

ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE CHANGES – COMMENTS REQUESTED

SUMMARY

Conservation Commission members, at their July 16 meeting, approved posting for comment DRAFT changes to a variety of election and appointment procedures and policies, including to the conservation district election and appointment manual and moving certain election and appointment forms on-line. Some of the proposed changes are the result of a number of issues that came to light during the last election cycle and other changes were slated to be made during the normal course of operations. The draft Elections and Appointments Manual (with proposed changes in red) is posted on this page. Links to the new on-line election and appointment forms are also included on this page. Further explanation of this process is included in the file entitled “Memo to Districts re Election and Appointment changes - (PDF).”

CONSERVATION DISTRICT ACTION

Conservation Commission staff will be accepting comments on proposed changes until **September 4, 2015**. Please use the [Feedback Form](#) to submit your comments. The Commission intends to review comments and adopt the changes at its September Commission meeting. The changes would, therefore, be effective for the 2016 election cycle.

Also, please feel free to try out the new on-line forms by clicking on the links provided below. Data can be entered and the new forms “submitted” until September 4, at which time the system will be reset in anticipation of the start of the new election cycle.

Comments can be submitted using the [Feedback Form](#).

DOCUMENTS

- [Memo to Districts re Election and Appointment changes](#) - (PDF)
- [Draft Election Manual with proposed changes in red](#) (PDF)

BACKGROUND

The Commission is authorized in Chapter 89.08.190 Revised Code of Washington to establish conservation district election procedures: “The Commission shall establish procedures for elections, canvass the returns and announce the official results thereof.”

The Commission has adopted election rules in WAC Chapter 135-110, effective November 19, 2010. District elections are to be conducted annually, and must comply with election rules and procedures. The election procedures exist to assist conservation districts and conservation district supervisors in the election, appointment, and replacement of supervisors in the State of Washington, and to assure fair treatment of all parties involved in such proceedings, and to provide guidance for compliance with WAC Chapter 135-110.

The Commission Elections Officer understands the burden on districts when new policies and procedures are instituted, therefore the need for the new policies and procedures must be clear. The number of issues that came to light during the last election cycle warrants bringing them to the Commission for consideration. After review and possible revision, the changes would be presented to districts for comment. Final adoption in September would allow the changes to be effective for the 2016 election cycle (the next cycle).

PROPOSED CHANGES

Proposed changes include:

Election Process:

Amendments to the Election and Appointment Manual on a number of subjects that came to light during the last election cycle. Specific changes and clarifications include

- All original election materials stay at the district.
- Districts must retain all original forms, documents, and ballots for 12 months after the election has been certified, at which time they may be destroyed unless the election has not been certified or the election is contested. This requirement conforms to the [Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule \(CORE\)](#).
- Election forms have been re-organized and moved on-line, if possible. On-line election forms will be filled out by the Election Supervisor. The intent is that by filling out these on-line forms, districts will provide all the information the Commission needs to certify and announce CD election results.
- Certain forms do not lend themselves to being transferred to on-line forms. Those forms will remain “paper” forms to be used by the Election Supervisor and polling officers to process the election.
- All “paper” forms will remain in the custody of the district, and no copies are needed at the Commission (unless requested by the Commission).

Election forms are now as follows:

On-line Forms only:

[EF1 – CD Election Information](#) (same as old election form #1)

[EF2 – Candidate Verification](#)

[EF3 – Automatic Re-Election Checklist](#) (same as before)

[EF4 – Due Notice Compliance](#) (same as old election form #5)

[EF5 – Ballot Results Report](#) (same as old election form #7)

[Election Feedback Form](#): a new form for anyone (the public, district staff, supervisors) to use to comment on the CD election process. This form gives folks a pathway to express concerns, compliments, and other information directly with the Commission.

Paper Forms:

PF-A – Candidate Information for Elected Supervisor Position (same as old form #2)

PF-B – Nominating Petition for Elected Supervisor Position (same as old form #3)

PF-C – Poll List (same as old form #6)

PF-D – Ballot Template (same as old form)

Appointment Process:

Amendments to the Election and Appointment Manual on a number of subjects that came to light during the last election cycle. Specific changes and clarifications include

- The appointment application is now on-line only. Therefore, districts will advertise for expiring appointee positions, direct applicants to an on-line application, and recruit applicants, but will no longer need to send applications to the Commission, nor will any original or copies of recruitment announcements need be sent to the Commission.

- Appointment applicants will fill out the appointment application on-line directly with the Commission.
- As a result of these changes, the entire Appointment process section in the Election and Appointment Manual was edited.

Appointment forms are now as follows:

On-line Forms:

[AF1 – Conservation District Appointed Supervisor Application](#) (same as old form)

[AF2 – Mid-Term Elected Position Appointment Verification of Qualifications](#) (same as old form, but re-titled)