

+Hillsborough Soil and Water Conservation District

By – Laws

ARTICLE I – NAME, AUTHORITY, AND PURPOSE

Section 1 Name

The name of this organization is the Hillsborough Soil & Water Conservation District (“District”).

Section 2 Authority

The District is a Florida special district organized under Chapter 582, Florida Statutes, Florida Statutes. Its jurisdiction covers Hillsborough County.

Section 3 Mission and Purpose

The District’s mission is to conserve and improve the soil and water resources of Hillsborough County by:

- Supporting the agricultural base of the County and surrounding areas.
- Sponsoring agricultural water quality projects and promoting Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- Providing technical assistance, outreach, and education to the public on natural resource conservation.
- Delivering programs funded through inter-local agreements, state/federal contracts, grants, donations, and County support.

ARTICLE II – BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Section 1 Composition

The governing body of the District shall consist of five (5) Supervisors, elected in accordance with Chapter 582, Florida Statutes.

Section 2 Terms of Office

Supervisors serve staggered four-year terms, or as otherwise prescribed by Florida Law.

Section 3 Eligibility and Election

- Supervisors must meet the eligibility requirements of Chapters 99 and 582, F.S.
- Elections are conducted according to the Florida Election Code.

Section 4 Vacancies

Vacancies are filled as provided in Chapter 582, F.S. or by appointment consistent with law.

Section 5 Duties

Supervisors set policy, approve budgets, oversee programs, and ensure compliance with applicable statutes.

ARTICLE III – MEETINGS

Section 1 Regular Meetings

The Board shall hold regular public meetings at a time and place designated annually by resolution. Per sections 582.195 and 582.295 F.S., all sitting Supervisors shall meet in person at least once per calendar year in a public meeting.

Unless it is inconsistent with law or these bylaws, meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 2 Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Chair or at the written request of a majority of Supervisors, with proper public notice.

Section 3 Quorum

A quorum is the number of Supervisors necessary to legally transact business. Three Supervisors must physically be present in a room, and publicly accessible, in order to establish a quorum for a meeting. Additional supervisors may participate in the proceedings using conferencing technology, including making motions and voting, provided that the physical quorum requirement is met.

In the absence of a quorum, the following action may be taken:

- 1) adjournment.
- 2) fix time to which to adjourn (continuance).
- 3) take steps to obtain quorum.

Section 4 Presiding Officer

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall preside. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair, the Treasurer shall preside.

The Chair, or Vice-Chair in the absence of the Chair, or Treasurer, in the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair, is authorized to sign manually, or electronically, any documents approved by the Board, no later than the next business day after such approval.

The presiding officer of the Board shall have the following functions:

- 1) Determining that a quorum is present.
- 2) Opening the meeting and calling the meeting to order.
- 3) Recognizing members of the District to speak.
- 4) Recognizing members of the general public or staff to speak.
- 5) Putting to vote all questions which come before the District as motions.
- 6) Restating the motion prior to the voting on the motion.
- 7) Deciding all questions of order.
- 8) Refusing to recognize frivolous or dilatory motions.
- 9) Refusing to recognize motions out of order.
- 10) Adjourning meetings when there is a sudden emergency affecting the safety of the District and others.

The decision of the presiding officer shall stand unless reversed by a majority vote of the members present after the proper motion has been made and seconded to reverse such decision.

Section 5 Voting

Each Supervisor has one vote; a majority of those participating in the meeting is required for action to pass unless otherwise required by law. Voting shall be done by voice. The Chair or the Board's designee will officially record the votes of individual Supervisors unless the vote is unanimous.

No Supervisor may abstain from voting on any matter before the Board upon which official action is to be taken unless there is or appears to be a possible conflict of interest under the provisions of applicable laws. In such cases, said Supervisor shall comply with the disclosure requirements of State Law.

If a Supervisor has a conflict of interest with an item appearing on the consent portion of the Board's agenda, the Supervisor shall announce such items he or she wishes to abstain from voting on, and such items shall be considered by a separate vote of the Board immediately after the approval of the consent agenda. Prior to abstaining from voting on an item on the consent agenda, the Supervisor must publicly disclose the nature of his interest in the matter from which he or she is abstaining.

Section 6 Motions

No matter may be officially acted upon by the Board unless a motion has been made by a Supervisor to take such action and said motion has been seconded by another Supervisor. Motions require a majority vote of those members present for passage. When a motion requires a majority of the Board for passage, three (3) affirmative votes are necessary.

Section 7 Subsidiary Motions

These are applied to original motions to more appropriately dispose of the original motions. The following subsidiary motions are listed in ranked order of priority from highest to lowest.

- 1) Lay on The Table.
- 2) Previous Question.
- 3) Limit or Extend The Limits of Debate.
- 4) Postpone To a Certain Time.
- 5) Amend (or Substitute.)

When such motions are made and seconded, the subsidiary motion supplements the original motion and must be decided by a majority vote before the original motion can be acted upon. However, motions to Limit or Extend the Limits of Debate and motions to order the Previous Question require a second, are debatable, and require a vote of a majority of the Supervisors present for passage.

Section 8 Public Access

All meetings are open to the public and conducted under Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine Law. Minutes will be kept and made publicly available.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

Section 1 Election of Officers

Officers are elected at the first regular meeting each calendar year and serve one-year terms or until successors are elected.

Section 2 Roles and Responsibilities

Chair - The Board shall elect from among its members a Chair per section F.S. 582.19(2), who shall preside over meetings in the capacity of parliamentarian, receive delegations from the Board via resolution and execute official documents and financial transactions.

