

Supervisors Draft Bylaw Amendments - January 10, 2017

Contributed by JUDITH BENSON
Friday, 13 January 2017

Supervisors conducted a publicly noticed workshop on January 10, 2017 to discuss amendments of the bylaws of Seminole SWCD

The results of the recent workshop concluded with a proposed amendment to the current bylaws, a copy is noted below.

Changes to the Bylaws require a 30-day written notice and approval by a 4/5 super majority of the Board.

The proposed amendments will be discussed at the February 14, 2017 monthly meeting. Public comments are accepted and encouraged.

The proposed amendment reads as follows:

Bylaws of the Seminole Soil & Water Conservation District

Approved July 16, 1991

As amended on this the 10th day of January in this the 229th year of the Great Republic of the United States of America, 2017 anno Domini

The Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District does exist by virtue of a charter, dated the 7th day of November A.D. 1947 from the Honorable R.A. Gray, Secretary of the State of Florida under provisions of Chapter 582, Florida Statutes to include all the land and water within the boundaries of the County of Seminole in the State of Florida, and whose office is located at P.O. Box 180834 Casselberry, Florida 32718-0834.

Purpose

To promote the conservation of natural lands and soil and water resources for the health, safety and welfare of the people of Seminole County against improper land use as set forth in Chapter 582 of Florida Statutes.

To work with the State of Florida, the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Seminole County, Altamonte Springs, Casselberry, Lake Mary, Longwood, Oviedo, Sanford, Winter Springs, the Association of Florida Conservation Districts and other governmental and private organizations to accomplish our conservation and preservation goals

To work with the schools in Seminole County to develop curriculum and hands-on- programs for students to develop a better understanding of the need to conserve and preserve our natural resources.

To balance advocacy for soil and water conservation with attention to the rights of private property owners in Seminole County seeking to make a reasonable and economic use of their property.

To provide enhanced or specialized public services in response to citizen demand that the County or a municipality is unable or unwilling to offer.

Governing Body and Procedure

The Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District shall be administered by the Board of five Supervisors duly elected under provisions of Chapter 582.18 of Florida Statutes.

On the first meeting after the first Monday of January the five Supervisors will elect a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Public Relations Officer to hold office for one year. Any Supervisor may call for an election at any noticed Board meeting. This unique provision allows each Supervisor an opportunity to see if there is an agreement of the Board for a change in the leadership of the Board. We are limiting this privilege to one time per calendar year. A majority of the Supervisors may call for an election at any noticed Board meeting. All elections shall take place in accordance with Florida's Sunshine Law.

Vacancies on the Board will be replaced by appointment of a new Supervisor under the provisions of Chapter 582. The new Supervisor must be a resident of Seminole County and agree to commit at least 10 hours a month to Board activities. The appointed Supervisor shall assume the Board position of the Supervisor being replaced.

All meetings of the Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District shall be public meetings. The records of the meetings shall be public records and made available for copying or inspection upon request to the District. The District shall respond to the request promptly and in good faith in accordance with state law.

Pursuant to Section 286.012 of Florida Statutes, all Supervisors who are present at a meeting at which an official decision, ruling, or other official act is to be taken or adopted may not abstain from voting in regard to such decision, ruling, or act; and a vote shall be recorded or counter for each Supervisor present, unless, with respect to any such Supervisors, there is, or appears to be, a possible conflict of interest under state law or additional or more stringent standards of conduct, if any, adopted pursuant to state law. If there is or appears to be, a possible conflict as defined by state law, the Supervisor shall comply with the disclosure requirements of state law. If the only conflict or possible conflict is one arising from the additional or more stringent standards adopted pursuant to state law, the Supervisor shall comply with any disclosure requirements adopted pursuant to state law. If the official decision, ruling, or act occurs in the context of a quasi-judicial proceeding, a Supervisor may abstain from voting on such matter if the abstention is to assure a fair proceeding free from potential bias or prejudice.

Duties

Chairperson (Chair)

1. To preside during all noticed Board meetings or arrange for the Vice-Chairperson to preside in the absence of the Chair.
2. Call special meetings when necessary.
3. Plan the order of business or agenda with the Executive Director and District Conservationist (when available).

