

# **Conservation District Board**

**Policy  
Book**

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# **ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR POLICY**

## **OBJECTIVE**

The District strives to make available technical, financial and educational resources, regardless of their source, to all land users and citizens of the District. To fulfill this mission effectively and efficiently the District must coordinate and collaborate with numerous agencies and organizations and reach out to the citizens of the District. There is a tremendous diversity of land users and citizens in the District, representing varied interests, objectives and needs. It is impractical for a five-member Board of Supervisors to adequately represent such diversity and thoroughly understand the variety of needs and concerns that exist. Therefore, the Board relies on paid staff and Associate Supervisors for input and to help inform their decisions and disseminate information to the citizens of the District.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

### **Powers and Duties of Associate Supervisors**

Associate Supervisors serve the District in a similar capacity to a member of the Board of Supervisors, with the primary exception of not having authority to vote on official actions of the Board. Associate Supervisors serve without compensation; however, they may be reimbursed for expenses incurred while conducting District business such as conference registrations, travel, and lodging. The following is a list of some of the more common duties performed by Associate Supervisors:

- Advise the Board on various subjects for which an Associate Supervisors has experience or special expertise;
- Represent the interests of underrepresented sectors of the community;
- Serve on special committees organized by the Board;
- Represent the Board on committees, commissions, councils, work groups, and associations formed by other organizations, as directed by the Board;
- Assist with outreach and education programs;
- Assist with the implementation of District projects;
- Assist with District administrative functions, such as the conducting of annual elections and audits;
- Assist with the development and distribution of annual plans of work, reports, and long-range plans.
- Collect information and feedback from citizens and recipients of District services and programs.

Associate Supervisors are appointed by the Board of Supervisors and serve the District under the general direction and discretion of the Board. The criteria for appointment are determined by the Board on a case-by-case basis. There is no set term of office for Associate Supervisors; however, the Board annually evaluates the activities of the Associate Supervisors to determine whether or not the interests of the District are being adequately and properly served by the appointments. There are no minimum qualifying standards that must be maintained. If the Board or staff has not had contact with an Associate Supervisor for a period of one year, he or she will be contacted to determine if continuing the appointment is appropriate or warranted. The Board may terminate the appointment of Associate Supervisors at any time. In most cases the Board will attempt to interview Associate Supervisors before terminating appointments.

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_

# **Audits**

(See C.R.S. 29-1 for details)

## **OBJECTIVE**

Audits provide accountability and transparency to our constituents and other funding agencies and organizations. An Audit or Exemption from Audit is required by State law. All funds received by conservation districts are classified as public funds, regardless of how obtained. As public officials we are accountable for funds, property, and equipment belonging to the district.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

The deadline for requesting an exemption from audit (income or expenses are less than \$500,000) is March 31<sup>st</sup>.

- If the District is exempt from audit, it shall complete an internal audit by an officer without signatory authority who will review expenditures authorized by the financial officer on an annual basis.
  - detailed receipts
  - detailed expenditures
  - reconciliation reports
  - liabilities
  - year end book balance comparison to bank statements
  - invoices supporting payments available for inspection
  - grant administration
  
- If income or expenditures exceed \$500,000, the District is required to have an audit by a CPA familiar with special district accounting.
  - Deadline for auditor to submit audit report to local district is June 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - Deadline for district to submit audit report to the Office of the State Auditor and the Colorado State Conservation Board is July 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Committees

## **OBJECTIVE**

To establish committee guidelines that will efficiently and effectively address assigned issues. Well organized and facilitated committee structures will improve overall board effectiveness.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

### Board Committee Principles:

The board is encouraged to establish committees to help carry out its responsibilities. Committees will not interfere with the wholeness of the board's job or with delegation from the board to the district manager.

- § Committees shall investigate, deliberate and analyze special issues on behalf of the board. They are expected to report their work to the full board on a regular basis to make recommendations to the board for action. Such recommendations are to be made by a member of the committee in the form of a motion at a full board meeting.
- § All committees will submit a written report to the district manager in adequate time for the report to be included in the meeting packet.
- § Committees may not speak or act for the board except when formally given such authority by the Board for specific and time-limited purposes.
- § Committees cannot exercise authority over staff except when formally given such authority by the Board for specific and time-limited purposes. They may need to assist the district manager on the specific issue or activity.
- § A board member will chair the committee.
- § Non-board members (including Associate Board Members) may also be appointed as committee members.
- § Committees with more than two Board Members must adhere to Open Meeting Laws.

### Committee Chairperson Guidelines:

The committee chair will be expected to lead the committee and is accountable for ensuring the productivity of the committee by:

- § Planning the agenda for the meetings.
- § Ensuring that all members are notified of the meetings.
- § Convening meetings and keeping them on track.
- § Appointing a recorder to keep a written record of committee actions.
- § Encouraging the committee to take action on the issues discussed.
- § Ensuring that reports and recommendations for action from the committee are presented to the full board.
- § Leading the committee to evaluate its operations.

