

CHAPTER 267.

[H. B. 429.]

PUBLIC HOSPITAL DISTRICTS.

AN ACT relating to public hospital districts; adding three new sections to chapter 70.44, RCW, and amending section 70.44.040, RCW.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

SECTION 1. Chapter 70.44, RCW, as derived from chapter 264, Laws of 1945, as last amended, is amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows: New section.

Any petition for the formation of a public hospital district may describe an area lying in more than one county, the boundaries of which shall follow the then existing precinct boundaries and not divide a voting precinct; and if a petition is filed with the county auditor of the respective counties in which a portion of the proposed district is located, containing not less than ten percent of the voters of that area of each county of the proposed district who voted at the last general election, certified by the said respective auditors in like manner as for a county wide district, the board of county commissioners of each of the counties in which a portion of the proposed district is located shall fix a date for a hearing on the petition, and shall publish the petition, without the signatures thereto appended, for two weeks prior to the hearing, together with a notice stating the time of the meeting when the petition will be heard. The publication required by this chapter shall be in a newspaper published in the portion of each county lying within the proposed district, or if there be no such newspaper published in any such portion of a county, then in one published in the county wherein such portion of said district is situated, and of general circulation in the county. The hearing before the respective county commissioners may be adjourned from time to time

Petition for formation of public hospital district.

Hearing.

Publication.

Decision of
county com-
missioners
fixing
boundaries.

not exceeding four weeks in all. If upon the final hearing the respective boards of county commissioners find that any land has been unjustly or improperly included within the proposed district they may change and fix the boundary lines of the portion of said district located within their respective counties in such manner as they deem reasonable and just and conducive to the welfare and convenience, and enter an order establishing and defining the boundary lines of the proposed district located within their respective counties: *Provided*, That no lands shall be included within the boundaries so fixed lying outside the boundaries described in the petition, except upon the written request of the owners of the land to be so included. Thereafter the same procedure shall be followed as prescribed for the formation of a district including an entire county, except that the petition and election shall be confined solely to the portions of each county lying within the proposed district.

Lands
outside
boundaries.

Amendment.

SEC. 2. Section 70.44.040, RCW, as derived from section 5, chapter 264, Laws of 1945, as last amended by section 1, chapter 229, Laws of 1947, is amended to read as follows:

Total vote
required.

The provisions of Title 54 relating to elections, vacancies, procedure of the commission and boundaries and consolidation of public utility districts shall govern public hospital districts, except that the total vote cast upon the proposition to form the district shall exceed forty percent of the total number of votes cast in the precincts comprising the districts at the next preceding general state and county election, and except that hospital district commissioners shall hold office for the term of six years and until their successors are elected and qualified, each term to commence on the second Monday in January in each year following the election. At the election at which the proposition is submitted to the voters as to whether a district shall be formed, three commis-

Terms
of commis-
sioners.

sioners shall be elected to hold office, respectively, for the terms of two, four, and six years. All candidates shall be voted upon by the entire district, and the candidate residing in commissioner district number one receiving the highest number of votes in the hospital district shall hold office for the term of six years; the candidate residing in commissioner district number two receiving the highest number of votes in the hospital district shall hold office for the term of four years; and the candidate residing in commissioner district number three receiving the highest number of votes in the hospital district shall hold office for the term of two years. Each term shall date from the time above specified following the election, but shall also include the period intervening between the election and the beginning of the regular terms specified in this section: *Provided*, That in public hospital districts encompassing portions of more than one county, the total vote cast upon the proposition to form the district shall exceed forty percent of the total number of votes cast in each portion of each county lying within the proposed district at the next preceding general county election. The portion of said proposed district located within each county shall constitute a separate commissioner district. There shall be three district commissioners whose terms shall be six years. Each district shall be designated by the name of the county in which it is located. All candidates for commissioners shall be voted upon by the entire district. Not more than one commissioner shall reside in any one district: *Provided further*, That in the event there are only two districts then two commissioners may reside in one district. The term of each commissioner shall commence on the second Monday in January in each year following his election. At the election at which the proposition is submitted to the voters as to whether a district shall be formed, three

Number of votes determines terms.

Districts encompassing more than one county.

Total vote required.

Terms of commissioners.

Residential requirements of commissioners.

Commencement of terms.

Number of votes determines terms.

commissioners shall be elected to hold office, respectively, for the terms of two, four, and six years. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes within the district, as constituted by said election, shall serve a term of six years; the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes shall hold office for a term of four years; and the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes shall hold office for a term of two years: *Provided further*, That the holding of each such term of office shall be subject to the residential requirements for district commissioners hereinbefore set forth in this paragraph.

New section.

SEC. 3. Chapter 70.44, RCW, as derived from chapter 264, Laws of 1945, as amended, is amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

Contiguous districts may consolidate.

Two or more contiguous hospital districts, whether the territory therein lies in one or more counties, may consolidate by following the procedure outlined in chapter 35.10, RCW, with reference to consolidation of cities and towns.

New section.

SEC. 4. Chapter 70.44, RCW, as derived from chapter 264, Laws of 1945, as last amended, is amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

Annexation of territory.

A hospital district may annex territory outside the existing boundaries of such district and contiguous thereto, whether the territory therein lies in one or more counties, under the procedure applicable to annexation of unincorporated areas as provided in chapter 35.12, RCW.

Passed the House March 6, 1953.

Passed the Senate March 10, 1953.

Approved by the Governor March 23, 1953.