

By-Laws of the Powers and Responsibilities of the Ramsey Conservation District

Minnesota Statutes 103C established soil and water conservation districts as governmental and political subdivisions of the State of Minnesota with certain inherent powers and duties. The Ramsey Conservation District (RCD) is that subdivision for Ramsey County.

Article 1: The Duties of the RCD

The RCD shall develop a comprehensive plan for the conservation of soil and water resources.

The RCD shall present an annual budget to the Board of Ramsey County Commissioners.

The following are discretionary powers of the RCD:

The RCD may construct, install, improve, maintain and operate any structures and works necessary or convenient for the performance of any of the operations authorized within Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103C.

The RCD may conduct resource surveys and demonstration projects.

The RCD may sue or be sued.

The RCD may require compensation or contributions for goods and services provided.

The RCD may carry out soil and water conservation measures on any lands within Ramsey County with the consent of the fee owner.

The RCD may cooperate or enter into agreements with any governmental agency or individual landowner within Ramsey County for the purpose of carrying on programs of water management and erosion prevention and control.

The RCD may purchase or accept gifts of real or personal property, earn from the property and provide equipment and supplies which will bring about conservation

practices within Ramsey County.

The RCD may assume land by purchase, lease or otherwise to improve, maintain, operate and administer any RCD project undertaken by the federal or state government.

The RCD may make application or enter into an agreement with any designated authority for federal assistance.

The RCD may appropriate necessary funds to provide membership in state and national associations which have as their purpose the betterment and improvement of soil and water conservation district operations.

The RCD may procure insurance directly or through Ramsey County when mutually agreed.

The RCD may publish information relating to the activities of the RCD.

The RCD may provide advice or consult with county and municipal representatives.

The RCD may employ technical experts and such other officers, agents and employees both permanent and temporary as may be required and shall determine their qualifications, duties and compensation.

Article II: Discontinuance of the District

The RCD may be discontinued in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 103C.221.

Article III: The Powers and Responsibilities of the RCD Supervisors

RCD Supervisors are obligated to conduct the business of the RCD.

The RCD Board of Supervisors is a policy board. The primary focus is on setting overall policy and objectives. As an elected official, each RCD Supervisor is responsible for operating the RCD as a political subdivision of Minnesota State Government. Supervisors shall determine the long term objectives for the RCD and which resource problems the RCD will address. The RCD Supervisors will periodically review the overall situation within Ramsey County and develop board policies which address county resources as a whole. RCD Staff shall carry out these policies. The RCD Board

of Supervisors shall make best efforts to conduct a comprehensive evaluation on RCD policies.

Article IV: Ramsey Conservation District

Location: The principal place of business of the RCD is 1425 Paul Kirkwold Drive, Arden Hills, MN, 55112.

Geographic Divisions: The RCD is divided into five districts at the discretion of the RCD. Each RCD Supervisor must reside in a specific district and be elected by residents of that district.

Term of Office: Each RCD Supervisor term is for four years. Terms are staggered and there shall be no more than three terms expiring in a given year.

Article V: Eligibility

In order to be an RCD Supervisor the following qualifications apply:

1. Legal residency in Ramsey County.
2. Residence in the nominating district for which the filing is specific
3. File sixty (60) days prior to a general election at the Ramsey County Elections Office
4. Complete necessary filing forms including the statement of economic interest form with the Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board.
5. Submit either a nominating petition along with a filing fee or file a petition signed by qualified voters within the nominating district.

Incompatibility of Office Source: Based on a September 12, 1973 ruling by the MN State Attorney General, the Office of Supervisor of a Soil and Water Conservation District is incompatible with or has a conflict of interest with that of a city or village council person, town board supervisor or county commissioner, if the city, village, town or county is located within the soil and water conservation district. This ruling is based on the MN Supreme Court statement that public offices are *“incompatible when their functions are inconsistent, their performances resulting in antagonism and a conflict of duty, so that the incumbent of one cannot discharge with fidelity and propriety the duties of both.”*

Article VI: Resignation

If a Supervisor wishes to resign from RCD service, the Supervisor shall submit his or her resignation in writing to the RCD Board.

Article VII: Relocation

Supervisors must be legal voters residing within Ramsey County and their Supervisor district. If a Supervisor relocates his or her residence outside of his or her district, the Supervisor no longer qualifies to serve as Supervisor for that district.

Article VIII: Vacancy

If a vacancy occurs within the office of an elected or appointed RCD Supervisor the RCD shall place notice of said vacancy in the local official publication or other publications within the nominating district prior to appointment or election.