### Duties of Committee Members:

Duties of the individual committee members will vary, but certain basic committee member responsibilities remain the same for all committees. Those responsibilities include:

- § Attending all meetings of the committee to which he/she is assigned.
- § Preparing for committee meetings by studying the agenda and researching issues to be discussed at committee meetings.
- § Actively participating in discussions at the committee meetings.
- § Following through promptly on any assignment for the committee.
- § Supporting committee recommendations before the full board.
- § The district manager may be available to take minutes but if not, the chair will assign someone to take notes and deliver them to the district manager.

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Confidentiality Agreement

## **OBJECTIVE**

To ensure board members realize and understand their legal and moral responsibility to maintain confidential information of the ABC District and partners. Each member shall review and sign a new agreement on an annual basis.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

### **Board Member Confidentiality Agreement**

As a member of the ABC Board, I acknowledge the importance of confidentiality with respect to the District's affairs and confidential personal information to which I may have access. In light of this acknowledgement, I agree to keep confidential, during and after service on the Board, all confidential information acquired pertaining to the District and related activities in the course of my term.

I particularly recognize the sensitivity of landowners' and employees' personal information.

I agree that this confidentiality agreement includes, but is not limited to:

- information pertaining to performance of District employees including evaluation data, compensation, and grievances.
- issues related to the board's legal and moral responsibility.
- landowner agreements, contracts, and personal information

I understand it is the board chairperson's responsibility to address infractions of confidentiality by individual board members and to take action to remedy the problem. I also understand that if infractions of confidentiality by individual board members continue, it is the expectation that the board chairperson will ask for the resignation of the individual board member who has violated this confidentiality agreement.

I agree to resign my board membership if requested by a majority vote of the board members for any confidentiality infraction.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Conflict of Interest Policy

## **OBJECTIVE**

To ensure that in making decisions, each Board Supervisor must exercise free, independent judgment as to what is in the best interest of the District and its constituents. The Board Member must not be influenced or extend influence to the detriment of the District by personal or outside interests or relationships.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors – Each Board Member shall sign a new Conflict of Interest Policy Statement annually.

## **SCOPE**

1. A conflict of interest exists if a Supervisor or an Associate of a Supervisor takes part in or exerts any influence for themselves or on behalf of any other party, directly or indirectly, whereby remuneration or business advantage is received. An “Associate” of any such person means:
  - a. Any corporation or organization (other than the District) of which such person is an officer, director or partner, or is directly or indirectly, the beneficial owner of any class of equity securities;
  - b. Any trust or other estate in which such person has a substantial beneficial interest or in which such person serves as trustee or in a similar fiduciary capacity; or
  - c. Any spouse or immediate relative (i.e.: children, parents, siblings)
2. It shall be the policy of the District that if any Board Supervisor or Associate at any time is involved in a business transaction that involves the District, the following steps shall be taken to ensure full disclosure has been given:
  - a. The proposed business transaction shall be disclosed at a regularly scheduled board meeting. A quorum of the Board will have opportunity to review the proposed business transaction and determine if a conflict of interest exists. If so, the Board will disqualify such supervisor from taking any part in, or exerting any influence with respect to, the decision or transaction.
  - b. This policy pertains to all business transactions including contracts, cost-share programs, matching grants, equipment rental, etc.
  - c. In the case of District Cost Share Programs, a district supervisor or staff member may participate if the Board approves and the following is in place:
    - i. Clear ranking criteria is set forth prior to the release of application
    - ii. All applicants receive a copy of the ranking criteria with application
    - iii. The supervisor or staff member is not a part of the ranking team
3. This policy does not pertain to NRCS contracts because the District does not have approving authority.
4. In the case of District equipment rentals, supervisors must pay the standard rental fee.
5. If a conflict of interest should arise, it shall be the primary responsibility of each director to disclose any business-related transaction, which they or their Associates are involved in by reporting the transaction voluntarily to the Board of Supervisors of the District.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Last revised: \_\_\_\_\_

# Cost Share Policy

## **OBJECTIVE**

The XYZ Conservation District provides cost share programs for landowners to encourage the implementation of on-the-ground conservation practices. This policy provides guidance and consistency in the program while assuring all landowners equal opportunity to participate.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

When Cost Share funds are allocated to the District, an advertisement detailing the availability of dollars, participant eligibility, and eligible Best Management Practices (BMP's) shall be placed in XYZ Paper at least twenty days prior to application deadline.

- Ø Applications will be received at the District office for a minimum of 20 days.
- Ø The applications are reviewed for eligibility as they are received.
- Ø A rating committee shall be identified with a minimum of 3 members. The committee shall consist of 1 District employee, 1 District supervisor, and 1 partner.
- Ø Applications are rated using criteria developed by the ranking committee.
- Ø The list of rated applications is taken to the next monthly Board of Supervisors meeting for formal approval.
- Ø Cooperators are contacted and informed of approved rankings.
- Ø A cooperator's agreement detailing cost estimates of BMP's is developed and signed by both parties. (Designs are completed if needed depending on the BMP's)
- Ø BMP's are installed by the cooperator and appropriate cost invoices are submitted to the District. Cooperators must submit documentation detailing their own and their employee's labor hours with date, start time, end time, and signature per process of implementing practices. Equipment hours, date, start time, and end time per process must also be documented to receive reimbursements.
- Ø BMP's are inspected for assurance of meeting design criteria. (Measurements and pictures are taken)
- Ø Check is drafted and approved at next monthly Board of Supervisors meeting. (May be delayed over 1 month depending on timing) Final agreement signatures are completed.
- Ø Check is mailed to or picked up by the cooperator.
- Ø A District employee will take digital photos annually for the practice design life documented on the agreement as proof of performance documentation. The photo will be dated and signed by a District employee. Any concerns observed in the photo or when taking the picture will be written on the photo and addressed at the following Board of Supervisors meeting.

