

CHAPTER 58.

[ H. B. 66. ]

RECREATION DISTRICTS ACT FOR CLASS AA COUNTIES.

AN ACT relating to park and recreation districts in Class AA counties; providing for the establishment, operation, regulation and dissolution thereof; defining powers and duties in relation thereto; amending section 1, chapter 93, Laws of 1955 and RCW 84.52.052; and providing penalties.

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

Park and recreation districts authorized.

SECTION 1. Park and recreation districts are hereby authorized to be formed in Class AA counties as municipal corporations for the purpose of providing leisure time activities and facilities, including swimming pools, of a nonprofit nature as a public service to the residents of the geographical areas included within their boundaries.

Petition for formation of park district.

SEC. 2. The formation of a park and recreation district in Class AA counties shall be initiated by a petition designating the boundaries thereof by metes and bounds, or by describing the land to be included therein by townships, ranges and legal subdivisions. Such petition shall set forth the object of the district and state that it will be conducive to the public welfare and convenience, and that it will be a benefit to the area therein. Such petition shall be signed by not less than fifteen percent of the registered voters within the area so described. No person signing the petition may withdraw his name therefrom after filing.

Signatures required.

Petition filed.

The petition shall be filed with the auditor of the county within which the proposed district is located, accompanied by an obligation signed by two or more petitioners, agreeing to pay the cost of the publication of the notice provided for in section 4 of this act. The county auditor shall, within

thirty days from the date of filing the petition, examine the signatures and certify to the sufficiency or insufficiency thereof; and for that purpose shall have access to all registration books or records in the possession of the registration officers of the election precincts included, in whole or in part, within the proposed district. Such books and records shall be prima facie evidence of the truth of the certificate.

Auditor's duties.

If the petition is found to contain a sufficient number of signatures of qualified persons, the auditor shall transmit it, together with his certificate of sufficiency attached thereto, to the county commissioners who shall by resolution entered upon their minutes, receive it and fix a day and hour when they will publicly hear the petition, as provided in section 4.

Auditor's certificate of sufficiency.

SEC. 3. A park and recreation district in Class AA counties may include any unincorporated area in the state and, when any part of the proposed district lies within the corporate limits of any city or town, said petition shall be accompanied by a certified copy of a resolution of the governing body of said city or town, approving inclusion of the area within the corporate limits of the city or town.

Areas included.

Resolution of city or town required.

SEC. 4. The board of county commissioners shall set a time for a hearing on the petition for the formation of a park and recreation district to be held not more than sixty days following the receipt of such petition. Notice of hearing shall be given by publication three times, at intervals of not less than one week, in a newspaper of general circulation within the county. Such notice shall state the time and place of hearing and describe particularly the area proposed to be included within the district.

Hearing on petition.

Notice.

SEC. 5. The board of county commissioners shall designate a name for and fix the boundaries of the proposed district following such hearing. No land shall be included in the boundaries as fixed by the

District name and boundaries.

Park and recreation districts. Name and boundaries.

county commissioners which was not described in the petition, unless the owners of such land shall consent in writing thereto.

The board of county commissioners shall eliminate from the boundaries of the proposed district land which they find will not be benefited by inclusion therein.

District subdivisions— District commissioners.

SEC. 6. The board of county commissioners, in addition to setting the boundaries of the proposed district, shall also divide it into five subdivisions and shall name five resident electors, no two of whom shall reside within the same subdivisions of said district, as candidates for election as the first park and recreation district commissioners of the district. The proposition for the formation of the proposed park and recreation district shall be submitted to the voters of such district for their approval or rejection at the next general election.

Election procedure— Notice— Ballots.

SEC. 7. All elections pursuant to this act shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of chapter 29.13 RCW. Notices of the election for the formation of the park and recreation district shall state generally and briefly the purpose thereof and shall give the boundaries of the proposed district, define the election precincts, designate the polling place of each, give the names of the five nominated park and recreation commissioner candidates of the proposed district, and name the day of the election and the hours during which the polls will be open. The proposition to be submitted to the voters shall be stated in such manner that the voters may indicate yes or no upon the proposition of forming the proposed park and recreation district. The ballot shall be so arranged that voters may vote for the five nominated candidates or may write in the names of other candidates.

SEC. 8. If a majority of all votes cast upon the proposition favors the formation of the district, the

board of county commissioners shall, by resolution, declare the territory organized as a park and recreation district under the name theretofore designated, and shall declare the candidate from each subdivision receiving the highest number of votes for park and recreation commissioner the duly elected first park and recreation commissioner of the subdivision of the district.

Declaration of election result by resolution.

SEC. 9. Elections for park and recreation district commissioners shall be held biennially in conjunction with the general election on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November. Residence anywhere within the district shall qualify an elector for any position on the commission after the initial election. Following the initial election declarations of candidacy for the office of commissioner shall be filed with the county auditor not more than forty-five nor less than thirty days prior to said election. Any candidate may withdraw his declaration at any time within five days after the last day for filing a declaration of candidacy. All names of candidates to be voted upon shall be printed upon the ballot alphabetically in a group under the designation of the title of the offices for which they are candidates. There shall be no rotation of names. All commissioners shall serve until their successors are elected and qualified. The terms of office of all commissioners after the first commissioners shall begin on the first Monday in January following their respective elections. At the first election following the formation of the district, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall serve for a term of six years, the two candidates receiving the next highest number of votes shall serve for four years and the two candidates receiving the next highest number of votes shall serve for two years. Thereafter all commissioners shall be elected for six year terms.

