This presentation was given at the 2017 Annual Conservation Districts Partnership Conference. This training is to aid district commissioners, district employees and others in the performance of their duties.

Mike Brown
National Association of State Conservation Agencies
SCACD Annual Meeting

Goals

• Learn More About South Carolina Conservation Delivery
• Learn More About Conservation Delivery Elsewhere
• Develop Tool(s) to Better Evaluate and Develop South Carolina Conservation Districts
• Group Participation
• Continue NACD Recognition
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District Official Training

State Agency Responsibility by Statute
WHAT IS A DISTRICT COMMISSIONER?

AN OVERVIEW OF THE COMMISSIONER’S ROLES
SCACD Annual Meeting

National Effort to Improve District Official Training

NACD District Ops Committee
NASCA
NRCS
**Conservation District Official Training Program Assessment**

**Overall Objective:**
The overall objective is to improve each state’s district official training program by offering an evaluation tool, plus assistance and materials from states that have outstanding district official training programs.

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<th>State:</th>
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<td>Organization:</td>
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**Email the Completed State Assessment to rayledgerwood@msn.com**

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<th>Overall Assessment Score (Average of all elements)</th>
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### Conservation District Official Training Elements & Topics

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<th>Planned Actions</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Basic Knowledge</strong></td>
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<td>□ History of the Conservation Movement – Local, State, and National</td>
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<td>• Dust Bowl Era</td>
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**National Association of State Conservation Agencies**
The Origin of Conservation Districts

In the early 1930s, along with the Great Depression, came an equally unparalleled ecological disaster known as the Dust Bowl. Huge black dust storms that stretched across the nation blotted out the sun and swallowed the countryside.
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Hugh Hammond Bennett

Bureau of Soils Soil Surveyor

http://www.soil.ncsu.edu/about/century/hugh.html
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Published

“Soil Erosion, a National Menace” in 1928.

(First national publication on soil erosion)
Bennett helped establish the Soil Erosion Service in the Department of the Interior and became its Director in September 1933.
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Testified to House Appropriations Committee in

March 1935

about soil erosion

Dust Bowl
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Soil Conservation Act of April 27, 1935

Hugh Hammond Bennett
First Chief of SCS
Because nearly three-fourths of the continental United States is privately owned, Roosevelt and Congress realized that only active, voluntary support from landowners would guarantee the success of conservation work on private land.
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The idea of soil and water conservation districts was born.
In 1937, President Roosevelt wrote the governors of all the states recommending legislation that would allow local landowners to form soil conservation districts.

Model Enabling Legislation
SCACD Annual Meeting

SCACD History – Important events:

• 1937 - FDR sent model district legislation to governors
• 1937 - SC Conservation Districts Law
• 1937 - First two SC conservation districts (Upper Savannah and Edisto)
• 1938 - The country’s first on-farm soil conservation plan implemented in Seneca, SC
• 1945 – SC Soil and Water Committee funded by the State
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SCACD History – Important events:

- 1946 - NACD formed (first President was E.C. McArthur from Gaffney, SC)
- 1946-47 – First NACD office in Spartanburg, SC
- 1967 – Act 619 created Watershed Conservation Districts
- 1970 – State Soil and Water Committee changed to Soil and Water Commission, then to Land Resources Commission
SCACD Annual Meeting

SCACD History – Important events:

• 1993 - Land Resources Commission restructured into the SCDNR
• 2013 - Historical marker for first NACD office erected in Spartanburg
• 2017 - NASCA came to town 😊
What is a Conservation District
“...a governmental subdivision of this State, a public body corporate and politic, organized in accordance with the provisions of this chapter ...”

(Title 48, Chapter 9)
Local government at work whose major responsibility is the management of soil and water resources

Decisions are made at the local level
SCACD Annual Meeting

District Powers

1. To conduct surveys, investigations and research relating to the character of soil erosion and floodwater and sediment damages
District Powers

2. To conduct demonstrational projects within the district on lands owned or controlled by this State …

3. To carry out preventive and control measures and works of improvement for flood prevention or the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water within the district…
District Powers

4. To cooperate, or enter into agreements with and... to furnish financial or other aid to any agency, governmental or otherwise, or to any owner or occupier of lands ...