### **District supervisors' participation in District Cost Share Program:**

- Ø Supervisors may submit an application and application will be considered in the same process as all other applications if:
  1. ranking criteria has been approved by the Board prior to the call for applications
  2. ranking criteria is advertised with notice of application
  3. applying Board Member does not participate in the development of ranking criteria, ranking committee, and abstains from voting on the approval of all applications. (See conflict of interest policy)

The District will keep all applications on file for possible future cost share funding. If additional cost share funds are available for same program within the same year, the District will contact all eligible applicants to determine if they are still interested in program. Interested applicants' applications will be funded based on their ranking under the same process as first group. A deadline for any additional or updated information will be made by the District Manager.

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Decision Making Processes

## **OBJECTIVE**

Effective decision-making is critical for boards to function and perform their best. Therefore, the XYZ Board will review annually and practice this policy at all times.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

- There is considerable research to support the view that groups composed of individuals with diverse backgrounds make different and better decisions than those with homogeneous backgrounds. For example, diverse groups deliberate longer, raise more facts about the issues under review, and conduct more wide-ranging deliberations making fewer factual errors. When errors do occur these are more likely to be rectified during the deliberations. This is less an issue of colour or creed but more that different perspectives, hewed from differing backgrounds and experiences, will enrich the quality of debate around the board table.
- However, the advantages conferred by a diverse board are neutralized by ineffective leadership. It is the District Manager who runs the District and the President who runs the board. Suffice to say that the best President listen to their board, refrain from stating their opinion until other board members have expressed theirs, and are willing to embrace contrary viewpoints as a means to ensure that the right decision is reached.
- The expression of dissent is often suppressed by a group desire for conformity. This fulfills a basic human need to 'fit in' and is the very antithesis of effective decision-making. Conformity in decision-making is increased when groups are faced with complex or ambiguous data and this may be the reason why some boards have struggled to make effective decisions when confronted with the realities of decision-making in times of uncertainty or adversity.
- It is tidy to think that human beings are analytical and logical in their thought processes, and make and take rational decisions. The psychological evidence is less convincing. There are many biases formed in our decision-making. We think evidence weighs more heavily on the side of beliefs that we already hold than it actually does. To take a political example, if Tony Blair and George Bush had a prior belief of the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq prior to the invasion of 2003, then they would have paid little attention to counter evidence. This is called 'Irrational belief persistence' and is a tendency to search for evidence that support beliefs that are already strong for us and afflicts the decision-making of groups as much as it does those of individuals. The antidote to this is to get board supervisors out of the board room and ensure that they talk to stakeholder groups to fully understand what is happening in their market place. It is this type of visceral experience that will help to dislodge these irrational beliefs.
- Effective board decision-making will only be as good as the reliability and validity of the information that is fed into it. Boards should take care to calibrate the information coming in. This means asking probing questions (such as 'who says?; what's it for?; what is the competition working from?') to ensure that the information is robust and fit for input into the decision making process. To extend the Iraq war analogy further, who in the UK Cabinet was asking the simplest of questions to ensure the validity of the information presented by the Iraq dossier that had formed a pretext to take military action against Saddam Hussein?
- Finally, by far the most pernicious of psychological conditions in board decision-making is that of Groupthink. This is a dysfunctional pattern of group processes, frequently found within a tightly knit group, who are impervious to external influences and who converge on a pattern of behavior convinced of their own infallibility. Some of the behaviors of groups afflicted by Groupthink are shown below in Table 1.

**Table 1: Groupthink behaviors**

<b>Groupthink behaviors</b>	<b>Effective board behaviors</b>
The board is more concerned with suppression of dissent than quality of decision making.	Every board member is encouraged to be a critical evaluator.
The board is ruled by a directive leader who makes his/her wishes known.	Leader maintains a neutral status and uses a facilitative style.
The board rationalizes and discounts warnings based on a selective approach to information gathering.	Board members guard against wishful thinking based on flimsy rationalizations of warning data.
Out-groups (e.g. partners and competitors) are stereotyped as weak or stupid.	The board conducts a thorough stakeholder analysis to understand the implications of decisions.
Board members choose the first option for solution on which there is a consensus.	The board undertakes a systematic search through all the available options.
The board fails to seek out expert opinion.	Board members invite in experts to the meetings and discuss with them and question them.

**To ensure effective board level decision-making we will:**

1. Ensure that the composition of the board is as diverse as possible.
2. Calibrate (through questioning) the validity of information coming into the board.
3. Encourage directors out of the board room to find out what is really going on in the business.
4. Use sub groups of experts to consider key decisions.
5. Ensure leader impartiality during the process of decision-making.
6. Bring in alternative and extreme viewpoints to board discussions to promote diversity of opinion.
7. Encourage each board member to critically evaluate every decision.
8. Ensure that all members engage in a thorough search through all available options.
9. Conduct rigorous stakeholder analysis to understand the implications of big decisions.
10. Evaluate the board and its members regularly to ensure that both it and they are fit for purpose.

