

TEXAS WATER CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION (TWCA) POLICY COMMITTEE PROCEDURES FOR STATE POSITIONS

The Texas Water Conservation Association (TWCA) State Positions reflect the association's views on statewide matters of importance to the association's purposes, which are described in its by-laws as follows:

- 1) to promote and support the dedicated task of conserving, developing, protecting and utilizing the water resources of Texas for all beneficial purposes;
- 2) to promote and assist in the proper coordination of plans proposed by agencies of the federal, state and local governments, associations, and private enterprise to conserve, develop, protect, and utilize the water resources of the state;
- 3) through all means of publicity open to the association, to create a widespread interest in water resources development and conservation by the citizenship of Texas and to keep all members of the association fully advised on all matters pertaining to or affecting water resources development and conservation in the state; and
- 4) to encourage in all ways possible needed legislation, both state and national, to carry out the association's objectives.

TWCA's State Positions guide the actions of the association and the TWCA executive staff, for example, with regard to state policy, legislative, and regulatory matters, and when the association participates as a friend of the court in judicial proceedings. The State Positions are adopted by TWCA's Board of Directors and stewarded by its Policy Committee. (TWCA's positions on federal matters are both adopted and stewarded by its Federal Affairs Committee.)

The Policy Committee's procedures for accepting, considering, and recommending proposed positions, and for stewarding them after adoption, are presented below in this order: Regular Procedures (including initiatives for maintaining the currency of TWCA's State Positions), Emergency Procedures, Corrections and Renumbering, and Voting Procedures. New or amended positions also may be proposed directly to the Board of Directors.

REGULAR PROCEDURES

STEP 1: Initiating a Proposal

Any TWCA member or group of members (including Panels / Committees) may initiate a new position, or changes to an existing position, by giving written notice to the Policy Committee

chair or the TWCA executive staff. The initiating member(s) are referred to in these procedures as the position “Sponsor.”

Action on a position is formally proposed to the Policy Committee when the Sponsor submits a completed State Position Proposal Form to the Policy Committee chair and the TWCA executive staff. *(The form is attached to these procedures and will be made available in electronic format upon request).* The completed form, then, becomes part of the Committee’s and the Association’s permanent records regarding the State Positions.

The Policy Committee also may consider new positions or changes to an existing position on its own initiative.

STEP 2: Preparing a Proposal for Consideration

The Policy Committee chair will determine whether one or more committee members and a representative of the TWCA executive staff should be assigned as a “resource team” to help the position Sponsor navigate the Committee’s procedures and complete the proposal form.

When a proposal is initiated, the Policy Committee chair, as advised by the resource team if one is assigned, will:

- 1) notify the Sponsor regarding upcoming Policy Committee meetings and the initial timetable for consideration of the proposal;
- 2) confirm that the position is proposed in the correct format and that it is proposed for inclusion in the State Positions at an appropriate section/number;
- 3) assess whether the proposal may conflict with any of the existing State Positions;
- 4) consider together with the TWCA executive staff whether any panels or committees should get early notice of the proposal or if coordination with the association’s legislative initiatives is called for, and take those steps as appropriate; and
- 5) confirm that the proposal form is complete including any attachments that the Sponsor may provide.

It is not the responsibility of the Policy Committee chair, or of the resource team if one is assigned, to advocate for a proposal or to compile information to include with the proposal form. Resource team members are not obligated to refrain from expressing objections to a proposal.

Unless they identify an emergency need to act on the proposal sooner, the Policy Committee chair and the TWCA executive staff will circulate the completed proposal form to the Policy

Committee members and any Panel and Committee chairs that the chair and the executive staff determine should get early notice of the proposal.

STEP 3: Consideration by the Policy Committee

Except as provided in the emergency procedures, a proposed new or changed position statement is eligible to be considered and first acted upon by the Policy Committee 14 days after the completed proposal form has been formally circulated to the Committee members. A favorable vote by the Policy Committee recommends that the TWCA Board adopt a new or changed position, as it may have been modified by the Committee. The position Sponsor cannot withdraw a proposal from further consideration after it has been acted upon by the Committee.