5. ...to acquire, by purchase, exchange, lease, gift, grant, bequest, devise or otherwise, any property, real or personal, ...
SCACD Annual Meeting

District Powers

6. To develop comprehensive plans for the conservation of soil and water resources and for the control and prevention of soil erosion and for flood prevention ...

7. To sue and be sued in the name of the district...
How many commissioners are mandated per district?
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3 elected
2 appointed by DNR Board
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Associate Commissioners

• Specific skills
• Recruitment tool (test drive)
• Appointed by District Board
Commissioner Qualifications

Candidates for election must be qualified registered electors and residents of the district in which elected.
Commissioner Qualifications

Appointed commissioners shall be persons who are by training and experience qualified to perform the specialized skilled services which will be required of them in the performance of their duties under this chapter.
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Board Member Responsibilities

• Programmatic
• Financial
• Legal
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Programmatic Responsibilities

• Assess Conservation Needs in the District
• Inventory Resources Available
• Develop Annual Plans of Work (bridge gaps between needs and available resources)
• Long-Range (Strategic) Planning
• Policy Development
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Programmatic Responsibilities (cont.)

- **Employee Supervision**
  - Draft Job Descriptions
  - Performance Planning
  - Performance Review
  - Coaching
  - Personnel Records
  - Training and Mentoring Opportunities
  - Participation at Regional and National Levels
  - Reporting to Board, Grantors, and Public
SCACD Annual Meeting

Programmatic Responsibilities (cont.)

• Awareness of Conservation Programs
  • Acronyms
  • Agriculture, Forestry, & Urban Conservation
  • Partnering to Deliver Programs
  • Conservation Education
  • Conservation Planning
  • Non-Traditional Roles for Conservation Districts
  • Developing New Programs
SCACD Annual Meeting

Programmatic Responsibilities (cont.)

• Review Accomplishments
• Reporting
  • DNR
  • Grantors
  • State Legislature
  • Cooperators
  • Landowners
• Education
• Media
SCACD Annual Meeting

What are policies?

• Guidelines that regulate organizational action.
• Control the conduct of people and activities.
• Ensure a safe organized, teambuilding, empowering, nondiscriminatory workplace.
Why establish district policies?

District employees and commissioners need to establish and know district policies for a variety of reasons:

- Employees and commissioners need to know district policies for consistent implementation.
- The district manager needs to know how much can be spent on equipment repair without board approval.
- District employees work with minimal supervision and guidance.
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A policy may be useful to:

• Eliminate confusion
• Protect the district legally
• Keep the district in compliance with government regulations, policies, and laws
• Establish consistent work standards, rules and regulations
• Provide consistent and fair treatment for employees
• Help customers define expectations
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Suggested areas where district policies may be needed:

- District office hours
- Financial management (Example: who is authorized to spend district funds and any limits on spending)
- Who in the office has keys (who has keys, is responsible for locking the building, etc.)
- Equipment policies (Example: equipment cannot be used by employees or commissioners for personal use, e.g. computers or ATV)
- Other areas where policies are needed to help carry out the day-to-day district activities.
- Personnel policies
- Whistle-blower protection
Numerous personnel management problems can be avoided if each district establishes written personnel policies. Once written, these policies should be provided to all employees.
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Basic Personnel Policy Items:

- Employment terms and conditions
- Compensation and benefits
- Participation with professional organizations, conferences, etc.
- Employee relations
- Performance appraisals
- Employee training
- Employee services
- Disciplinary procedures
- Non-discriminatory language
SCACD Annual Meeting

Personnel Manual

- Employment Terms and Conditions
- Compensation
- Employee Relations
- Performance Appraisal System
- Employee Training
- Employee Benefits
- Work Schedules
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Organizational Chart
SCACD Annual Meeting

Policy Review

• Policies should be reviewed annually or as prescribed.
• Consider placing an item on the board meeting agenda to discuss and establish district policies.
• Consider appointing a district employee, commissioner, or committee to draft a policy for the board’s adoption to save time at board meeting.
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Fiduciary Responsibilities
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“FIDUCIARY"