(Above information taken from *The Psychology of Effective Board Decision-Making* by Dr. Mike Rugg-Gunn, Norman Broadbent blue paper)

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_

# **Duties and Standards of Conduct**

## **OBJECTIVE**

To clarify the fiduciary duties of the supervisors and the standard of conduct for which they will be held accountable when serving on the board. Supervisors must

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

1. LEGAL DUTIES – Supervisors have a fiduciary responsibility to the District of loyalty, obedience, and due care & diligence.

Under the Duty of Loyalty, directors are required to:

- a. Act only in the best interests of the District
- b. Place the interests of the District over any personal interests
- c. Avoid any conflict of interest.
- d. Avoid even the appearance of any conflict of interest.
- e. Represent and support the interest of the District to elected and public officials.
- f. Publicly support decisions of the Board except in extraordinary circumstances where the supervisor actually believes that there is a clear and present threat to the survival of the District.

Under the duty of Obedience, directors are required to:

- a. Study and adhere to all obligations imposed by Colorado Revised Statutes, District Articles of Incorporation, District Bylaws, Board Policies, and contractual agreements.

Under the duty of Due Care and Diligence, directors are required to:

- a. Exercise the degree of care that an ordinarily prudent person would exercise under similar circumstances.
- b. Have or acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to direct the affairs of the district including reading the Colorado Soil Conservation Act, District Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, policies, contractual agreements, and attending trainings.
- c. Make every effort to attend all meetings of the board and to study materials sent prior to each board meeting.

2. CONDUCT WITH RESPECT TO FELLOW DIRECTORS

- a. Demonstrate mutual respect.
- b. Allow opportunity for every director to be heard on any matter being considered by the board.
- c. Abstain from revealing to persons other than directors or the District's attorney any difference of positions among directors on matters considered and acted upon by the board. (This standard does not preclude fair and accurate publication of such differences to the system's members in relation to contests for director elections or other matters to be voted upon by the members.)

3. GOOD FAITH AND FAIR DEALING – Every supervisor shall engage in good faith and fair dealing with every other director and the District Manager in expressing his views, questions and concerns relating to District policies and programs. Good faith and fair play require:
  - a. Supervisors to reveal all information or interests that they may have and that may bear upon action being considered by the District.
  - b. Supervisors not to pursue a position, inquiry, or motion as to unduly harass or annoy other directors, the District Manager, employees or independent contractors.
  - c. Supervisor communications with employees other than the District Manager to be casual and conducted on a courteous basis, but not for the purpose of obtaining information without the knowledge of the District Manager or influencing an employee's position or attitude concerning the District's related activities.
  
4. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND RESPONSIBILITY
  - a. All candidates, nominees or appointees to the board shall receive a copy of this policy and attest by their signatures to having received the policy.
  - b. The President of the Board shall ensure that this policy is followed.

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE

# Ethical Credibility

## **OBJECTIVE**

Because the conduct of the board has a direct impact on public and constituent perceptions about the District, board members will maintain high credibility in adhering to legal and policy requirements.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

Board members will be active and encourage all other board members to be active by attending meetings, studying, questioning, voting on all issues, monitoring progress and maintaining active committees.

Board members will not condone conflicts of interest on the board. A generally accepted rule is that a board member or his/her family may not receive any benefit (tangible or intangible) through the connection with the District and/or board. Refer to Conflict of Interest Policy for details.

Board members will vote against proposed actions if they feel there is insufficient information on which to base an opinion. Minutes of each meeting should be carefully maintained and all votes properly recorded.

Board members will adopt formally, by motion, any rules, regulations, policies, and budgets.

Board members will keep policy and procedure manuals up-to-date for ready reference.

Board members will review fiscal records and controls at regular intervals.

Board members will ensure that standard budget forms and annual report forms are prepared and filed as required by law.

Board members will listen carefully to board colleagues, respect each other's opinions, respect and support majority decisions of the board both in and out of the board room.

Board members will refer complaints to the proper level in the chain of command.

Board members will represent all those whom this Board serves, not just a particular geographic area or interest group.

Board members will consider themselves as "trustees" of the District and do their best to ensure that it is well-maintained, financially secure, growing and always operating in the best interests of those they serve.

Board members will keep the confidential proceedings of the board confidential outside the board room. (Refer to Board Member Confidentiality Agreement)

Board members will respect the duties of the district manager and his/her authority to supervise staff members by not interfering.

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_

# **Financial Management & Procedures**

## **OBJECTIVE**

As a public body, the XYZ Board is accountable to taxpayers, district cooperators, and the public at large. The policies and procedures adopted in this document are intended to insure accountability, transparency, efficiency, and lawfulness of the fiscal operations of the XYZ Conservation District.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

### **ACCOUNTING SYSTEM**

1. The XYZ will utilize a financial software system to track the district's assets including checking, savings and investments, and any special project funds.
2. The accounting system will include a chart of accounts for all of the district's financial operations.
3. The system's register will remain up-to-date and balanced and accounts will be reconciled with monthly bank statements.