The Board shall determine by a vote of the Supervisors present in its first regular meeting of the calendar year the necessity and practicality of electing the additional offices of Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. The Board may, by a majority of the Supervisors present, vote to delegate specific functions to these offices or to staff.

Vice-Chair – Acts in the Chair’s absence.

Treasurer – Oversees the maintenance of financial records and executes payments as authorized. Alternatively, the proscribed financial duties may be delegated to staff. When a physical quorum of Supervisors is present for an announced meeting, the Treasurer acts as the presiding officer and parliamentarian in the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair.

Secretary – ensures proper notice of meetings and meeting agendas, prepares draft documents for the Board’s consideration, keeps accurate minutes of Board meetings, and handles official correspondence of the District. The Board may delegate these functions to staff.

Registered Agent – Pursuant to F.S. Chapter 189.014, annually, the Board shall designate a registered agent and confirm its registered office location with the Department of Commerce’s Office of Special District Programs. This role may be delegated to a Board Supervisor or to a staff member. The registered agent’s delegations will include the coordination of regular updates to those State agencies and constitutional offices responsible for the tracking of elected and appointed offices and independent special districts.

ARTICLE V – COMMITTEES

The Board may establish standing or ad hoc committees to carry out its mission, appointing members and chairs as needed.

ARTICLE VI – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND STAFF

Section 1 Appointment

The Board may employ an Executive Director and other staff to manage day-to-day operations.

Section 2 Delegation

The Board may delegate authority and duties to staff except as prohibited by law.

Section 3 Duties

Staff implement policies of the Board, manage facilities and other tangible assets, grants, projects and personnel, and prepare budgets and reports.

ARTICLE VII – FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Section 1 Funds and Revenues

The District may receive and expend funds through inter-local agreement, contracts, grants, donations, and as provided for by Hillsborough County appropriations.

Section 2 Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the District shall match that of Hillsborough County or as otherwise designated by the Board.

Section 3 Budget and General Funds

The Board shall adopt its fiscal year budget in the first month of the fiscal year and issue implementing directives to staff.

Annually, the Board shall direct the preparation and shall approve budget proposals for the next fiscal year for submittal to the appropriate major funding partners, pursuant to their statutory requirements and no later than January of each calendar year.

Section 4 Bonding and Insurance

Officers and employees with delegations to authorize payments from the District's funds shall be bonded. The Board shall maintain necessary insurance coverage.

Section 5 Financial Reporting and Audit

The Board shall ensure that the District complies with Florida's audit and annual financial reporting requirements for special districts. The Treasurer or staff designee shall provide regular financial reports to the Board, ensure that financial reports are entered into the record for audit and ensure that the Board's selected external auditor receives all appropriate records for review.

ARTICLE VIII – TRANSPARENCY, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & ETHICS

Section 1 Public Records

All District records are public under Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, and will be available in accordance with law.

Section 2 Public Participation

Public comment will be allowed at Board meetings as determined by policy or law.

Section 3 Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

Supervisors and staff will comply with Florida's Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees (Chapter 112, Florida Statutes).

Section 4 Public Representation by Supervisors

The Conservation District is a nonpartisan single purpose body, and its Board of Supervisors recognizes the necessity to speak with one voice, in the execution of its statutory authority and purpose to promote the conservation of natural resources associated with agricultural lands and green infrastructure.

The Board will adopt policies, procedures and position statements that are limited to the scope of that authority and purpose identified in Section 582.02 F.S.

The Board will, by majority vote, determine its official policies and positions and the appropriate context within which individual supervisors may speak on behalf of the Board as a whole.

ARTICLE IX – DUE DILIGENCE REGARDING QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICE

Section 1 Due diligence ahead of appointing Supervisors to vacant seats.

When vacant seats are filled by appointment, the Board shall ensure that appointees are qualified to serve the office as provided under Section 582.19, F.S., as follows:

- Proof of Voter Registration within the District per Chapter 99, F.S., and one of the following:
- Substantive proof of financial interest in the production of agricultural products as provided for in Section 570.02, F.S. or
- Constructive evidence of ownership or the management of land actively in use for agricultural purposes as defined in Section 193.461, F.S.

The Board recognizes the reservation of the right to challenge qualification to serve the office to the electorate. Under those circumstances when a member of the electorate steps forward to publicly challenge qualification, the Board will make a good faith effort to substantiate the qualification of the sitting Supervisor.

Section 2 Referral

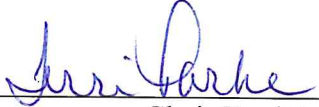
In the event that the Board's due diligence effort fails to substantiate the qualification of the sitting Supervisor, or for issues of malfeasance or issues of ethical misconduct, the Board shall consider by Motion a referral of the Supervisor to the Governor's Office for removal.

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

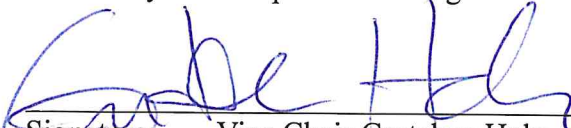
These bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting by a majority vote of the full Board, provided written notice of the proposed amendment has been given to each Supervisor and posted publicly as required by law.

CERTIFICATION:

These bylaws were adopted by the Board of Supervisors of this Hillsborough Soil and Water Conservation District on 17th day of November, 2025 at a duly noticed public meeting.



Signature: Chair Terri Parke
Supervisor, District 1



Signature: Vice Chair Gretchen Hoke
Supervisor, District 3



Signature: Elizabeth Tompkins
Supervisor, District 2



Signature: Casey Simmons Runkles
Supervisor, District 4

Signature: Vacant
Supervisor, District 5