For purposes of maintaining the currency of the State Positions through periodic review as described in Step 5 below, when the Policy Committee votes favorably on a proposed new or changed position, it also will recommend (1) a subsequent "Review-by-Date" and (2) suggest "Review Advisor(s)" which may include the original Sponsor and representatives from one or more Panels or Committees, including the Policy Committee itself.

STEP 4: Preparing for Consideration by the Board of Directors

The Policy Committee chair and the TWCA executive staff will update the proposal form to reflect the Committee's action on a proposed new or changed position. Under regular procedures, the updated form and any attachments will be included with at least 14 days written notice to the TWCA Board of Directors that the Committee's recommendation will be placed on agenda for Board consideration and action. As appropriate to respond to comments that may be generated by circulating the Policy Committee's recommendation, or for other reasons, the Committee can convene again to make adjustments to the proposal up until final action by the Board.

After a new or changed position is voted favorably by the Board of Directors, the TWCA executive staff will reflect the Board's action in the State Positions, subject to periodic review as described in Step 5.

STEP 5: Maintaining the Currency of TWCA's State Positions

Although a proposal to adopt or change a state position can be initiated at any time, periodic review also is valued to ensure that the positions continue to meet the needs of the association.

The State Positions, in full, are circulated annually to the Policy Committee and the Board of Directors in advance of the association's annual meeting to invite discussion of proposed new and changed positions. The State Positions also should be reviewed in conjunction with the Water Resources, Development and Management Committee at least once every other year when interim legislative charges are announced.

Additionally, each individual position will be reviewed by the Policy Committee at least once every 7 years, on a staggered basis, following the Committee's regular procedures for new and amended positions. To facilitate the periodic review of individual statements, the Committee will maintain a review calendar that organizes the positions according to their Review-by-Dates. Each year at the annual Policy Committee meeting, the Committee chair will initiate these procedures for each position that is due to be reviewed the next year, and engage identified Review Advisor(s) to serve as Sponsor for the position being reviewed. If no changes to a position are recommended by the Policy Committee at the conclusion of a scheduled review, no further action needs to be taken with regard to the position being reviewed and the next Review-by-Date for the position will be noted on the calendar.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR STATE POSITIONS

If the Policy Committee chair and the TWCA executive staff have identified a need for emergency action regarding a position, the Policy Committee may need to act on an expedited basis. This might occur, for example, as necessary to support legislative or regulatory initiatives or participation in court proceedings when there is not time for the Committee to take action under the Regular Procedures.

For positions considered by the Committee on an emergency basis:

- 1) a State Position Proposal Form still should be completed for inclusion in the Committee's and the association's records;
- 2) the maximum amount of time practical under the circumstances should be afforded for notice to Committee members and action by the Committee; and,
- 3) the maximum amount of time practical under the circumstances should be afforded for notice of the Committee's recommendation to the Board of Directors; and,
- 4) for any position adopted under emergency procedures, the Policy Committee will initiate review of the position under regular procedures within one year.

PROCEDURES FOR CORRECTIONS AND RENUMBERING

The Policy Committee, at any time, can take action on changes to section / number placement within the State Positions, and grammatical or other corrections to a position after adoption. Such changes and corrections to the State Positions do not require subsequent action by the Board of Directors, but will be brought to the Board's attention during the Committee chair's next regular report to the Board.

PROCEDURES FOR VOTING

The Policy Committee greatly values its ability to act by consensus regarding the matters brought before it. Nevertheless, the committee identified a need to achieve greater clarity with regard to its *minimum* internal procedures for taking a committee vote.

As of June 2015, the committee has 30 members, some of which are appointed by TWCA's Panels. In the event that a committee member is unable to attend a meeting (including by telephone if telephone call-in is provided), the member may notify the TWCA executive management in writing that another committee member holds proxy. Alternatively, for members appointed by a Panel, the Panel Chair may designate an alternate. Committee members may not delegate their votes to non-committee members. For called meetings, establishing a quorum requires that a majority of the committee members appear in person, by telephone if call-in is provided, or by proxy. For matters taken up by email, establishing a quorum requires that two-thirds of the committee as a whole respond.

The association's by-laws do not specify procedures for committee voting. If it became necessary to do so, the committee would defer to Robert's Rules of Order as a guideline for proceeding. Generally, whether following the regular procedures or the emergency procedures of the Committee, a favorable vote requires two-thirds of the members voting. (Abstentions are not counted as votes.)