Of, relating to, or involving one that holds something in trust for another.
A "fiduciary" is one who stands in a special relationship of trust and confidence with respect to his or her obligations to others.
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“A person who is required to act for the benefit of another person on all matters within the scope of their relationship; one who owes to another the duties of good faith, trust, confidence and candor; one who must exercise a high standard of care in managing another’s money or property.”
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District commissioners must prudently represent the interests of the district AND its members while directing the business and affairs of the district.
Fiduciary Checklist for Board commissioners

- Operate within the bounds of the law.
- Ethics
- Conflicts of Interest
- Actions support mission, vision, annual plan, strategic plan
- Hire and evaluate manager or staff
SCACD Annual Meeting

Fiduciary Checklist for Board commissioners

- Operate within the bounds of the law
- Ethics
- Conflicts of Interest
- Actions support mission, vision, annual plan, strategic plan
- Hire and evaluate manager or staff
- Fiscal oversight
- Meeting preparation and committee participation
- Community Relations
SCACD Annual Meeting

Financial Responsibilities

• Annual Budget(s)
• Public Funds
• Different Protocols for Different Pots of Money
  • Federal
  • State
  • County
  • Local
  • Other
SCACD Annual Meeting

Financial Responsibilities (cont.)

• Approved Accounting System
• Audit Requirements
• Financial Statements
• Financial Planning
  • Investing
• Available Funding Mechanisms
• Fund Raising
• Grants and Agreements
Funding Opportunities for South Carolina Conservation Districts

- County Funding
- State Funding
- Farm Bill Programs
- Contribution Agreements
- Grants
- Local Funds
- Fees
- Donations
- Penalty Funds
- Mitigation Funds
- Taxes
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Legal Responsibilities
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South Carolina Code Online

http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/statmast.php
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SCDNR

Statutory role of assistance and coordination for the districts
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South Carolina Code
Title 48
Chapter 9

Soil and Water Conservation Districts Law
SCACD Annual Meeting

South Carolina Code
Title 30

Freedom of Information Act
SCACD Annual Meeting

South Carolina Code
Title 8
Chapter 13

Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform
SCACD Annual Meeting

South Carolina Code
Title 48
Chapter 11

Watershed Conservation Districts Law
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Roles and Responsibilities of Local, State, and National Associations and Partners
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National Conservation Partnership

• NRCS
• NACD
• NASCA
• NCDEA
• NARCDC
SCACD Annual Meeting

SCDNR

- Offer assistance to districts and Commissioners
- Keep Commissioners informed
- Coordinate and facilitate information exchange between districts
- Prepare guidelines for districts and help them develop policies and procedures
The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a federal agency with the goal of conserving natural resources on private land. NRCS primarily works through a voluntary incentive based program for privately owned lands, and also with other private and public resources and units of government. Many Districts have an NRCS employee housed in local USDA Service Centers.
A memorandum of understanding was executed between USDA and Conservation Districts at the time of its organization. This Mutual Agreement and the Cooperative Working Agreement allows the District to utilize the technical services of NRCS.
In general, the Cooperative Working Agreement addresses:

- Cooperation
- Information Sharing
- Program Delivery
- Office facilities
- Vehicles
- Equipment
- Records Management
- Funding Liability
Agreements at a Glance

**Basic framework for cooperation with USDA**

**Basic framework for state cooperation**

**Locally developed detailed working arrangements**

---

**Mutual Agreement**

Signed by:
- Secretary
- Governor and/or Tribal Council
- District and/or Tribe

---

**Cooperative Working Agreement**

Signed by:
- NRCS
- State conservation agency and/or Tribal Council
- District and/or Tribe

---

**Operational Agreement**

Signed by:
- NRCS
- District
- Others as deemed necessary by district
The Mission of the SCACD is to protect the natural resources of South Carolina through its 46 member Conservation Districts by providing the leadership, information, and tools which enable Districts to achieve their goals.
SCACD Annual Meeting

SCACD Leadership

• President
• Vice-President
• Secretary/Treasurer
• Past President
SCACD Annual Meeting

