

Bylaws of the Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District

Approved July 16, 1991

As amended on this the 14th day of March in this the 229th year of the Great Republic of the United States of America, 2017 anno Domini

The Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District does exist by virtue of a charter, dated the 7th day of November A.D. 1947 from the Honorable R.A. Gray, Secretary of the State of Florida under provisions of Chapter 582, Florida Statutes to include all the land and water within the boundaries of the County of Seminole in the State of Florida, and whose office is located at P.O. Box 181774, Casselberry, Florida 32718-0834.

Purpose

To promote the conservation of natural lands and soil and water resources for the health, safety and welfare of the people of Seminole County against improper land use as set forth in Chapter 582 of Florida Statutes.

To conduct surveys, investigations and research relating to the character of soil erosion and floodwater and sediment damages, development and utilization of soil and water resources and the disposal of water, and to the preventive and control measures and works of improvement needed; to publish the results of such; and to disseminate information concerning such preventive and control measures and works of improvement.

To conduct demonstrational projects within the district's boundaries, with the cooperation of the agency administering and having jurisdiction thereof, and on any other lands within the district's, in order to demonstrate by example the means, methods, and measures by which soil and water resources may be conserved, and soil erosion in the form of soil blowing and soil washing may be prevented and controlled, and works of improvement for flood prevention or the conservation, development and utilization of soil and water resources, and the disposal of water.

To carry out preventive and control measures and works of improvement for flood prevention or the conservation, development and utilization of soil and water resources, and the disposal of water within the district's boundaries, including, but not limited to, engineering operations, methods of cultivation, the growing of vegetation, changes in use of land, and the measures listed in F.S. 582.04 on the lands owned or controlled by this state or any of its agencies, and on any other lands within the district's boundaries.

To cooperate, or enter into agreements with, and within the limits of appropriations duly made available to it by law, to furnish financial or other aid to carry on erosion control or prevention operations and works of improvement for flood prevention or the conservation, development and utilization of soil and water resources and the disposal of water.

To obtain options upon and to acquire, by purchase, exchange, lease, gift, grant, bequest, devise or otherwise, any property, real or personal, or rights or interests therein; to maintain, administer, and improve any properties acquired, to receive income from such properties and to expend such

47 income in carrying out the purposes and provisions of chapter 582 F.S., and to sell, lease or
48 otherwise dispose of any of its property or interests therein in furtherance of the purposes and the
49 provisions of chapter 582 F.S.

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51 To make available, on such terms as it shall prescribe, agricultural and engineering machinery and
52 equipment, fertilizer, seeds and seedlings, and such other material or equipment, as will assist such
53 landowners and occupiers to carry on operations upon their lands for the conservation of soil
54 resources and for the prevention or control of soil erosion and for flood prevention or the
55 conservation, development and utilization, of soil and water resources and the disposal of flood
56 water.

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58 To construct, improve, operate and maintain such structures as may be necessary or convenient for
59 the performance of any of the operations authorized.

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61 To develop comprehensive plans for the conservation of soil and water resources and for the
62 control and prevention of soil erosion and for flood prevention or water conservation. which plans
63 shall specify procedures, performances and avoidances which are necessary or desirable for the
64 effectuation of such plans, including the specification of engineering operations, methods of
65 cultivation, the growing of vegetation, cropping programs, tillage practices, and changes in use of
66 land; control of artesian wells; and to publish such plans and information and bring them to the
67 attention of owners and occupiers of lands within the district's boundaries.

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69 To take over, by purchase, lease, or otherwise, and to administer any soil-conservation, erosion-
70 control, erosion-prevention project, or any project for flood-prevention or for the conservation,
71 development and utilizaiton of soil and water resources, and the disposal of water, located within
72 the district's boundaries; undertaken by the United States or any of its agencies, or by this state or
73 any of its agencies; any soil-conservation, erosion-control, erosioin-prevention, or any project for
74 flood-prevention or for the conservation, development, and utilization of soil and water resources,
75 and the disposal of water within the district's boundaries; to act as agent for the United States, or
76 any of its agencies, or for the state or any of its agencies, in connection with the acquisition,
77 construction, operation or administration of any soil-conservation, erosion-control, erosion-
78 prevention, or any project for flood-prevention or for the conservation, development and utilization
79 of soil and water resources, and the disposal of water within the district's boundaries, to accept
80 donations, gifts, and contributions in money, servies, materials, or otherwise, from the United
81 States or any of its agencies, or from the state or any of its agencies, or from others, and to use or
82 expend such moneys, services, materials or other contributions in carrying on its operations.

