



10-Minute Supervisor Trainings

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

May 2018

Adding Supervisors to the Board

Conservation District Supervisors serve a term of 4 years. Supervisor elections are held every 2 years, with 3 Supervisors being elected one time and 4 the next. At the end of that term, it is time to go through the process of re-election. This year there should be 3 supervisors elected. Supervisors are also added outside of the election cycle due to resignations and other vacancies.

Electing New Supervisors

According to KRS 262.210 supervisors must present a nominating petition to the county clerk in the county where the term is being sought. The petition is only available through the county clerk's office. It cannot be obtained online. The petition must include the signatures of at least 25 registered voters in the county. This petition must be presented by the filing deadline. This year the deadline for filing is **August 14th at 4:00 p.m. local time**.

The candidate must pay the county filing fee of \$20. No district funds can be used in the filing of election petitions.

How many petitions are submitted?

- In the event that only 3 petitions are submitted, the county clerk will certify the election of supervisors to the Soil and Water Conservation Commission.
- If more than 3 petitions are filed, the county clerk then presents them to the voters in the general election.
- If 2 or fewer petitions are filed, write-in candidates are also able to be considered during the general election.

Write-in candidates are physically written in on the ballot. Only certified names can be counted. To be certified as a "Write In" you must file a declaration of intent within 10 days preceding the election (KRS 265).

A supervisor's term begins January 1st following the election. **A supervisor is not qualified to take office until they have signed the oath of office card and returned it to the Division of Conservation.**

Appointing New Supervisors

Supervisors may need to be appointed because a vacancy has occurred on the board. Reasons a vacancy could occur include a supervisor resigning because of time or health issues, he or she might not be interested in serving any more, or there might be a death leaving a vacancy. A supervisor might become ineligible by moving out of the district or by being elected to another position.

It's important for the board to try to fill this vacancy as soon as possible. Not only because having an odd number of supervisors on the board is better for voting purposes, but also because it's easier to ensure a quorum with more members. Please note that the quorum requirement of 4 members does not change if there's a vacancy.

The process is as follows:

- The current supervisor resigns in writing
- The open position is advertised by word of mouth, paid advertising in the newspaper, social media, etc.
- Every potential supervisor must have a petition with 25 signatures. This petition form is found on the DOC website.
- These petitions are submitted to the district board (not the county clerk).
- The board votes for the candidate they would like to recommend to the SWCC.
- The district sends the resignation letter, all petitions, and a letter apprising the commission of the district's recommendation.
- The commission votes to approve a new supervisor. This could be any of the petitions that were received.
- **A supervisor is not qualified to take office until they have signed the oath of office card and returned it to the Division of Conservation.**

Other Facts

- Supervisors must reside in the county.
- Supervisors can campaign like any other elected official
- No district funds can be contributed to campaign funds or for the filing fee. Petitions will be disqualified if at least 25 signatures are not from registered voters in that county.
- Supervisors cannot hold any other elected office but can remain on the board while running for an elected position.
- Names are publically "drawn" to determine the order of appearance on the ballot.
- Supervisors are not required by law to attend a mandatory number of meetings per year but some districts have set a limit to which they can request that a supervisor resign.
- It is extremely important to have a diverse group of supervisors; men and women, minority groups, different ages, different backgrounds in agriculture, environmental knowledge, education, and business, and representatives of different areas of the county. The ideal supervisor is someone who cares about conserving our natural resources and can devote the time needed for monthly meetings and district functions.