SCCDEA

To promote professional development of Conservation District employees
SCACD Annual Meeting

National Association of Conservation Districts

• The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) formed in 1946, is a non-governmental, non-profit organization which represents nearly 3000 Conservation Districts nationally.
• NACD maintains offices in Washington D.C. and has regional representatives throughout the country.
• NACD has established a strong voice on soil, water and other natural resource concerns at the national level.
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Other Partners

Agencies:
- FSA
- USFWS
- USFS
- State Agencies
- SCDOT
- SCDA

NGOs:
- DU
- TNC
- NASCA

Counties and Municipalities:
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Ethics

(Title 8, Chapter 13)
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Ethics

- Oath of Office
- Conflict of Interest
- Abuse of Position
- Acceptance of Gifts
- Diversity
- Nepotism
- Confidentiality
“I, XXXXXX do solemnly affirm, that I am duly qualified according to the Constitution of this State, to exercise the duties of the Office of Commissioner of the Soil & Water Conservation District, to which I have been XXXXXX and that I will, to the best of my ability, faithfully discharge the duties thereof, and preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of this State and of the United States of America. So help me God.”
Conflict of Interest

Any private or personal interest sufficient to influence or appear to influence the objective exercise of the entity’s official or professional responsibilities.
A. No public official, public member, or public employee may knowingly use his official office, membership, or employment to obtain an economic interest for himself, a family member, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated
B. No public official, public member, or public employee may make, participate in making, or in any way attempt to use his office, membership, or employment to influence a governmental decision in which he, a family member, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated has an economic interest.
B. A public official, public member, or public employee may not, directly or indirectly, knowingly ask, demand, exact, solicit, seek, accept, assign, receive, or agree to receive anything of value for himself or for another person in return for being:

1. influenced in the discharge of his official responsibilities;
2. influenced to commit, aid in committing, collude in, allow fraud, or make an opportunity for the commission of fraud on a governmental entity; or
3. induced to perform or fail to perform an act in violation of his official responsibilities.
F. A person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be punished by imprisonment for not more than ten years and a fine of not more than ten thousand dollars and is permanently disqualified from being a public official or a public member. A public official, public member, or public employee who violates the provisions of this section forfeits his public office, membership, or employment.
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How do your Board commissioners vote or participate in any matter in which the member or family member of the member has any financial gain or interest?
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Non-Discriminatory Clause

"In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability."
SCACD Annual Meeting

Non-Discriminatory Clause

"In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, citizenship, or veteran status."
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Diversity
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Gender
Race
Ethnicity
Age
Veteran Status
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Knowledge
Cultural beliefs
Mental Models
SCACD Annual Meeting

Nepotism

Favoritism granted to relatives regardless of merit.
F. No public official, public member, or public employee may cause the employment, appointment, promotion, transfer, or advancement of a family member to a state or local office or position in which the public official, public member, or public employee supervises or manages.
SCACD Annual Meeting

Section 8-13-750

B. A public official, public member, or public employee may not participate in an action relating to the discipline of the public official's, public member's, or public employee's family member.
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Understand Local, State, and Federal Laws, Rules, and Regulations Related to CDs
SCACD Annual Meeting

Legal Responsibilities

• Conducting Board Business
  • Meetings
    • Open to Public
    • Notice
    • Quorum
    • Executive Session Rules*
  • Meeting Agendas

• Conflicts of Interest

• Liabilities
SCACD Annual Meeting

Be Familiar With

- Farm Bill (Programs and Rules; Section 1619)
- SC Code Title 48, Chapters 9 and 11
- SC Code Title 8, Chapter 13
- SC Code Title 30, Chapter 4
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
  - Sexual Harassment
  - Equal Opportunity
- Others?
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Does your district have a FOIA policy?
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Section 30-4-30

“Any person has a right to inspect or copy any public record of a public body…”

“The records must be furnished at the lowest possible cost to the person requesting the records.”
Where do SC Conservation Districts obtain legal representation?
The commissioners may call upon the Attorney General of the State for such legal services as they may require or may employ their own counsel and legal staff.
Does your Conservation District Have:

- New Employee Orientation Program
- Personnel Manual
- Written Job Descriptions for All Positions
- Annual Employee Work Plans
- Employee Evaluation Process
What percent of your annual budget is dedicated to employee training?
SCACD Annual Meeting

Training Opportunities

- State Personnel Training Programs
- Statewide, Regional, or National Meetings
- Webinars
- On-Line Training
- Tuition Assistance
- Partner-Sponsored Training
Does your Conservation District Board consider career development planning for staff?
SCACD Annual Meeting

Financial Training
Section 48-9-30 Estimate of financial needs.

