

## Interesting Facts & Anecdotes

from your District Operations and Member Services Committee

July 2014

### Did you know?....

Districts should have clearly defined duties for each officer. Officer positions will be highlighted in this and the next three DYKs, starting with the chair. These are only suggestions for your consideration.

Duties of the board chair include:

- Preside at board meetings
- Review input from other board members and employees to prepare agendas
- Call special meetings as necessary, according to state meeting laws
- Appoint committees and their chairs
- Request reports for review at meetings or to be distributed to board members
- Assure new board members receive thorough orientation
- Sign official documents as authorized by the board
- Delegate duties to other officers, as advisable, for specific times and purposes
- Supervise the lead staff person as determined by board action
- Discuss and vote on motions
- Keep order and impose any reasonable restrictions necessary for efficient and orderly meetings

The district should have a written description of board duties and responsibilities, including, at least:

- Policy development
- Training
- Ethics
- Speaking on behalf of the district outside of board meetings
- Attendance at local, state, regional, and national meetings
- Relations with employees
- Participation on committees

Being a good leader involves understanding and mastering one's emotions in ways that instills confidence, motivates, inspires, and enhances group effectiveness. Leadership also involves the ability to read the emotions and thoughts of others.

Technical assistance is the foundation of working-lands conservation. It puts conservation on the ground. It translates science, professional judgment, personal experience, and community values into action on farms and ranches and in urban settings to conserve resources, enhance the environment, and ensure the commercial viability of natural-resource industries.

The finance committee, or at least the treasurer, should periodically review the insurance coverage -- what is covered, dates of coverage and payments due, particularly for employee benefits. Specific items include workers' compensation; vehicle insurance; district liability insurance; property insurance; and medical, dental, and vision policies.

In performance evaluations, job performance--not personality traits--should be measured. Evaluators should keep the review process as objective as possible. Address behavior and conduct, citing specific examples with place, date, time, and circumstances. And never use the words "never" or "always."

Performance evaluations are excellent times to:

- Give praise for work well done
- Cite examples of unacceptable work performance
- Plan training and education needed to improve performance
- Assess the adequacy of job descriptions to actual work done
- Give the employee a chance to discuss their supervision, particularly the clarity and appropriateness of task assignments
- Discuss the employee's interactions with board members, co-workers, customers, and the public

Making every Did You Know? statement be completely accurate for all states is impossible. The DO/MS Committee requests your understanding. We also invite you to find out what your state and local laws and policies say about any particular item.

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