### **EXPENDITURES AND TRANSFERS**

1. The signatures of the Treasurer and President of XYZ Board are required for each check.
2. All signatories must be bonded at the District's expense.
3. No XYZ employee will be authorized to sign checks.
4. Blank checks will not be pre-signed.
5. Transfer of funds between XYZ accounts will be approved by a quorum of XYZ supervisors at a regular or special meeting and will be documented in the meeting minutes.
6. The XYZ checking account will maintain a minimum balance of \$500 and a maximum balance of two months of normal operating expenses.
7. Supporting documentation is required and will be maintained in the district's records for all expenditures. Supporting documentation will include all information necessary to explain transactions including invoices, receipts, and other statements as needed. Validated timesheets are required for payroll expenditures. The check number and the date paid shall be documented on each paid invoice or statement.
8. Checks will only be authorized at regular or special board meetings by a quorum of XYZ supervisors, except for bi-monthly payroll checks or other regularly occurring financial transactions which must be ratified at the next district meeting.
9. The check number, name of payee, and amount will be noted in the meeting minutes for each authorized check.
10. All receipts shall be deposited in the XYZ checking account. Funds may then be transferred to savings or investment accounts as needed.
11. Voided checks shall be retained and listed on the monthly financial report.

### **TRAVEL**

1. XYZ supervisors and employees may receive reimbursement for appropriate related travel expense incurred while carrying out their duties.
2. When possible, supervisor and employee travel will be approved in advance by a quorum of the XYZ supervisors at a regular or special meeting, and will be documented in the minutes. When travel is unforeseeable, supervisors and employees will incur travel expenses at their own risk and will request ratification and reimbursement of their expenses at the next district board meeting.
3. Signed Travel Expense Reimbursement Claim Forms and appropriate receipts will be submitted prior to any travel expense reimbursement, whether travel was pre-approved or ratified.
4. Supervisors and employees will be reimbursed for approved actual expenses, except for mileage which will be paid at the state rate.

5. Paid Travel Expense Reimbursement Claim Forms will be attached to a copy of the check and filed in the district's records.
6. XYZ supervisors and employees who travel by personal vehicle must have a valid driver's license and must have the vehicle registered and insured in accordance with state requirements. Supervisors and employees are personally responsible for any fines or penalties connected to traffic or parking violations.

#### RECEIPTS

1. Receipts will be prepared for all incoming cash.
2. Deposit slips will indicate each cash receipt and check number.
3. Cash receipts will be deposited into the XYZ checking account within one month of receipt.

#### PERSONNEL

1. The XYZ will have up-to-date personnel policies which, at a minimum, include job descriptions, timesheets, and performance evaluations.
2. Timesheets will be reviewed and signed by an XYZ supervisor.
3. Employee pay rates will be documented each year in the minutes and in the personnel files.
4. Employee evaluations will be conducted at least annually.

#### GRANTS

1. Separate files containing financial and programmatic records, supporting documentation and sub-grantee or landowner agreements will be created for each grant program.
2. A separate account will be created within the XYZ accounting system for each grant program that involves funding.
3. All expenditures of grant funds will be in accordance with the approved grant agreements.
4. Accurate and timely reports will be submitted to granting agencies and organizations.

#### FINANCIAL REPORTS

1. The XYZ Treasurer will present a monthly financial report at each regular board meeting. Financial statements will include a balance sheet, income statement (profit and loss), and transaction detail for any accounts with transactions.
2. The report will include the time period covered, beginning balance, date, check numbers, payees, the amount of each transaction, and the ending balance. The beginning balance shall equal the previous month's ending balance.
3. Bank statements, cancelled checks, and the account reconciliation will be available for review at all regular meetings if requested.

#### FINANCIAL RECORDS RETENTION

1. Financial statements presented at board meetings will be maintained permanently with the meeting minutes, along with the Annual Budget and Application for Exemption from Audit in the XYZ Administrative Files. Administrative Files will be organized by month and year.
2. Original bank statements, cancelled checks, and all supporting documentation such as invoices, receipts, travel expense reimbursement claim forms, and reconciliation reports, will be maintained for at least three years in a notebook organized by month and year at the district office.
3. Grant program files containing financial and programmatic records, supporting documentation, sub-grantee agreements, and submitted grant reports will be maintained for at least three years.
4. Landowner operation and maintenance agreements will be retained for the life of the practice plus three years. When landowner agreements are associated with a grant program, the entire grant file will be retained for the life of the longest practice plus three years.
5. Personnel records will be maintained permanently.
6. No record will be destroyed so long as it pertains to any pending legal case, claim, action, or audit.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Last revised: \_\_\_\_\_

# **Grant Application & Administration**

## **OBJECTIVE**

Grants are often necessary to fund on-the-ground conservation, research, education, cost-share programs, etc. This policy provides guidance on the purpose and administration of grants.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

The District will apply for grants that address specific issues and concerns identified within the Long Range Program. All grant applications must be reviewed by the Board (or grant committee) for purpose and financial commitment before being approved for submittal.

