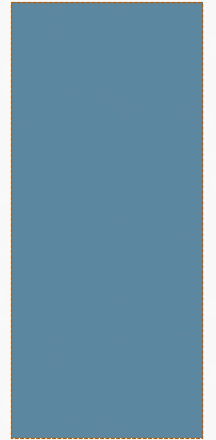


MINUTES

RECORDING OF MINUTES



Conservation district boards are required to keep minutes of all board meetings. The minutes are one of the most important documents kept by the district. They provide an accurate summary of the business conducted during board meetings as well as provide a history of the district.

❖ **Basic information** that must be included:

- Where & When the meeting took place
- Location of the meeting
- Date and Time that meeting started and stopped
- Who called the meeting to order and their title
- Chairman need to state the date, location and time the meeting started as well as who is present in the room for clarity in the recording of the minutes per Act 1028

Components and procedures for minutes:

❖ **Recording of the minutes**

- This might include written, electronic or recorder.
- The Open Meeting Act requires that a public body record the proceedings of all meetings.
- Minutes should contain enough information for anyone to look at them at a later date and determine what items were discussed in the meeting and what specific action was taken.

❖ **Attendance**

- Minutes must list all board members present, as well as those absent. Under “Other Present” list the name and title of other individuals present.
- The minutes should include when the meeting starts and when it adjourns.

❖ **Recording Motions**

- When a motion is recorded in the minutes, the name of the individual making the motion and the name of the person seconding it must be recorded.
- The motion must be recorded in detail completely
- A decision or action taken by the board cannot be recorded as merely “the same as last year”. The motion must be specific to the action being implemented

❖ **Votes**

- Each vote of the board members (including the Chairman) must be publicly cast and recorded on all motions.
- Each member must verbalize a yea, nay or abstention vote.
- Abstention votes are required if the member has a conflict of interest or feels they do not have enough information to make a reasonable decision.
- If there are votes against the motion, then minutes should reflect how members voted by name.

MOTIONS

- ❖ Due to recording requirement board members need to be identified verbally when making a motion and/or seconding the motion
- ❖ Motion must be made to bring any action item to the table and seconded prior to discussion
 - Once the motion has been made and seconded the board can discuss at will, however, unless pertinent to the matter the only thing recorded is the motion itself, not the full discussion
 - If the motion is not seconded, it dies for lack of a motion
 - If the motion is amended the amendment has to be voted on first then the motion as amended is voted on
- ❖ All motions should be recorded in the minutes
 - Motions can be tabled for future discussion if the board feels they do not have enough information to move forward or does not want to take action at that time
 - No motion is complete until the Chairman states, “So moved”

VOTING MUST BE PUBLIC



Recording votes of members are especially critical in the event of a split vote.

Board members may call in for a board meeting if they are unable to attend and their participation is needed for a quorum.

Rationale for identifying split voting is for historical perspective if a question arises.

A quorum must be established at the beginning of the meeting. If there are not enough board members to hold a meeting it should be cancelled in advance or not conducted due to lack of quorum.

Robert's Rules of Order state that the Chairman may make a motion and vote on any motion if the board is less than 12 individuals.

AGENDA

- ❖ Agenda should be developed in collaboration with the chairman, staff and partners
- ❖ Agenda and previous meeting minutes should be emailed/mailed to board members prior to meeting
- ❖ Include any information that the board might need to help them with their decision-making
- ❖ Additional items may be added to agenda on-site with board approval
- ❖ Agenda should provide a clear outline of topics to be discussed, action items, district business, etc.
- ❖ Agenda should state if the meeting is a regular or special called meeting

PREVIOUS MINUTES AND TREASURER'S REPORT

- ❖ Approval of the previous meeting minutes
 - Who made the motion to approved?
 - Who seconded the motion?
 - Were there corrections, additions or other changes?
 - Identify the date of the previous meeting minutes
- ❖ Treasurer's Report
 - Review the financial report regarding income and expenses
 - Are the expenses in line with the budget or approved expenditures?
 - Motion should be made to file the report for audit, seconded and then voted on.
 - Treasurer's Reports are not approved per se but filed for audit

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

❖ Old Business should be covered first

- Includes any outstanding items or action items which are on-going or incomplete
- These are items which were discussed at previous meetings but not completed

