**Guide No. 26- Associate Board Members**

Associate board members can provide a great service to the board and the community. Here are a few tips and guidelines for selecting and utilizing associate board members.

**Appointment of Associate Directors**
The conservation district board by official vote during a board meeting may appoint one or more individuals to serve as associate directors.

**Term of Office**
An associate director should be appointed for a specific term, possible one year, with the expiration date clearly understood and specifically placed in the minutes. Appointment and reappointment should be an official act of the district board.

**Potential Appointees**
The district board might consider the following types of individuals to serve as associate directors:

- An associate director might be a potential district director. This could serve both as a learning period for the associate director and as a time for the board to observe the associate director’s commitment and abilities.
- A district director who has retired from the board might be appointed as an associate director. This would ensure that the district continues to benefit from the experience of a past director who can no longer give full time to the district’s work.
- An individual who is professionally involved in conservation could provide a special service to the district. Consider the benefits of naming a teacher or other educator, city planner or someone who works for a newspaper or magazine.

**Obligations**
An associate director should be expected to attend most board meetings, or if assigned a specific project, may attend only the meetings when that project is discussed.

**Limitations**
Associate directors have no official or legal authority, can not vote on the district’s business and may not receive reimbursement for expenses from the Oklahoma Conservation Commission.

**Reimbursement for Expenses**
If an associate board member performs a specific service at the request of the board, reimbursement can be made from district-earned funds for mileage and/or legal actual expenditures under the same guidelines as are applied to district directors and employees.

**Tort Claims**
Associate directors fall into the same category as employees or directors concerning tort claims, when they are working on a district activity as authorized by the board.

**Specific Duties and Responsibilities**
To realize the full potential of associate directors, the board should consider assigning them specific duties and responsibilities based upon their interest and abilities. Some examples might be:

- Handling arrangements for a district event
- Arranging district tours
- Conducting youth activities
- Assisting with the district information program