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84 To work with the State of Florida, the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services,
85 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Seminole County, Altamonte Springs, Casselberry, Lake Mary,
86 Longwood, Oviedo, Sanford, Winter Springs, the Association of Florida Conservation Districts
87 and other governmental and private organizations, land owners or occupiers to accomplish our
88 conservation and preservation goals

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90 To work with the schools in Seminole County to develop curriculum and hands-on- programs for
91 students to develop a better understanding of the need to conserve and preserve our natural
92 resources.

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94 To balance advocacy for soil and water conservation with attention to the rights of private property
95 owners in Seminole County seeking to make a reasonable and economic use of their property.

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97 To provide enhanced or specialized public services in response to citizen demand that the County
98 or a municipality is unable or unwilling to offer.

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100 **Governing Body and Procedure**

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102 The Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District shall be administered by the Board of five
103 Supervisors duly elected under provisions of Chapter 582.18 of Florida Statutes.

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105 On the first meeting after the first Monday of January the five Supervisors will elect a Chairperson,
106 Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Public Relations Officer to hold office for one year.
107 Any Supervisor may call for an election at any noticed Board meeting. This unique provision
108 allows each Supervisor an opportunity to see if there is an agreement of the Board for a change in
109 the leadership of the Board. We are limiting this privilege to one time per calendar year. A majority
110 of the Supervisors may call for an election at any noticed Board meeting. All elections shall take
111 place in accordance with Florida's Sunshine Law.

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113 Vacancies on the Board will be replaced by appointment of a new Supervisor under the provisions
114 of Chapter 582. The new Supervisor must be a resident of Seminole County and agree to commit
115 at least 10 hours a month to Board activities. The appointed Supervisor shall assume the Board
116 position of the Supervisor being replaced.

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118 All meetings of the Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District shall be public meetings. The
119 records of the meetings shall be public records and made available for copying or inspection upon
120 request to the District. The District shall respond to the request promptly and in good faith in
121 accordance with state law.

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123 Pursuant to Section 286.012 of Florida Statutes, all Supervisors who are present at a meeting at
124 which an official decision, ruling, or other official act is to be taken or adopted may not abstain
125 from voting in regard to such decision, ruling, or act; and a vote shall be recorded or counter for
126 each Supervisor present, unless, with respect to any such Supervisors, there is, or appears to be, a
127 possible conflict of interest under state law or additional or more stringent standards of conduct, if
128 any, adopted pursuant to state law. If there is or appears to be, a possible conflict as defined by
129 state law, the Supervisor shall comply with the disclosure requirements of state law. If the only
130 conflict or possible conflict is one arising from the additional or more stringent standards adopted
131 pursuant to state law, the Supervisor shall comply with any disclosure requirements adopted
132 pursuant to state law. If the official decision, ruling, or act occurs in the context of a quasi-judicial
133 proceeding, a Supervisor may abstain from voting on such matter if the abstention is to assure a
134 fair proceeding free from potential bias or prejudice.

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Duties

Chairperson (Chair)

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- 143 1. To preside during all noticed Board meetings or arrange for the Vice-Chairperson to
- 144 preside in the absence of the Chair.
- 145 2. Call special meetings when necessary.
- 146 3. Plan the order of business or agenda with the Executive Director and District
- 147 Conservationist (when available).
- 148 4. Extend invitations to all individuals you want to attend meetings and take part in
- 149 discussions.
- 150 5. Call the meeting to order on time, announce the order of business, distribute a typed agenda,
- 151 and recognize visitors and others present.
- 152 6. Handle discussions in an orderly manner pursuant to the most current edition of Robert's
- 153 Rules of Order:
 - 154 a. Give everyone a chance to speak—one at a time.
 - 155 b. Tactfully keep all speakers to Robert's Rules of Order and the questions at hand.
 - 156 c. Give opposing Supervisor's equal opportunities to speak.
 - 157 d. Encourage all Supervisors to participate in the discussion.
 - 158 e. Enter into discussion to give additional facts or information.
- 159 7. State each Motion before it is discussed and before it is voted upon. Put all Motions to a
- 160 vote and announce the outcome.
- 161 8. Suggest Motions but do not make them.
- 162 9. Insure that Supervisor statements and Board discussions are germane to any Motions made
- 163 by a Supervisor; to any presentation being given to the Board; or the purview of the District
- 164 as established by applicable law.
- 165 10. Avoid expressing your own opinion too soon and talk no more than necessary while
- 166 presiding.
- 167 11. A quorum is required to conduct official business. The Chairperson ensures that a quorum
- 168 (3 supervisors) is present at each meeting.
- 169 12. To administer the office and staff of the District with the advice and counsel of the other
- 170 Supervisors.
- 171 13. Review the objectives of the District 5-Year (Long-Range) Plan and the District Annual
- 172 Plan monthly, to make sure that all planned activities and assignments are carried-out.
- 173
- 174 14. Appoint committees, assign their responsibilities, and collect reports when due.
- 175 15. Ensure that the board does not "rubber stamp" the actions and recommendations of
- 176 cooperating agencies.
- 177 16. Ensure that all supervisors are properly informed and understand their duties.
- 178 17. Set a good example by observing proper parliamentary procedure. Remember – all official
- 179 actions require a Motion.
- 180 18. Close meetings on time. Encourage regular attendance. Follow-up on absentees.
- 181 19. Enforce the legislation approved by the Board, and represent the Seminole Soil and Water
- 182 Conservation District at or with the State of Florida, Department of Agriculture, US
- 183 Department of Agriculture, Seminole County, Altamonte Springs, Casselberry, Lake Mary,
- 184 Longwood, Oviedo, Sanford, Winter Springs, the Association of Florida Conservation