4. Extend invitations to all individuals you want to attend meetings and take part in discussions.
5. Call the meeting to order on time, announce the order of business, distribute a typed agenda, and recognize visitors and others present.
6. Handle discussions in an orderly manner pursuant to the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order:
 - a. Give everyone a chance to speak—one at a time.
 - b. Tactfully keep all speakers to Robert's Rules of Order and the questions at hand.
 - c. Give opposing Supervisor's equal opportunities to speak.
 - d. Encourage all Supervisors to participate in the discussion.
 - e. Enter into discussion to give additional facts or information.
7. State each Motion before it is discussed and before it is voted upon. Put all Motions to a vote and announce the outcome.
8. Suggest Motions but do not make them.
9. Insure that Supervisor statements and Board discussions are germane to any Motions made by a Supervisor; to any presentation being given to the Board; or the purview of the District as established by applicable law.
10. Avoid expressing your own opinion too soon and talk no more than necessary while presiding.
11. A quorum is required to conduct official business. The Chairperson ensures that a quorum (3 supervisors) is present at each meeting.
12. To administer the office and staff of the District with the advice and counsel of the other Supervisors.
13. Review the objectives of the District 5-Year (Long-Range) Plan and the District Annual Plan monthly, to make sure that all planned activities and assignments are carried-out.
14. Appoint committees, assign their responsibilities, and collect reports when due.
15. Ensure that the board does not "rubber stamp" the actions and recommendations of cooperating agencies.
16. Ensure that all supervisors are properly informed and understand their duties.

17. Set a good example by observing proper parliamentary procedure. Remember – all official actions require a Motion.

18. Close meetings on time. Encourage regular attendance. Follow-up on absentees.

19. Enforce the legislation approved by the Board, and represent the Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District at or with the State of Florida, Department of Agriculture, US Department of Agriculture, Seminole County, Altamonte Springs, Casselberry, Lake Mary, Longwood, Oviedo, Sanford, Winter Springs, the Association of Florida Conservation Districts and other governmental and private organizations to accomplish our conservation and preservation goals.

20. Other duties – duties as approved by the Board and accepted by the Chair.

Vice-Chairperson (Chair)

21. To assume the duties of the Chair in the absence of that officer and assist the Chairperson (Chair) in the performance of the Chairperson (Chair)’s duties.

22. Assume other duties at the Chairperson’s request.

23. Serve as chairperson for special programs.

24. Succeed the Chairperson in the event of resignation or other conditions precluding the continued tenure until the board is reorganized.

25. Other duties – duties as approved by the board and accepted by the Vice-Chair.

Secretary

26. Notify the Board members of each meeting.

27. Provide the Chairperson with a list of business items to be placed on the agenda.

28. To keep or cause to be kept an accurate set of minutes of each meeting. a. The minutes should include the following information:

a. Type of meeting (regular, annual, or special)

- b. Name of presiding officer, date, hour, and place.
 - c. Attendance (supervisors, agency representatives, guests). Supervisors not in attendance should also be listed.
 - d. Official business. Remember – Official business cannot be transacted without a quorum. At least three supervisors constitute a quorum.
 - e. Reports made at meetings. (Reports may be summarized – ask agency representatives and committees to provide written reports when necessary).
 - f. All Motions, indicating the person making the Motion, seconding the Motion, and the action that was taken on the Motion. (A Motion that was withdrawn should not be recorded).
29. Keep the Office of Agricultural Water Policy and the local Supervisor of Elections informed concerning board membership by furnishing copies of all letters of appointment and resignation, as well as names of district officers and address changes in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.
30. Record each Motion in full and read same before action is taken.
31. Insist that action be completed on each item of business to ensure that a record is be made of all business conducted.
32. Keep a record of all committees, both standing and special. Notify committee members of their appointment if they were not present when the appointment was made in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.
33. Initiate correspondence on behalf of the Board as the need arises in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.
34. To be the “custodian of records” as defined under Chapter 119 of Florida Statutes for the purposes of responding to public records requests.
35. Other duties – duties as approved by the Board and accepted by the Secretary.

Treasurer

36. To keep or cause to be kept an accurate set of financial records of the District in accordance with Chapter 189 of Florida Statutes and make all required reports as statute or rule in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.
37. The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining an accurate account of the financial transactions of the District.
38. All expenditures of the District must be made in check form. The signature of the Treasurer in conjunction with either the Chair or the Executive Director is required for all expenditures by check.