Grant administration is the responsibility of the District Manager or designee per job description. The Board (or committee) will provide oversight and review of grant administration on a monthly basis. All required grant reporting will be reviewed by the grant committee.

The District Manager will provide documentation of each grant's required deliverables and financial accounting to the Board at each monthly meeting.

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Involvement in Organizations

## **OBJECTIVE**

To specify guidelines regarding involvement with other agencies, groups, and organizations in fulfilling the Districts mission.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

The District's function is to make technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, available to landowners for the use of soil, water, and related resources conservation. Therefore the District seeks partnership and involvement with other agencies, groups, and organizations for this purpose.

Our primary partners in conservation include:

- Colorado State Conservation Board (CSCB)
- Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (CACD)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- CSU Extension
- County
- Weed District
- Colorado State Forest Service
- US Bureau of Reclamation

The District will carefully evaluate the purpose and need for involvement with other agencies, groups, and organizations to accomplish their mission and purpose. Evaluations will be made by considering the benefit of the partnership to the District's Mission Statement and Long Range Program goals.

After careful evaluation of the above statement, other agencies, groups, and organizations the District seeks membership in and active involvement with are:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Issues Policy/Position Statements

## **OBJECTIVE**

To assure that the Board has policy or position statements in place before they take an official stand or make statements outside the Board Room.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

Definition of Position Statement: A written description of the District's belief or approach to address a specific issue.

The District may be asked or need to take a position on natural resource issues. It is the policy of this Board to take a position or make policy statements **only** with Board approved policy or position statements in place.

The Board will utilize the CACD Policy Book as their position unless the Board has voted on and passed specific policy on the issue in question. Policy should be based on consensus but may be accepted with a 2/3 majority vote.

Board position policy will be kept in the same policy notebook as Board and Management Policy but under a separate category for quick reference.

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Mission, Value, and Objective Statements

## Mission Statement:

Local conservation districts promote the stewardship and sustainability of natural resources.

- Through education and technical assistance
- By helping landowners learn best management practices based on sound science

## Function Statement:

To take available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user for conservation of soil, water, and related resources.

## Core Values: (District to complete the sentences below)

Constituents: Our success depends on our relationships with our constituents. It is important that our constituents know they can rely on us for technical, financial, and educational resources.

- Our first responsibility is to...
- We anticipate and take advantage of ...
- We continuously improve...
- We are prompt, courteous, and thorough in...
- We are transparent...

## Employees and Board Members:

We expect a lot of ourselves...

- We are ...
- We treat our...
- We cooperate...
- We are continuous ...
- We innovate, ...
- We have ...
- We achieve...
- We treat each other...
- We will promote...
- We listen...

## Integrity:

We do the right thing when no one is watching.

- 
- 
- 
-

**Community:**

We support the community.

- We provide...
- We communicate...
- We share...
- We encourage employees and board members...
- Educational contributions...

**Resources:**

We treat our resources with the utmost care.

- We maintain...
- We manage our financial resources...
- We take care of...
- We encourage employees...
- We take calculated risks with...
- If we fail, we...

At the \_\_\_\_\_ Conservation District, it is required that we live our values AND achieve our objectives:

- Employees and Board Members/Supervisors who live the District's values and achieve their goals will be rewarded.
- Employees and Board Members/Supervisors who are not able to live both the District's values and achieve their goals will be coached and given additional opportunities to succeed.
- If after coaching and counseling, the Employees or Board Members/Supervisors are still unable to live both the District's values and achieve their goals, they may be asked to resign.

**Board Objectives**

**Topic (samples)**

**Objective Statement (samples)**

Constituent Service

XYZ District will work with partners to provide superior customer service.

Education

XYZ District will provide information and education based on sound science.

Technical Assistance

XYZ District will...

Financial Assistance

XYZ District will...

Innovation

XYZ District will promote new thought and creative ideas.

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Officer Authority

### **OBJECTIVE**

To clarify Board officer authority.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

### **SCOPE**

Officers of the board are elected to be servant-leaders of the board. All authority of the officers is delegated to them by the board of directors. No officers will have authority to speak or act on behalf of the board other than that authority specifically granted in the District bylaws, board policy, or by majority vote of the board of directors recorded in the minutes.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Last revised: \_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE

## Officer Election Process

### **OBJECTIVE**

To specify the officer election process for continuity.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

### **SCOPE**

Special District elections are held in May of even years. Therefore, the election of officers of the Conservation District will be held at the June board meeting. The board will adhere to the following procedures in electing its officers:

- The board will meet to elect its officers at the first meeting following the June board meeting. This election may be postponed for one month if a quorum is not present.
  - Nominations will be open for any eligible candidate who has given prior consent.
  - Officer candidates must have consented to seek office before their name is placed in nomination.
  - Board members will encourage candidates to disclose their interest in the office.
  - Only board members present for elections will be allowed to vote for officers.
  - Election will be by secret paper ballot at a meeting at which a quorum of board members is present.
- One board member not running for the office and the district manager will count the votes.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Last revised: \_\_\_\_\_

# Officer Removal

## **OBJECTIVE**

To clarify reasons for and process of removing officers of the Board.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

The Board has the right to remove any officer from the elected position by the same authority that elected the officers. Officers may be removed from office for:

- Gross or willful neglect of the office's duties.
- Misuse of District funds.
- Misuse of position/office.
- Failure to inform the Board regarding a conflict of interest.
- Misrepresentation of board policy or action.
- Acting without Board consent.
- Conviction of a felony.
- Intentional lack of public support for the District mission, staff, or programs.
- Failure to inform the board about issues that impact board decisions.