- 185 Districts and other governmental and private organizations to accomplish our conservation
186 and preservation goals.
187 20. Other duties – duties as approved by the Board and accepted by the Chair.
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189 **Vice-Chairperson (Chair)**

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191 21. To assume the duties of the Chair in the absence of that officer and assist the Chairperson
192 (Chair) in the performance of the Chairperson (Chair)’s duties.
193 22. Assume other duties at the Chairperson’s request.
194 23. Serve as chairperson for special programs.
195 24. Succeed the Chairperson in the event of resignation or other conditions precluding the
196 continued tenure until the board is reorganized.
197 25. Other duties – duties as approved by the board and accepted by the Vice-Chair.
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199 **Secretary**

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201 26. Notify the Board members of each meeting.
202 27. Publicize the most current form of the proposed Meeting Agenda no later than 7 days prior
203 to a regularly scheduled meeting, including posting the Agenda on social media if possible.
204 28. To keep or cause to be kept an accurate set of minutes of each meeting. a. The minutes
205 should include the following information:
206 a. Type of meeting (regular, annual, or special)
207 b. Name of presiding officer, date, hour, and place.
208 c. Attendance (supervisors, agency representatives, guests). Supervisors not in
209 attendance should also be listed.
210 d. Official business. Remember – Official business cannot be transacted without
211 a quorum. At least three supervisors constitute a quorum.
212 e. Reports made at meetings. (Reports may be summarized – ask agency
213 representatives and committees to provide written reports when necessary).
214 f. All Motions, indicating the person making the Motion, seconding the Motion,
215 and the action that was taken on the Motion. (A Motion that was withdrawn
216 should not be recorded).
217 29. Keep the Office of Agricultural Water Policy and the local Supervisor of Elections
218 informed concerning board membership by furnishing copies of all letters of appointment
219 and resignation, as well as names of district officers and address changes in coordination
220 with the Chair or Executive Director.
221 30. Record each Motion in full and read same before action is taken.
222 31. Insist that action be completed on each item of business to ensure that a record is be made
223 of all business conducted.
224 32. Keep a record of all committees, both standing and special. Notify committee members of
225 their appointment if they were not present when the appointment was made in coordination
226 with the Chair or Executive Director.
227 33. Initiate correspondence on behalf of the Board as the need arises in coordination with the
228 Chair or Executive Director.
229 34. To be the “custodian of records” as defined under Chapter 119 of Florida Statutes for the
230 purposes of responding to public records requests.

231 35. Other duties – duties as approved by the Board and accepted by the Secretary.
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233 **Treasurer**
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235 36. To keep or cause to be kept an accurate set of financial records of the District in
236 accordance with Chapter 189 of Florida Statutes and make all required reports as statute
237 or rule in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.

238 37. The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining an accurate account of the financial
239 transactions of the District.

240 38. All expenditures of the District must be made in check form. The signature of the
241 Treasurer in conjunction with either the Chair or the Executive Director is required for all
242 expenditures by check.

243 39. Deposits of District funds only require one signature by either the Treasurer, the Chair, or
244 the Executive Director.

245 40. Prepare and maintain district budget for the operating year in coordination with the Chair
246 and Executive Director.

247 41. Prepare a monthly treasurer’s report for the board to be presented at Board meetings.

248 42. Maintain complete and accurate records of receipts and expenditures. in coordination with
249 the Chair or Executive Director.

250 43. Instruct the Executive Director or designated agent of the District to pay only the bills
251 approved by official action of the Board and issue receipts for incoming funds.

252 44. Maintain separate accounting of any funds the district may receive for a specific purpose.

253 45. Arrange for an annual audit of receipts and disbursements in accordance with Chapter
254 218.32, F.S., “Annual Financial Report,” and Chapter 11.45, F.S., “Audit.” in
255 coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.