Commissioners. Elections.

Residence qualification.

Declarations of candidacy.

Terms.

Vacancies filled.

SEC. 10. Vacancies on the board of park and recreation commissioners shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining commissioners.

Commissioners to receive expenses.

SEC. 11. The park and recreation commissioners shall receive no compensation for their services but shall receive necessary expenses in attending meetings of the board or when otherwise engaged on district business.

Commissioners' duties.

SEC. 12. The park and recreation district board of commissioners shall:

(1) Elect its officers including a chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and such other officers as it may determine it requires;

(2) Hold regular public meetings at least monthly;

(3) Adopt policies governing transaction of board business, keeping of records, resolutions, transactions, findings and determinations, which shall be of public record;

(4) Initiate, direct and administer district park and recreation activities, and select and employ such properly qualified employees as it may deem necessary.

Powers of districts.

SEC. 13. Park and recreation districts in Class AA counties shall have such powers as are necessary to carry out the purpose for which they are created, including, but not being limited to, the power: (1) To acquire and hold real and personal property; (2) to dispose of real and personal property only by unanimous vote of the district commissioners; (3) to make contracts; (4) to sue and be sued; (5) to borrow money to the extent and in the manner authorized by this act; (6) to grant concessions; (7) to make charges for the use of facilities or for participation; (8) to make and enforce rules and regulations governing the use of property, facilities or equipment and the conduct of persons thereon; (9) to con-

tract with any municipal corporation, governmental or private agencies for the conduct of park and recreation programs; (10) to operate jointly with other governmental units any facilities or property including participation in the acquisition; (11) to hold in trust or manage public property useful to the accomplishment of their objectives; (12) to establish cumulative reserve funds in the manner and for the purposes prescribed by law for cities; and, (13) to make improvements or to acquire property by the local improvement method in the manner prescribed by this act: *Provided*, That such improvement or acquisition is within the scope of the purposes granted to such park and recreation district.

Powers of districts.

Proviso.

SEC. 14. A park and recreation district in Class AA counties shall not have power to levy an annual authorized levy, but it shall have the power to levy a tax upon the property included within the district, in the manner prescribed for cities for the purpose of exceeding the limitations established by Article VII, section 2, as amended by Amendment 17, of the Constitution and by RCW 84.52.052. Such special, voted levy may be either for operating funds or for capital outlay, or for a cumulative reserve fund. A park and recreation district may issue general obligation bonds for capital purposes only, not to exceed an amount, together with any outstanding general obligation indebtedness equal to one and one-half percent of the assessed valuation of the taxable property within such district, and may provide for the retirement thereof by levies in excess of millage limitations in accordance with the provisions of RCW 84.52.056.

Special levies authorized.

Bonds.

SEC. 15. Section 1, chapter 93, Laws of 1955 and RCW 84.52.052 are each amended to read as follows:

RCW 84.52.052 amended.

The limitations imposed by RCW 84.52.050 through 84.52.056, shall not prevent the levy of additional taxes, not in excess of five mills a year

Excess levies authorized—When—Procedure.

Excess levies  
authorized—  
When—  
Procedure.

Public  
agencies  
authorized—  
Elections.

and without anticipation of delinquencies in payment of taxes, in an amount equal to the interest and principal payable in the next succeeding year on general obligation bonds, outstanding on December 6, 1934, issued by or through the agency of the state, or any county, city, town, or school district, or the levy of additional taxes to pay interest on or toward the reduction, at the rates provided by statute, of the principal of county, city, town, or school district warrants outstanding on December 6, 1932; but this millage limitation with respect to general obligation bonds shall not apply to any taxing district in which a larger levy is necessary in order to prevent the impairment of the obligation of contracts. Any county, school district, metropolitan park district, park and recreation district in Class AA counties, sewer district, water district, public hospital district, rural county library district, inter-county rural library district, fire protection district, city or town may levy taxes at a rate in excess of the rate specified in RCW 84.52.050 through 84.52-.056, when authorized so to do by the electors of such county, school district, metropolitan park district, park and recreation district in Class AA counties, sewer district, water district, public hospital district, rural county library district, inter-county rural library district, fire protection district, city or town by a three-fifths majority of those voting on the proposition at a special election, to be held in the year in which the levy is made, and not oftener than twice in such year, in the manner provided by law for holding general elections, at such time as may be fixed by the body authorized to call the same, which special election may be called by the board of county commissioners, board of school directors, or council, board of commissioners, or other governing body of any metropolitan park district, park and recreation district in Class AA counties, sewer district, water district, public hospital district,

rural county library district, intercounty rural library district, fire protection district, city or town, by giving notice thereof by publication in the manner provided by law for giving notices of general elections, at which special election the proposition of authorizing such excess levy shall be submitted in such form as to enable the voters favoring the proposition to vote "Yes," and those opposed thereto to vote "No": *Provided*, That the total number of persons voting at such special election must constitute not less than forty percent of the voters in said taxing district who voted at the last preceding general state election: *Provided further*, That the total number of persons voting on an excess levy for current operating purposes at any such special election of any school district prior to November 3, 1954, must constitute not less than forty percent of the voters in said taxing district who voted at the last preceding general election in such district.

