



Oklahoma Conservation Commission

District Directors' Responsibilities

A 10-Minute Guide Series

This is one in a continuing series of informational/discussion topics designed to help conservation district directors become more informed and knowledgeable about their responsibilities. It is suggested that board members review these guides before a board meeting and then have a ten minute discussion on them at a meeting.

Guide No. 12 - District Director Elections

The governing body of a conservation district consists of five public officials. Two board members are appointed by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and three are elected by registered voters within the conservation district. This guide describes the conservation district election process.

Elected Directors

Three positions on the board are elected. The elected positions are numbered 1, 2 and 3 with succeeding terms, so that one term expires each year.

Term of Office

The term of an elected director is from April 1 through March 31 for a period of three years. The incumbent director must file for re-election every three years to declare as a candidate for the district director election.

Eligibility Requirements for Candidate

To be eligible to file for district director election, an individual must be a registered voter in the district and must be a cooperator of the district. The individual must have a cooperator agreement on file with the district at least thirty days prior to filing (see 10-minute guide #4 on Cooperator Agreements).

Taking Office

Elected directors begin their term of office on April 1 of the year they are elected. They will be eligible to vote on district matters and to draw per diem for attending meetings on or after April 1 and after the Oklahoma Conservation Commission has certified the position and the Oath of Office and the Loyalty Oath have been administered.

Elections

Conservation district director elections are held each year on the second Tuesday of March, as established by law (Title 27A of the Oklahoma Statutes, Section 3-3-301 (A)), a day also designated by law as Conservation District Day.

Election Schedule

Districts must meet several deadlines and requirements for elected positions on the board each year. These are outlined in Chapter 3 of the district handbook as well as in a memo from OCC sent to each district in November.

December Board Meeting: Set the dates for publishing notices of filing period and election in **all** newspapers in the district. This action must be recorded in the board meeting minutes.

January - First Three Weeks: Publish two times, with seven day interval for daily papers, the Form OCC-3D, *Notice of Filing Period for Election of District Director*. The district must then certify to the Oklahoma Conservation Commission that the notice has been published on Form OCC-3E, *Affidavit of Publication of Filing Period or Election*.

February - First Two Weeks: Accept applications from those who apply by using Form OCC-3F, *Notification and Declaration of Candidacy*, and Form OCC-3C, *District Director Information Material*. These forms are to be made available to the public at the district office. A copy of the applicant's Cooperator Agreement must be attached. The district must verify with the County Election Board that the individual is a registered voter in the district.

February - Second Two Weeks: If only one candidate files, no election will be held, and the candidate, if qualified, will be certified as elected by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission. If two or more candidates file, the district must notify the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and forward Form OCC-3F, *Notification and Declaration of Candidacy*, and Form OCC-3C, *District Director Information Material*, to the Commission office by close of business following the last day of the filing period.

The Commission will notify the district whether candidates are eligible and whether an election is to be held.

Board Meeting to Prepare for Election

If the district did not have knowledge of a district director election at the February board meeting, a special meeting should be called as soon as possible to make necessary arrangements. The board will need to:

- ◆ Determine the newspapers to publish the Notice of Election.
- ◆ Designate polling places.
- ◆ Appoint a District Election Committee to have charge of the election and determine the pay scale of the committee members.

When No Candidate Files for Election

If no one files for the elected position, the Oklahoma Conservation Commission will declare that position vacant and will request that the board recommend two individuals for appointment. The recommendations are to be submitted on Form OCC-3B, *Recommendation for Appointment of Conservation District Director*, and signed by at least three board members.

The Commission will select and approve one of the recommended appointees during a regular meeting and will send a Certificate of Appointment to the district office.