

Elected Commissioners

Wis. Stat. § 33.01(9)(b)
Wis. Stat. § 6.10

Qualifications: To serve as an elected lake district commissioner, a person must be a U.S. citizen, eighteen years of age or older, and either an elector (resident voter) or an owner of property within the district. In order to qualify as an elector, a citizen must be a resident of the district. A person who is an official representative of an organization which is an owner of property may hold office as a commissioner even though the person does not own property within the district or qualify as an elector.

Wis. Stat. § 33.285

At least one commissioner must be a district resident, unless no resident is willing to serve. If no resident is willing to serve, this requirement is waived until the end of that term.

Wis. Stat. § 33.28(2m)(b)

Wis. Stat. § 33.28(2)(c)

Elections: Commissioners are elected at the annual meeting by secret ballot to serve for staggered three-year terms. The use of staggered terms ensures that the board of commissioners will have some institutional memory as leadership evolves over the years. Commissioners' terms of office expire at the conclusion of the annual meeting at which their successors are elected.

In order to stagger the terms of commissioners, the three commissioners elected at the first annual meeting serve for terms of one, two and three years. (The length of the term is sometimes determined by the number of votes each receive, the most votes gets the three-year term, second most the two-year term and so on.) As these initial terms expire, successor commissioners are elected to regular three-year terms. This means that an election for one commissioner is held at each annual meeting, except in cases where the lake district has expanded the number of elected commissioners. If the annual meeting expands the size of the board of commissioners, one of the newly created seats expires in two years and the other in three years. In subsequent years, these districts hold elections for two commissioners each year, except every three years, when only one commissioner is elected. When their initial terms expire, all five commissioners are elected for regular three-year terms.

Wis. Stat. § 33.30(3)(a)
Wis. Stat. § 33.30(2)(b)

Key Point

Chapter 33 does not set detailed election procedures, but it does mandate the use of secret ballots and prohibits the use of absentee ballots and proxies. Electors (resident voters) and property owners are eligible to vote in lake district elections only if they are physically present at the annual meeting. *For more information on voter eligibility, see Voting, page 73.*