39. Deposits of District funds only require one signature by either the Treasurer, the Chair, or the Executive Director.
40. Prepare and maintain district budget for the operating year in coordination with the Chair and Executive Director.
41. Prepare a monthly treasurer's report for the board to be presented at Board meetings.
42. Maintain complete and accurate records of receipts and expenditures. in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.
43. Instruct the Executive Director or designated agent of the District to pay only the bills approved by official action of the Board and issue receipts for incoming funds.
44. Maintain separate accounting of any funds the district may receive for a specific purpose.
45. Arrange for an annual audit of receipts and disbursements in accordance with Chapter 218.32, F.S., "Annual Financial Report," and Chapter 11.45, F.S., "Audit," in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.
46. Ensure, in compliance with state and federal law, the District does not expend or mishandle district funds.
47. Be responsible for the retrieval and distribution of mail to the District.
48. Other duties — duties as approved by the board and accepted by the Treasurer.

Public Relations Officer

49. Develop rapport, through personal contact, with all local newspapers, radio, and television stations so that activities are sufficiently publicized.
50. Maintain and serve as a point-of-contact for the the District's social media and utilize the same to disseminate information and updates about District activities and events.
51. Submit news items (include photographs when appropriate) of general interest concerning the district activities to the Office of Agricultural Water Policy for possible use in statewide publications in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.
52. Develop and maintain a record of the district activities in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.
53. Write the public information section of the District Annual and 5-Year (Long-Range) Plans in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.

54. Other duties – duties as approved by the board and accepted by the Public Relations Officer.

District Employees

Executive Director

55. Know the specific functions of the District and understand its 5-Year (Long-Range) Plan.

56. Assist the Board in preparing the Annual Plan. Refer to it monthly when preparing Board meeting agendas.

57. Thoroughly understand the cooperative agreement and group assistance forms.

58. Be familiar with all Memoranda of Understanding, if any.

59. Be familiar with the District Supervisors Handbook.

60. Assist landowners applying to the District Board for technical assistance.

61. Prepare District Board meeting notices and agendas in consultation with the Chair.

62. Email notices and agendas to the Board Members in advance of the meeting.

63. Assist with the planning and preparation for all District meetings.

64. Prepare monthly financial reports, in conjunction with the Treasurer, for presentation to the Board. Reconcile balances of special and District accounts. Maintain records of District business transactions on a daily basis. Maintain all records in an orderly fashion established by the District Treasurer.

65. Prepare vouchers and checks for bills authorized for payment by the District Board.

66. Attend all Board meetings.

67. Keep records for award programs.

68. File Supervisor's mail for distribution and action.

69. Assist in the preparation of educational events such as field days, tours, and special events.
70. Maintain a standardized filing system for the District.
71. Keep a schedule of all events that concern the Board and bring it to their attention at the proper time.
72. Assist the Board with correspondence and any other business they may have in connection with local activities or any responsibility they may assume in area or statewide District activities.
73. Maintain District property records.
74. Assist in District financial bookkeeping – maintain a separate ledger for “Special Funds,” “District Funds,” “Special Projects,” and keep posting current.
75. Receive and receipt contributions to the District on behalf of the Board. The Executive Director may also make bank deposits and is has signatory responsibility
76. Forward copies of all District meeting minutes to the Office of Agricultural Water Policy, NRCS, and the AFCD.
77. Hire, train and directly supervise all District support staff in consultation with the Chair.
78. Assume any additional responsibilities designated by the Board of Supervisors.
79. The Executive Director will be hired by the Board at a noticed meeting with a complete job description with working hours, benefits, etc.
80. The Chair will be responsible for the direct supervision of the Executive Director and the Chair shall provide a written evaluation of the Executive Director, annually. In the event of any grievances and/or reprimands regarding the Executive Director they shall be brought to the Board for discussion/decision.
81. Should no Executive Director be hired or installed by the Board, then the Chair may assign any of the above duties to any other Supervisor as approved and accepted by that Supervisor.

Office Staff

82. Office staff shall be hired by the Executive Director at the expressed direction of the Board by recorded vote on a Motion or the annual budget.
83. All office staff shall be hired on a part time basis, for a time limited period and further limited by the availability of funding. The Board will work to open the State of Florida employee benefits package to all employees of the District.

84. The Executive Director shall be responsible for the direct supervision of the Office Staff. The Executive Director shall provide a written evaluation of the Office Staff, annually. In the event of any grievances and/or reprimands regarding the Office Staff shall be brought to the Board for a resolution of the issue.

85. Should no Executive Director be hired or installed by the Board, then the Chair may assign any of the above duties to any other Supervisor as approved and accepted by that Supervisor.

Properties

Property owned by the Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District will be transferred to Seminole County in the event of the discontinuance of the Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District.

Amendments to the Bylaws

Changes to the Bylaws require a 30-day written notice and approval by a 4/5 super majority of the Board.