Procedure for removal of any officer from office will be a simple majority vote of the board.

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_

# **President Policy**

## **OBJECTIVE**

To establish the basic services and functions to be performed by the Board President guiding the deliberations and activities of the Board.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

Duties and functions of the Board President:

1. Conducts the proceedings and activities of the District, including recommendation of the time, date, and place of meeting, preparation of agendas, and provision of information to the Supervisors concerning the activities and performance of the District, as required for the effective discharge of Directors responsibilities in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. Board Supervisors and staff are free to submit agenda suggestions to both Committee Chairs and the Board President.
2. Chair of the Executive Committee.
3. Ensures that the Secretary records all decisions and actions of the Board and follows up with reports on their implementation when appropriate.
4. Ensures that the Treasurer keeps accurate and up to date accounting of the Districts funds. President signs on all checks and vouchers along with the Treasurer.
5. Ensures a Board Member who is not a signatory on the accounts reconciles the bank statements per bonding requirements.
6. Assigns Supervisors to membership on Board committees and reports such assignments to the Board of Supervisors.
7. Assigns individual Supervisors to attend external functions and meetings as representatives of the District and the Board, and reports such assignments to the Board of Supervisors.
8. The Board President shall act as a spokesperson for the Board of Supervisors.
9. Guides the deliberations of the Board of Supervisors in formulating objectives and policies.
10. Ensures that the Board is satisfied that the policies laid down are adequate to attain such objectives and that such policies are being followed.
11. Ensures that all matters proper for discussion by the Board are included on the agenda and the agenda is approved.
12. Ensures that the Board is satisfied that adequate proposals, plans, programs, and budgets covering all phases of the District's activities, together with appropriate reports and recommendations, are submitted by the District Manager to the Board of Supervisors as a basis for policy formulation.
13. Ensures that the Board of Directors approves a Long Range Program every third year and an Annual Plan of Work every year by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Staff will subsequently assist in preparing the budget according to Board approved strategy with the first preliminary budget meeting to be held by October 31<sup>st</sup>. President will ensure the plans and budget are submitted to the appropriate State offices by December 31<sup>st</sup>.



14. Conducts meetings of the Board of Directors:
  - a. To ensure adequate opportunity for discussion of all agenda items;
  - b. To make sure the rights of all members are respected;
  - c. To ensure a clear understanding of matters before the Board and to sum up the decisions agreed upon.
15. Discusses with District Manager any significant issues that may arise outside the framework of existing Board policy and, where necessary, ensure that such issues are properly submitted to the Board for decision.
16. Takes steps, in coordination with the District Manager, as may be necessary to ensure that the District achieves and maintains a high position, reputation, and level of good will and for this purpose maintains contacts with industrial, civic, national bodies, etc., as are appropriate.
17. Ensures that expense reports for Supervisors are properly submitted and reviewed.
18. Ensures the Board periodically examines the activities, operating results, expenditures, and commitments of the District in relation to Board policies and approved budgets and, where necessary, that the District Manager takes prompt action to correct any adverse trends.
19. Ensures that the Board evaluates the performance of the District Manager on an annual basis, and also ensures that the Board reviews the salary of the District Manager on not less than an annual basis.
20. Assists supervisors in improving their skills.
21. Encourages all supervisors to participate in District activities.
22. Ensures all supervisors' views are represented in board activities and meetings.

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Vice President Policy

## **OBJECTIVE**

To establish the basic services and functions to be performed by the Board Vice President, as the presiding officer of the District, guiding the deliberations and activities of the Board representing the District in major external relationships.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

The Vice-President will preside at the board meetings in the absence of the President and assume the office of the chairperson when the board determines that the President can no longer serve. The Vice-President will also:

- Serve on the Executive Committee.
- Work with the President to be prepared to assume that office if/when necessary.
- Manage special assignments as requested by the President
- Chair the Annual Meeting Committee

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Last revised: \_\_\_\_\_

## Secretary Policy

### **OBJECTIVE**

To establish the basic services and functions to be performed by the Board Secretary.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

### **SCOPE**

The Secretary will oversee the records of the board, including meeting minutes, the charter and any historical documents. The Secretary will:

- Sign notes, contracts and other official agreements on behalf of the District and at the direction of the board.
- Attests (signs) contracts along with the primary signatory (President) and places the corporate seal near the signature.
- Serve on the Executive Committee.
- Ensure that all official documents are safely passed to the next secretary.
- Research District records for information when necessary.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Last revised: \_\_\_\_\_

# Treasurer Policy

## **OBJECTIVE**

To establish the basic services and functions to be performed by the Board Treasurer to ensure transparency and credibility of public funds.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

The Treasurer will oversee and manage the financial records of the District. The treasurer will:

