assemble topics for the agenda for the next meeting.
- Acts as, or appoints, a liaison to the board and the Conservation District employees.

#### Duties of the Vice-Chair

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

#### Duties of the Secretary

- Is familiar with the duties of the chairperson.
- Presides as chairperson in absence of vice-chairperson and chairperson. (Note: A quorum, which is a majority of directors, must be present.)
- Supervises all written reports.
- Supervises the recording of the minutes of all District meetings for their accuracy and compliance with the Open Meetings Act. (See section 15.267 of Public Act 267 of 1976 in *Appendix B* for details)
- Supervises the preparation of the Annual Report. Attends planning meeting for Annual Report with the administrator/executive director and the local NRCS District Conservationist and reviews the final draft before publication.

#### Duties of the Treasurer

- Supervises the paying of all bills of the District in accordance with MDA guidelines.
- Verifies the District's financial standing.
- Deposits the District funds in compliance with the Public Act 20 of 1943 (*See Appendix C for details*).
- Presents treasurer's report at board meetings.
- Signs and verifies all bank statements.
- Ensures that the Conservation District is in compliance with all aspects of the Michigan Conservation District Uniform Accounting Procedures Manual. This document can be found on the MACD website at [www.macd.org](http://www.macd.org).