The department may require the commissioners of the respective soil and water conservation districts to submit to it such statements, estimates, budgets and other information as it may deem necessary for the purposes of this section.
Monthly Financial Reports

- Whose responsibility
- Are financial reports “approved” every month
SCACD Annual Meeting

Financial Reports May Include:

• Balance Sheet- tells us what we own and what we owe (and to whom)
• Statement of Operations- lists revenues, expenses, and margins
• Accounts Receivable Report
SCACD Annual Meeting

Audits

• Conduct an annual audit (may be required by law depending on your source of funds).
• The **Board** hires the auditor.
• Change auditor every 3-5 years.
• Seek an “unqualified” audit. This means that the auditor reports whether or not the financial statements fairly represent the financial condition of the district.
SCACD Annual Meeting

Auditor Qualifications

- Certification- CPA in good standing in South Carolina
- Independent- the auditor had no direct or indirect financial or material interest in the district
- Peer Review- the CPA belongs to and participates in a peer review program and has undergone a satisfactory peer review
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Internal Financial Controls
SCACD Annual Meeting

Understanding State and National Resolutions Processes
SCACD Annual Meeting

NACD Resolutions Process

An idea is presented at the State Association Annual Meeting to be adopted as a resolution to NACD.

Resolution is presented to NACD CEO at least 30 days prior to annual NACD Board meeting.

Staff researches current policy. CEO forwards resolution to Resolutions Committee.

Resolutions Committee presents resolutions to NACD Board for action.

Resolutions Committee reviews submittals, combines like resolutions, and may draft their own.

Resolver presents resolutions to NACD Board for action.
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Awareness of All Available Conservation Programs
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Available Funding Sources

- Federal Program $
- State Program $
- Local Program $
- Fees
- Grants
- Landowner Contributions
- Penalty Funds
- Mitigation Funds
Federal Programs

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA)
- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
- Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP)
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- Section 319 Grant
- FEMA
- Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)
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State Programs

- Cost-Share
- E&S
- Ag planners
- Drainage
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Local Programs
SCACD Annual Meeting

Grant Opportunities

• Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)
• Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)
• 319
• www.grantgopher.com
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Legislative Process Training
Conservation Districts are directly affected by actions of Federal, state, and local legislators. Sometimes there is a need for new legislation to handle a natural resource issues; sometimes the issue concerns state funding for District and natural resource programs. Elected officials react to what they read, hear, and with whom they speak. In order to influence the legislative process, it is necessary to take action to educate, inform, and persuade.
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To build effective legislative relationships, Conservation District members, especially District commissioners should:

• Be informed of issues affecting their District and its goals.
• Know their elected representatives and other legislators who influence Conservation District funding and policy.
• Be prepared to present the case for Conservation District interests effectively.
SCACD Annual Meeting

Personal Contacts

• Know your topic.
• Know when and where to contact a legislator (Tuesday through Thursday).
• Make an appointment.
• Be punctual.
• Dress professionally.
• Make clear who you are and who you represent.
• Be concise and leave an informative one-page fact sheet as reference.
• Aides can be just as important as elected officials.
Written Contacts

• The letter should be mistake-free.
• Get the elected official’s name right, and address the letter to “The Honorable”.
• Use your own words; avoid form letters.
• Time the letter so that it arrives when the issue is still in committee.
• Be concise and limit the letter to one page.
• Explain the benefits of your position to the elected official’s entire constituency.
Assemble a list of the email addresses of the residents of your conservation district.
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Follow up any legislative contact with a thank you note.
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Awareness of Proper Protocol in Conducting Public Meetings
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SC Code Title 30
Chapter 4

Freedom of Information Act
“Every meeting of all public bodies shall be open to the public unless closed pursuant to Section 30-4-70 of this chapter.”
"Public body" means...any state board, commission, agency, and authority, any public or governmental body or political subdivision of the State, including counties, municipalities, townships, school districts, and special purpose districts, or any organization, corporation, or agency supported in whole or in part by public funds or expending public funds..."
"Meeting means the convening of a quorum of the constituent membership of a public body, whether corporal or by means of electronic equipment, to discuss or act upon a matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction or advisory power."

