

For Guidance Only

## SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD

The following are responsibilities of the board. The board may delegate certain responsibilities to individual directors or committees for specific, limited tasks. In such cases, the delegation must be by board action and recorded in meeting minutes.

#### Communications

1. Strive for open communication between the board and the district employees.
2. The board may designate participation of employees on appropriate committees.
3. Solicit ideas, recommendations, and opinions from the employees and communicate the same to the employees.
4. Invite customers, volunteers, partner agencies, and groups to board and committee meetings to explore issues and seek solutions.
5. Respect the opinions of other board members, customers, and partners.
6. Practice active listening to other directors, employees, customers, and partners.
7. Keep the public, landowners, other constituencies, county commissioners, legislators, agencies, organizations, funders, and the media informed of district programs, services, achievements, and needs.
8. Distribute an annual report.
9. Conduct an annual meeting.

#### Finances

1. Approve the annual budget, which includes individual project and grant budgets.
2. Set policies to ensure fiscal accountability and integrity are maintained.
3. Regularly review the financial status of the district.
4. Arrange for and submit annual financial reports [annual audit or financial statement ("In Lieu of Audit Report") to the Secretary of State]. Include an annual financial statement in the annual report.
5. Seek additional funding to expand the capacities and services of the district.

#### Policies, Plans, and Implementation

1. Understand and follow all laws and policies governing the district.
2. Approve the annual work plan.
3. Approve the long-range business plan and review or update it annually.
4. Approve policies needed to govern the operations of the district. Recognize the primary responsibility of the board is policy making.
5. Approve and monitor district projects.
6. Receive and act on committee or other group's recommendations.
7. Recruit partners to be involved in planning and decision-making processes.
8. Approve plans for district operations, training, and board operations.

9. Implement district programs effectively.
10. Identify local conservation needs and work to meet them within the limits of available resources.
11. Keep the district's vision and mission in focus.

## Management

1. Select board officers and respect their rights and authorities to carry out their duties.
2. Recruit, train, and supervise employees.
3. Define the duties, responsibilities, authorities, and accountabilities of all board members, officers, employees, committees, and volunteers.
4. Authorize officers or other agents to approve contracts, sign written instruments, and take defined financial actions.
5. Ensure all actions are taken by the board or by delegation to a committee or director as recorded in minutes of meetings.
6. Evaluate the performance of employees.
7. Assess the capacities, policies, and procedures of the board's operations.
8. Clearly define the responsibilities and authorities of the district manager to properly manage the district within the board's policies and recognize that directors should not usurp these administrative functions.
9. Ensure that employee issues go through proper channels. Do not allow employee problems other than the district manager's to come to the board.
10. Ensure the district is in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws.
11. Do a periodic "self-evaluation" of the board's progress toward accomplishing its mission, annual work plan, and long-range business plan.
12. Use workshops, regular board training, and seminars to gain a deeper understanding of issues and develop skills to be effective directors.
13. Be informed about the laws governing how the board must operate, such as budget development, audit, holding public meetings, contracting laws, etc.
14. Ensure the board's policies, activities, annual work plan, and long-range business plan are consistent with the policies of the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Division and the Oregon Soil and Water Conservation Commission.
15. Develop and carry out the long-range business plan and annual work plan.

## Board Functioning

1. Motivate board members to accept leadership positions and responsibilities.
2. Define powers and responsibilities of board members and committees.
3. Understand individual board members have no legal status to act for the entire board, unless granted such authority by board action and recorded in the minutes.
4. Follow all requirements of the Oregon Public Meetings Laws.
5. Place the needs of the public above the personal concerns of the board members.
6. Recruit and orient new directors and associate directors.