If a vacancy occurs more than fifty-six (56) days before the next state primary election, the RCD Board shall fill the vacancy by appointment in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 103C.305 Subd.6(a).

If a vacancy occurs less than fifty-six (56) days before the next state primary election, the RCD Board shall fill the vacancy by appointment in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 103C.305 Subd. 6(b).

Article IX: Meetings and Attendance

1. The RCD shall hold one regular monthly board meeting each month. Meeting dates, times, and locations for the next calendar year shall be determined by the Supervisors at the January board meeting and shall be posted on the RCD website. Agendas and supporting materials shall also be posted on the website. Any cancellation of future meetings must be approved at a meeting of Supervisors.
2. Supervisors unable to attend an RCD regular board meeting shall contact the RCD office prior to the meeting.
3. Meetings of the RCD are governed by the Minnesota Statutes, section 471.705 which is the Open Meeting Law. Except for limited situations described in MS 471 all meetings of the RCD Board are open to the public.

A quorum shall be a majority of Supervisors in accordance with Minnesota statutes section 103C.315 Subd. 3.

Article X: RCD Officers

Each of the five RCD Supervisors shall hold an officer position which consists of the

following: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Education and Information Officer. All officers shall be elected by majority vote at the first meeting of the RCD each year.

Chair: Responsible for guiding the overall activities of the RCD and presiding at official RCD meetings.

Vice Chair: Assumes the position of the Chair when the Chair is unable to be present.

Secretary: Responsible for the official RCD record.

Treasurer: Responsible for the financial record of the RCD.

Education and Information: Serves as a liaison between the RCD and the public.

Article XI: RCD Committees

The RCD Supervisors will come to a mutual agreement by majority vote on which of the following committees they will attend and represent the RCD at said meeting. If a Supervisor cannot attend the meeting, a replacement should be found so that the RCD may be represented.

RCD Committees include:

Internal: Budget
 Comprehensive Plan
 Legislation
 Personnel

External: Capital Region Watershed District's Citizens' Advisory Committee
 Metro Conservation Districts Board
 Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District Board
 Rice Creek Watershed District Citizens' Advisory Committee
 Ramsey County League of Local Governments Board
 Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization

Article XII: Compensation and Expenses Reimbursement

The position of RCD Supervisor is a non-salaried position. Compensation is set on a per diem basis. The maximum rate of the per diem is established by the Board of Soil

and Water Resources (BWSR) in accordance with MN Statutes, §103C.315 Subd.4. Currently the maximum compensation allowed per day is \$75.

Mileage traveled to and from a Supervisor's main residence for the purpose of attending approved RCD business will be reimbursed at the federal rate established annually.

Compensation for regular, special, committee and other meetings is set by the RCD. It cannot exceed the maximum rate set by BWSR in accordance with MN State Statutes, Chapter 103C. The following is the compensation rate for meetings as currently set by the RCD Board:

Regular Board meetings	\$75
Special Board meetings	\$75
Standing Committees (see above)	\$50
Other meetings, conventions etc.	\$25

RCD Board approval is required for compensation at all functions. Travel must be directly related to the business of the RCD. At least two RCD Supervisors must nominate a specific meeting to have that meeting designated as a special internal or external meeting and available for compensation and reimbursement for mileage.

If the RCD prepays the cost of a seminar, training session, etc. and the Supervisor does not attend without prior justification, the Supervisor shall reimburse the RCD in full for all advance payments if said payment is non-refundable.

Expense Reports: Compensation rates, mileage reimbursement rates, events and meetings attended requiring compensation and expense claims must be approved by the RCD Board and recorded in the minutes. All travel expenses such as lodging and meals are reimbursed at actual costs. All claims must be accompanied by required receipts.

Expenses will be reimbursed only when within the current reporting period.

The Ramsey County Payroll Office issues reimbursement checks to the Supervisors. RCD staff have no control over the processing of reimbursements.

Article XIII: Amendment Procedures

The RCD Supervisor Handbook shall be adopted by a majority vote of the RCD Supervisors. Revision of non-statutory or BWSR requirements shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the RCD Supervisors.

Article XIV: Items Not Included in By-Laws

All conduct and procedures not provided for herein are governed by Minnesota Statutes. Rules of Procedure, if not covered under Minnesota Statutes, shall be consistent with Robert's Rules of Order.

**Approved by the Ramsey Conservation District Board on October 21, 2013.
Revised May 4, 2017.**