DISTRICT BOARD MEETINGS

PREPARING FOR THE MEETING:

Organize. Get the information needed for your board meeting together. Sometimes it's hard to determine what to include on the agenda. Don't include agendas for meetings, training sessions, workshops, and tours that are over with. Do include information that you feel could pertain to your district and highlight the high points or summarize them. In time you will have a much better feel for what should be included and what you can leave out. Reading through prior minutes and agendas will help you. Until you're comfortable, review agenda items with your board chairman prior to sending the agenda out to the full board.

Review agenda items and group them. If you are discussing tree planting activities make sure everything that needs to be discussed at this meeting about tree planting is noted under that topic. A well-organized & well-prepared agenda will make recording the minutes much easier for the secretary and will help move the meeting along.

Get pertinent information out to your board prior to the meeting. You may find that they don't always get a chance to look through it or study it, but at least you have given them the opportunity. Include the agenda, the treasurer's report or your monthly financial statement, legislative information, an explanation of any problems encountered in carrying out the district's activities since the last meeting, etc.

Send meeting notices to guests. If you are currently shopping for insurance, make sure you let the potential agents know the place, date and time of the meeting. Same goes for others such as State Foresters, NRCS personnel, Area Directors, potential supervisors or advisors to your board, Extension Agents, etc.

RECORDING THE MINUTES

Always record the name of the person making the motion and seconding the motion. It is very important to remember that ONLY ELECTED SUPERVISORS CAN MAKE, SECOND, AND VOTE ON MOTIONS. Advisors are there to advise the supervisors but have no right to make, second, or vote on motions. They are encouraged to participate in the discussion surrounding motions and in this way can change the outcome of the vote.

State the motion clearly in the minutes. It is also helpful to fully record any changes in prices. In other words rather than stating that Jeff Board moved to increase the price of tree planting by $.20 a rod. Jane Supervisor seconded. Motion carried. State instead: Jeff Board moved to increase the price of tree planting from $2.30 per rod to $2.50 per rod. This reinforces the price for the board and for you.

Take notes of discussions…especially those discussions that lead to decisions that directly affect the district. Some examples of discussions that you may want to take notes on include:

a. discussions affecting specific producers (why Joe Blow is not getting a refund for the hand plant trees)
b. discussions affecting district finances (why the district will up the price on products/services)
c. discussions affecting district policies (why the district is changing employee benefits to include health insurance).

Occasionally board members and employees need a reminder as to why they reached their decision and taking notes of the discussion can be very helpful in those instances. Usually the discussion does not become part of the minutes, but can provide a record for you or your board to look back on.

Do not take notes of discussions held in EXECUTIVE SESSION. Motions cannot be made in executive session. Motions coming from discussions held in executive session must be made after coming out of executive session and are recorded in the minutes just like any other motion.

Refrain from including commentary in the minutes. For example, if one of your co-workers does not have a report ready for the board, simply say 'No Report'. Don't say "John doesn't have a report because he didn't do any thing this month." Regardless of whether it's the way you feel or the truth, it doesn't belong in the minutes.

Any time you have questions as to what to include in the minutes ask your board. They are responsible for making the final decision.