

Interesting Facts & Anecdotes

from your District Operations and Member Services Committee

July 2013

Did you know?...

1. Meeting minutes are not transcripts of "he said, she said." Detailed dialogue may be necessary only when essential to understand an issue. Minutes should be as short as possible, primarily recording official actions taken. District boards need to define the purposes, contents, and audiences of their official proceedings.
2. **Write to the audience** when preparing annual reports (in fact, when preparing most reports). Ways to write to the audience include: determining the appropriate level of detail; avoiding "private, insider-only" language; minimizing use of technical terms or jargon; avoiding acronyms; making the contents interesting to "THEM," not just you; making it easy to read; and consider using multiple formats.
3. Opportunities for conservation districts to partner with military bases exist, when issues are seen as mutually beneficial. To read the NACD publication on this subject, [click here](#).
4. Resource management is best achieved with a locally-led, voluntary, holistic, and incentive-driven approach.
5. All district funds from whatever source are considered public monies.
6. Districts must follow certain rules regarding voting:
 - o All actions require a vote. Consensus is not allowed. Voting must be open, visible, and audible (never in secret). Exceptions exist for executive sessions.
 - o How every district official voted must be recorded in the minutes. Individual names need not be given each time if it is obvious how each voted by how the minutes are written. For example, if five members are cited as present at the meeting, and all five vote the same way, the vote can be recorded as "unanimous".
 - o The chair **should vote**. Chairs can also make motions and participate in discussion, i.e., generally participate as any other district official.
 - o District officials may request the reasons for their votes or reasons to abstain be recorded in the minutes.
 - o Even in cases of conflict of interest, the district official declaring such may participate in the discussion and even vote in many cases. What are the rules in your state?
7. Almost every square inch of privately-owned land in the U.S. and certain territories is represented by a conservation district.