(Section 30-4-20)
SCACD Annual Meeting

Notice

“All public bodies, except as provided in subsections (B) and (C) of this section, must give written public notice of their regular meetings at the beginning of each calendar year.”

(Section 30-4-80)
SCACD Annual Meeting

Notice

“The notice must include the dates, times, and places of such meetings.”

(Section 30-4-80)
SCACD Annual Meeting

Notice

“An agenda for regularly scheduled or special meetings must be posted on a bulletin board in a publicly accessible place at the office or meeting place of the public body and on a public website maintained by the body, if any, at least twenty-four hours prior to such meetings.”

(Section 30-4-80)
SCACD Annual Meeting

Agenda

“After the meeting begins, an item upon which action can be taken only may be added to the agenda by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.”

(Section 30-4-80)
SCACD Annual Meeting

Minutes

“All public bodies shall keep written minutes of all of their public meetings.”

(Section 30-4-90)
Minutes

- Must include date, time, and place of meeting.
- Must include roster of members in attendance and actions taken, including individual voting record.
- Must include record of votes taken if requested by any Commissioner.
- Must include any information requested by public body at meeting.

SCACD Annual Meeting
Executive Sessions
(Section 30-4-70)

Meetings may be closed to the public for:

• Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body
Executive Sessions

- Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property
- The receipt of legal advice
- Discussion regarding the development of security personnel or devices
- Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct
SCACD Annual Meeting

Executive Sessions

• Must vote to go into Executive Session
• If vote is affirmative, the Chair must publically state the reason for going into Executive Session
• Only action that can be taken is to adjourn or return to public session
SCACD Annual Meeting

Quorum

“means a simple majority of the constituent membership of a public body”

(Section 30-4-20)
"Public record" is information of any kind, owned, made, used, retained, received, produced, composed, drafted or otherwise compiled or collected, by any public body, relating in any way to public business, or in any way of public interest, or in any way related to public purposes.
STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Mission Statement
- Strategic Drivers
- Critical Success Factors
- Long Term Objectives
- Vision Statement
- Critical Business Issues
- SWOT Analysis
- Tactical Initiatives
“Strategic planning and strategic goals are a process to and not a result of running a good business”
The three components of the planning process are:

**Resource Assessment**: is a document that outlines information about the natural resource needs and concerns in the District’s service area and summarizes the District Board’s priority issues.

**Strategic Plan**: provides clear goals and objectives to be attained within a five year time frame. Specific issues in the strategic plan comes directly from the resource assessment.

**Annual Plan of Work**: is the annual work plan for the District. It provides specific activities, timelines, evaluation expectations, and describes the responsible person and/or persons who will complete the work outlined in the plan. The content of the annual plan of work generally comes from the strategic plan.
Resource Assessment

- Enlist the services of natural resource professionals who work within the district boundaries
- DC should be an integral part of this process
- Enlist the assistance of all potential stakeholders
- District retains leadership of this process.
Resource Assessment

• Identify the current state and predicted state of all natural resource types in the district
• Also identify desired state for of these natural resource types
• Prioritize the district’s resource concerns
Resource Assessment

• Identify all resources available to work with
• Identify additional resources needed
Strategic Planning

How we get from the current state to the desired state for each natural resource type?
Sample Strategic Plan Outline

Mission Statement

Objective

Goal

Strategy

Objective

Goal

Strategy

Objective

Goal

Strategy

Strategy
Mission Statement

A written declaration of an organization's core purpose and focus that normally remains unchanged over time.
Mission vs. Vision

Mission is the cause.