- Ensure that the board receives accurate, easy to read Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Statements monthly.
- Ensure that checks have double signatures; Treasurer and the President.
- Ensure the bank accounts are with appropriate institutions (Special Districts have specific requirements).
- Ensure the officers with signing authority are bonded.
- Ensure the required policies are in place and implemented in accordance with the Bond.
- Chair the Finance Committee.
- Ensure the Finance Committee develops and presents the annual budget to the Board for approval by October 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Ensure the exemption from audit is completed and turned into the State by March 31<sup>st</sup> if income and expenses are less than \$500,000.
- Arrange for an annual audit of the District's books
  - Finance Committee shall perform internal audit if income or expenses are less than \$500,000
  - Formal CPA audit required if income or expenses exceed \$500,000
    - § June 30 deadline for auditor to submit audit report to District (C.R.S. 29-1-606(a)(1)).
    - § July 31<sup>st</sup> deadline for submitting annual audit report to the Office of the State Auditor (C.R.S. 29-1-606(3)) and Colorado State Conservation Board Office.
    - § July 31<sup>st</sup> deadline for requesting extension of audit (C.R.S. 29-1-606(4))
- Arrange in-service training/programs for the board members to better understand the financial reporting process.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Last revised: \_\_\_\_\_

## Officer Terms

### **OBJECTIVE**

To set date of election and terms of Board officers.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

### **SCOPE**

During the June board meeting, the board of supervisors will hold the election of officers; president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer (or secretary-treasurer).

Each supervisor should welcome the opportunity to serve as one of the officers of the board and each supervisor should have an opportunity to rotate through the various offices at least once. This allows each supervisor the opportunity to become more familiar with each officer's responsibilities, to become more actively involved, and to have a better understanding of the total district function and programs.

Terms of all officers will be for one year. Each officer may be reelected for a second consecutive term to the same office, and then may stand for election for that same office again only after at least one term of absence from that office.

*The CSCB recommends that no one elected or appointed conservation district supervisor serve in the same officer position of their district for more than two consecutive years.*

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Last revised: \_\_\_\_\_

# **Officer Position Vacancies**

## **OBJECTIVE**

To clarify process for filling officer position vacancies.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

If a vacancy occurs in any elected office because of resignation, death, ineligibility to hold office, or formal removal of an officer by the board, the board will proceed to fill the vacancy at the earliest possible time.

If the vacancy occurs in the chairperson's office, the vice-chairperson will assume the office as soon as the board of directors declares the position vacant. The vice-chairperson will hold the office of chairperson until the board elects a new chairperson.

A vacancy is filled in the prescribed manner of election of officers in Officer Election Policy.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Last revised: \_\_\_\_\_

## Personnel Policy

### **OBJECTIVE**

Personnel policy sets consistent guidelines and expectations for employees by the Board.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

### **SCOPE**

All districts with full or part-time employees shall have a policy. [See Sample Personnel Policy](#)

The XYZ District personnel policy will consider:

- Ethical behavior
- Standards of conduct
- Employment terms and conditions
- Leave criteria
- Holidays
- Training & development
- Travel
- Benefits
- Performance evaluation guidelines
- Grievance process
- Work hours, approval of leave and overtime pay
- Other

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_ Last revised: \_\_\_\_\_

# Supervisor Education & Training

## **OBJECTIVE**

To promote and support the qualified and informed performance of District Supervisors through education and training.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

1. Funds will be budgeted and approved annually by the Board of Supervisors for the above objective.
2. In addition to materials received by each Supervisor, the District staff will advise Supervisors of future available seminars, workshops, and institutes from the resources shown below.
3. Each Supervisor shall be encouraged to attend, with prior approval of the Board, at least one CSCB or CACD sponsored educational activity per year, at the expense of the District.
4. Each Supervisor who attends a non-District sponsored educational activity will report to the Board.
5. Each new District Board Member shall attend a formal orientation at the District's expense. The orientation shall present legal and general information concerning District policies, procedures, and practices.

## **LISTING OF POTENTIAL SUPERVISOR EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

1. Colorado State Conservation Board (CSCB)
2. Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (CACD)
3. Special Districts Association (SDA)
4. National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)
5. Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)
6. Other

**Adopted:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Last revised:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Supervisor Representation

## **OBJECTIVE**

To ensure a fair, accurate election process for the election of Supervisors to the District Board and equitable representation within the District.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board of Supervisors

## **SCOPE**

1. The powers and duties of the District and the management of its affairs shall be vested in the Board of Supervisors. The number of Supervisors shall be prescribed by the District's Bylaws. Currently, the District maintains \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisors.

2. One Supervisor shall be elected from each of the following areas; \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

The remaining \_\_\_\_\_ members may be elected at large but no more than two Supervisors should be from any one of the areas.

3. Directors must remain a bona fide resident of his/her specified area while serving as a supervisor. If a supervisor moves his/her residence outside of the specified area during their term of office, s/he will no longer be allowed to serve on the Board. Temporary absences due to changes in residency, such as selling a home and renting while a new home is built or purchased may be allowed on a case-by-case basis, upon approval of the Board of Supervisors.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_ Last revised: \_\_\_\_\_