256 46. Ensure, in compliance with state and federal law, the District does not expend or
257 mishandle district funds.

258 47. Be responsible for the retrieval and distribution of mail to the District.

259 48. Other duties – duties as approved by the board and accepted by the Treasurer.
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261 **Public Relations Officer**
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263 49. Develop rapport, through personal contact, with all local newspapers, radio, and
264 television stations so that activities are sufficiently publicized.

265 50. Maintain and serve as a point-of-contact for the the District’s social media and utilize the
266 same to disseminate information and updates about District activities and events.

267 51. Submit news items (include photographs when appropriate) of general interest
268 concerning the district activities to the Office of Agricultural Water Policy for possible
269 use in statewide publications in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.

270 52. Develop and maintain a record of the district activities in coordination with the Chair or
271 Executive Director.

272 53. Write the public information section of the District Annual and 5-Year (Long-Range)
273 Plans in coordination with the Chair or Executive Director.

274 54. Other duties – duties as approved by the board and accepted by the Public Relations
275 Officer.
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District Employees

Executive Director

- 55. Know the specific functions of the District and understand its 5-Year (Long-Range) Plan.
- 56. Assist the Board in preparing the Annual Plan. Refer to it monthly when preparing Board meeting agendas.
- 57. Thoroughly understand the cooperative agreement and group assistance forms.
- 58. Be familiar with all Memoranda of Understanding, if any.
- 59. Be familiar with the District Supervisors Handbook.
- 60. Assist landowners applying to the District Board for technical assistance.
- 61. Prepare District Board meeting notices and agendas in consultation with the Chair.
- 62. Email notices and agendas to the Board Members in advance of the meeting.
- 63. Assist with the planning and preparation for all District meetings.
- 64. Prepare monthly financial reports, in conjunction with the Treasurer, for presentation to the Board. Reconcile balances of special and District accounts. Maintain records of District business transactions on a daily basis. Maintain all records in an orderly fashion established by the District Treasurer.
- 65. Prepare vouchers and checks for bills authorized for payment by the District Board.
- 66. Attend all Board meetings.
- 67. Keep records for award programs.
- 68. File Supervisor’s mail for distribution and action.
- 69. Assist in the preparation of educational events such as field days, tours, and special events.
- 70. Maintain a standardized filing system for the District.
- 71. Keep a schedule of all events that concern the Board and bring it to their attention at the proper time.
- 72. Assist the Board with correspondence and any other business they may have in connection with local activities or any responsibility they may assume in area or statewide District activities.
- 73. Maintain District property records.
- 74. Assist in District financial bookkeeping – maintain a separate ledger for “Special Funds,” “District Funds,” “Special Projects,” and keep posting current.
- 75. Receive and receipt contributions to the District on behalf of the Board. The Executive Director may also make bank deposits and is has signatory responsibility
- 76. Forward copies of all District meeting minutes to the Office of Agricultural Water Policy, NRCS, and the AFCD.
- 77. Hire, train and directly supervise all District support staff in consultation with the Chair.
- 78. Assume any additional responsibilities designated by the Board of Supervisors.
- 79. The Executive Director will be hired by the Board at a noticed meeting with a complete job description with working hours, benefits, etc.
- 80. The Chair will be responsible for the direct supervision of the Executive Director and the Chair shall provide a written evaluation of the Executive Director, annually. In the event of any grievances and/or reprimands regarding the Executive Director they shall be brought to the Board for discussion/decision.

323 81. Should no Executive Director be hired or installed by the Board, then the Chair may
324 assign any of the above duties to any other Supervisor as approved and accepted by that
325 Supervisor.
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327 **Office Staff**
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329 82. Office staff shall be hired by the Executive Director at the expressed direction of the
330 Board by recorded vote on a Motion or the annual budget.

331 83. All office staff shall be hired on a part time basis, for a time limited period and further
332 limited by the availability of funding. The Board will work to open the State of Florida
333 employee benefits package to all employees of the District.

334 84. The Executive Director shall be responsible for the direct supervision of the Office Staff.
335 The Executive Director shall provide a written evaluation of the Office Staff, annually.
336 In the event of any grievances and/or reprimands regarding the Office Staff shall be
337 brought to the Board for a resolution of the issue.

338 85. Should no Executive Director be hired or installed by the Board, then the Chair may
339 assign any of the above duties to any other Supervisor as approved and accepted by that
340 Supervisor.
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343 **Properties**
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345 Property owned by the Seminole Soil and Water Conservation District will be transferred to
346 Seminole County in the event of the discontinuance of the Seminole Soil and Water Conservation
347 District.
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350 **Amendments to the Bylaws**
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352 Changes to the Bylaws require a 30-day written notice and approval by a 4/5 super majority of the
353 Board.
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