Vision is the effect.
Goals

**S**imple

**M**easurable

**A**chievable

**R**esults oriented

**T**ime sensitive
Strategies

Specific actions taken to achieve goals
There is only one mission statement, but numerous objectives, goals, and strategies.
Annual Planning

Selected strategies from the strategic plan to implement in the coming year
# Annual Planning Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Activities to be completed</th>
<th>Persons Responsible</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Expected Measurable Outcomes</th>
<th>Budget</th>
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Effective strategic planning

- Identifies key issues and priorities
- Organizes and streamlines work
- Increases operational efficiency
- Enhances performance appraisal
- Leads to improved reporting
SCACD Annual Meeting

Basic Operations
SCACD Annual Meeting

Basic Operations Checklist

• Has the board reviewed CD law?
• Are comprehensive, accurate records kept of all board action?
• Are audits performed annually?
• Is CD’s long-range plan amended and adopted?
• Is CD annual work plan amended and adopted?
• Are CD written agreements in place with all conservation partners?
Basic Operations Checklist (cont.)

• Is there a training plan for commissioners and employees?
• Are CD offices, meetings, and programs accessible to the public?
• Have audit findings been properly addressed?
• Has an annual budget been approved?
• Are monthly financial reports complete and accurate?
• Are internal controls documented and implemented?
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Basic Operations Checklist (cont.)

- Are personnel policies in place and applied fairly?
- Is proper public notice made for all meetings?
- Are essential policies in place and adhered to?
- Is all Board action taken in general session with a quorum present?
- Do conflicts of interest exist with any board member?
- Are proper procedures followed when going into and out of Executive sessions?
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Election Process and Board Member Recruitment
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Conservation District Commissioner Terms

Elected 4 year terms
Appointed 4 year terms
Associates not addressed in code
Can commissioners be removed?

YES

By Board

“For neglect of duty or malfeasance in office, but for no other reason”

(Section 48-9-1230)
How often should the Board select a Chair?
The Board may fill the vacancy of any unexpired Commissioner term by appointment upon unanimous recommendation of the remaining members.
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General Leadership Qualities

• **Developing self and others**—the ability to continuously learn and grow, and promote the development of others

• **Relationship and consensus building**—the ability to promote strong teamwork and garner commitment and participation of others to achieve and effect positive change

• **Representing and advancing the profession**—the ability to professionally and positively represent, advocate for, and advance soil and water conservation

• **Creating and sustaining momentum**—the ability to inspire confidence and action to implement and support change
Making astute decisions—the ability to make and communicate sound, fact-based, and timely choices and decisions that reflect the long and short-term interests of the District

Leveraging technology—the ability to embrace and leverage technology to promote soil and water conservation

Financial management—the ability to interpret and appropriately use data within financial statements to promote the financial position of the District

Communicating for results—the ability to openly, efficiently, and compellingly express ideas as a representative of the organization
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Leadership Qualities of a Board commissioner

• Puts his/her agenda aside and does what’s best for the organization
• Builds a sense of fellowship among those with whom he/she works
• Sees the big picture
• Is trusted by the other members of the Board and staff
• Communicates well, in writing and verbally
• Works well on a team
• Is accepting of people with opinions different than his/hers
• Asks questions which challenge the status quo
• Understands the organization’s finances and takes fiscal responsibility
• Has a strong commitment to the mission of the organization
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Characteristics of the “Perfect” Board Member

- Listens well
- Effectively solves problems
- Makes decisions based upon data
- Is passionate about the organization
- Understands the finances of the organization
- Focuses on the mission of the organization in all decision making
- Has a sense of vision and wants the organization to be more than it is today
- Understands the needs of the members
- Works as a team member but offers respectful dissent
- Asks probing questions, especially on matters that are unfamiliar
- Makes decisions based upon the organization’s strategic plan
- Follows through on Board and Committee assignments
SCACD Annual Meeting

Links Of Interest:

Title 48 - Environmental Protection and Conservation

http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t48c009.php

http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t48c011.php

Title 30 - Public Records
CHAPTER 4
Freedom of Information Act

http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t30c004.php