

listed. Examples of such personal characteristics are the ability to:

1. Prepare comprehensive yet detailed records and reports.
2. Develop sound principles and practices of district administration, including planning.
3. Establish good working relationships with the Board and fellow workers.
4. Keep the Board informed on developments in the program.
5. Know how to take orders as well as give them, and don't overstep authority.
6. Promote harmony and good public

relations with the public and within the organization.

7. Be loyal, fair, honest and cooperative with all others in developing a dynamic and successful program.
8. Keep informed and up-to-date on new developments in all phases of mosquito abatement activities.

In closing, it should be pointed out that self-evaluation is frequently just as valuable as evaluation of others. When translated into action evaluation becomes an important tool useful for improving individuals, the work they do, and their organization's achievements.

## THE ROLE OF THE TRUSTEE IN FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DISTRICT

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The formation of the "Metropolitan Mosquito Control District" was authorized by the Minnesota State Legislature in 1957. This action resulted from a strong citizen demand particularly from Minneapolis, Saint Paul and the surrounding urban communities which have been growing so rapidly. Actual operations began in 1958. It has been my privilege to have served on the executive board of this district since it was founded; and perhaps I might add that I have been in county government for 20 years.

Six counties with a population of 1,500,000 covering about 2,750 square miles make up the district. It is believed that this is one of the largest mosquito control districts in the country.

An executive board made up of 12 county commissioners, 2 from each county, control and establish policy for the district. The staff is headed by a director and a business administrator.

Under these 2 men we have 37 full time employees most of whom are supervisors and foremen. During the operating season we employ 90 to 100 men from 3 to 6 months.

Our district owns 26 vehicles, 7 are station wagons and the other 19 are specialized pickup trucks. During the operating season we will lease about 65 pickup trucks.

All work is done by our employees with the exception of aerial spraying which is done by private operators under contract.

Our supervisory personnel maintain a constant check on the effectiveness of the program through the use of mosquito light traps, collection of biting mosquitoes and soil (mosquito egg) samples. With this brief sketch of our district I will try to say a few things about the topic assigned me, "The role of the trustee in fiscal responsibilities of the district."

Prudent management of the tax dollar must always be uppermost in the mind of the selected official regardless of the governmental service: roads and highways, welfare or mosquito control. Of course, financial policy is not the trustee's only concern. Certainly he must be able to understand and communicate with the top staff people, and when the occasion demands, the trustee should have a gen-

eral competence in explaining and defending the work of the program to the tax-paying public.

Being a special service district created by the legislature, we have been allowed certain taxing powers. We are authorized to levy up to 50¢ per person annually using the population figures of the latest Federal census.

This places us in the unusual position of having our budget established at the same figure for a 10-year period. From 1958 through 1961 our annual levy was \$583,000. In 1962 the new census figures allowed us to levy \$751,000 and it is expected this figure will remain constant for 10 years.

So it has been only for the last three years that we have been able to take full advantage of a constant budget and program years ahead. Hence long range planning becomes a very real responsibility for our district.

Normally a governmental agency will appear before some authority seeking an increase in its budget if it appears that its expenses are increasing. We in effect are like a man on a pension. We have to live on a fixed income even if expenses rise. And of course we are expected to maintain a steady high standard of services.

I am sure there is little doubt about increasing costs. Let me cite one example. The amount we paid in salaries to our full-time personnel started out at \$154,000 in 1958. Salaries in this category have increased each year, so that we now find the figure increased to over \$240,000 a year. Of this amount \$170,000 is paid to our working foremen. Part of this increase, of course, is due to staff expansion, but not all of it. Added to this \$240,000 is about \$190,000 paid to seasonal employees.

In a business that pays out \$2.00 for salaries and wages out of every \$3.00 it

spends, it is certainly the responsibility of the trustees to be informed about prevailing wages and changes in the cost of living. You must try to balance the morale of your employees against the feelings of your taxpayers.

In my experience on boards of this kind you soon learn that it is absolutely necessary for one of the top staff people to be a business administrator who keeps a close watch on the budget and maintains up-to-date "cost analysis" figures, particularly on personnel and vehicle costs.

Of course it is up to us as trustees to take the time to study the reports and be able to spot changes and new trends. I have no patience with the official who says he doesn't understand all those figures. If the bookkeeping and reporting system is too complicated, he should insist on changes in the system.

Just because you have a budget doesn't necessarily mean you spend the same amount every year. With a fixed budget system like ours you cannot. We try to taper off capital spending when costs rise. We also set aside a small percentage for a reserve. A lot of the equipment that we require is only used a few months a year, so wherever possible we try to lease such items. We think leasing is especially important because our needs change from one year to the next.

There are a lot of important details about the business affairs such as: bids, checking accounts, petty cash, bonds, and insurance that I could talk to you about. But under a business administrator these things will be properly handled.

In conclusion I would only say that a good trustee must maintain a lively interest and concern in the budget and the regular reports from the business administrator. There is no other way, there are no shortcuts for the trustee who would participate wisely in the decisions to spend the taxpayers' tax dollar.