❖ New Business

- Any item or action which has not been discussed previously but needs to be brought to the Board's attention
- New business should include the appropriate documents, etc. to ensure the board had all necessary information needed to make a decision

STAFF & COMMITTEE REPORTS

- ❖ Staff may give a brief report on their activities since the last board meeting
 - District Office Manager/Secretary reports on items such as water well or poultry registration, pecan or supply sales, etc.
 - Water Quality Technicians/Irrigation Technicians report on their activities related to technical assistance to the landowners, farmers, etc.
 - Report should be provided in writing for the board members and attached to the minutes
- ❖ NRCS and NRD Staff members should be given time for brief reports and/or updates on programs

ADJOURNING THE MEETING

- 1) The date and location of the next board meeting should be noted prior to adjournment
- 2) Once all business is concluded the Chairman can ask for a motion to adjourn, seconded then voted on
- 3) As with all motions the Chairman states, “so moved” to complete the motion
- 4) The actual time of the adjourning the meeting should be noted in the minutes as well to document that the meeting was concluded at that time
- 5) The approved minutes should be sent to your Land Resource Specialists, AACD but might also include local elected officials, NRCS and other appropriate conservation partners which have been approved by the Board

ACT 1028

- ❖ The Arkansas General Assembly passed legislation requiring any entity receiving taxpayer funds to record their board meetings and save those recordings for 1 year
- ❖ Care must be taken to ensure that we do not accidentally reveal any private landowner information in our board meetings
 - No landowner names should be mentioned in relation to their operation, practices
 - Encourage board members to stick to the agenda to keep the meeting moving efficiently
 - Encourage board and staff to discuss personal issues or items not related to board business prior to the meeting or after
 - Personnel issues should be addressed in an Executive Session which is not recorded electronically (this only applies to personnel issues)
 - However no action can be taken in the Executive Session
 - Board must come back into session to ensure actions are recorded

❖ Storage of Minutes

- The original signed minutes with agenda, financial statements and reports must be retained in the district office as a permanent record.
- Recorded minutes must be retained for 1 year per Act 1028.



❖ Executive Session Minutes

- The Open Meeting Act requires that the minutes be recorded for executive sessions as well as open sessions.
- Someone must be designated to take minutes if the board approves going into executive session.
- Executive session minutes are hand written, should identify who participated and a brief summary of issues discussed.
- Executive session minutes should be placed in a sealed envelope and marked “Executive Session of the _____ Conservation District and dated. It is also recommended that the Chairman initial across the seal of the envelope and placed in a secure location.
- Typically executive sessions are used for personnel issues.
- Voting must be delayed until the board returns to regular session.

Example:

Cherry Hill Conservation District
Regular Board Meeting
10:00am Tuesday, December 3, 2019
C.A. Vines 4-H Center, Little Rock, AR

Agenda (attached)

The meeting was called to order at 10:00am by Sam Hunt, Chairman.

Members present:

Sam Hunt, Chairman

Willie Wise, Treasurer

Randy Right, Secretary

Mary Lou Stewart, Board Member

George Dolittle, Board Member

Staff Present:

Sissy Birdsong, District Secretary & Harvey Hill, WQT

NRCS staff

ADA-NRD staff

Others present: None present

Minutes from _____, 2020

- *Motion to approve the minutes as mailed by Willie Wise, seconded by George Dolittle. Motion passed.*

Treasurer's Report

- *Motion to submit the financial reports for audit by Mary Lou Stewart, seconded by George Dolittle. Motion passed.*
- Bank balance as of _____, 2020 is \$_____.

Old Business

New Business

District Reports

- Committee Reports
- Staff reports (should be provided in writing to attach to the minutes)
- Include any motions and/or actions that resulted from the reports

Partner Reports

- Brief reports by NRCS, NRD and/or other partners present at the meeting, if present.

Other Business

- If none then omit from minutes

Adjourning the Meeting

- Motion required to adjourn the meeting.
- State who made the motion, seconded the motion and vote.
- Chairman should state “so moved” after the completion of each motion’s vote.

Respectfully submitted by _____, District Secretary

Approved on _____, 2020 _____Secretary

Board Secretary initials after approval

Minutes are nothing more than a draft until they are approved at the next meeting.

Minutes should not include side discussions unless related to a motion.