SEC. 16. The county treasurer of the county in which the district shall be located shall be the treasurer of the district, and expenditures shall be made upon warrants drawn by the county auditor pursuant to vouchers approved by the board of park and recreation commissioners.

SEC. 17. The board of park and recreation commissioners of each park and recreation district shall annually compile a budget, in form prescribed by the state division of municipal corporations, for the ensuing calendar year, and which shall, to the extent that anticipated income is actually realized, constitute the appropriations for the district. The budget may include an amount to accumulate a reserve for a stated capital purpose. In compiling the budget, all available funds and anticipated income shall be taken into consideration, including contributions or contractual payments from school districts, cities or towns, county, or any other governmental unit; gifts



and donations; special tax levy; assessments; fees and charges; proceeds of bond issues; cumulative reserve funds.

Expenditures, park districts.

SEC. 18. Expenditures shall be made solely in accordance with the budget, and should revenues accrue at a rate below the anticipated amounts, the board of park and recreation commissioners shall reduce expenditures accordingly: *Provided*, That the board may, by unanimous vote, authorize such expenditures, or authorize expenditures in excess of those budgeted, if sufficient revenue to pay such expenditures is derived by the levy of the district or if provided by other governmental agencies specifically for such purposes.

Proviso.

Violation of rules—Penalty.

SEC. 19. The violation of any of the rules or regulations of a park and recreation district adopted by its board for the preservation of order, control of traffic, protection of life or property or for the regulation of the use of park property shall constitute a misdemeanor.

Additional area may be added to district.

SEC. 20. After a park and recreation district in Class AA counties has been organized, an additional area may be added by the same procedure within the proposed additional area as is provided herein for the organization of a park and recreation district, except that no first commissioners shall be nominated by the board of county commissioners or elected, and all electors within both the organized park and recreation district and the proposed additional territory shall vote upon the proposition for enlargement.

Local improvement districts authorized.

SEC. 21. Whenever the board of park and recreation commissioners of any district shall determine that any proposed capital improvement would be of special benefit to all or to any portion of the district, it may establish local improvement districts within its territory; levy special assessments under the mode of annual installments extending over a period

Assessments.

not exceeding twenty years, on all property specially benefited by a local improvement, on the basis of special benefits to pay in whole or in part the damage or costs of any improvements ordered in the district; and issue local improvement bonds in the improvement district to be repaid by the collection of local improvement assessments. The method of establishment, levying, collection and enforcement of such assessments and issuance and redemption of local improvement warrants and bonds and the provisions regarding the conclusiveness of the assessment roll and the review by the superior court of any objections thereto shall be as provided for the levying, collection, and enforcement of local improvement assessments and the issuance of local improvement bonds by cities of the first class, including the restraints provided for in RCW 35.43.160 through 35.43.170, insofar as consistent herewith. The duties devolving upon the city treasurer are hereby imposed upon the county treasurer for the purposes hereof. The mode of assessment shall be determined by the board.

Bonds.

Procedure.

County treasurer's duties.

SEC. 22. Local improvement districts may be initiated either (1) by resolution of the board of park and recreation commissioners, or, (2) by petition signed by the owners (according to the county auditor's records) of at least fifty-one percent of the area of land within the limits of the local improvement district to be created.

Initiation of local improvement district.

SEC. 23. If the board of park and recreation commissioners desires to initiate the formation of a local improvement district by resolution, it shall first pass a resolution declaring its intention to order such improvement, setting forth the nature and territorial extent of such proposed improvement, designating the number of the proposed local improvement district and describing the boundaries thereof, stating the estimated cost and expense of the improvement

Procedure when initiation by resolution.

and the proportionate amount thereof which will be borne by the property within the proposed district, and fixing a date, time and place for a public hearing on the formation of the proposed local district.

Procedure when initiation by petition.

SEC. 24. If such local improvement district is initiated by petition, such petition shall set forth the nature and territorial extent of the proposed improvement requested to be ordered and the fact that the signers thereof are the owners (according to the records of the county auditor) of at least fifty-one percent of the area of land within the limits of the local improvement district to be created. Upon the filing of such petition the board of park and recreation commissioners shall determine whether it is sufficient, and the board's determination thereof shall be conclusive upon all persons. No person shall withdraw his name from the petition after it has been filed with the board. If the board shall find the petition to be sufficient, it shall proceed to adopt a resolution declaring its intention to order the improvement petitioned for, setting forth the nature and territorial extent of said improvement, designating the number of the proposed local district and describing the boundaries thereof, stating the estimated cost and expense of the improvement and the proportionate amount thereof which will be borne by the property within the proposed local district, and fixing a date, time and place for a public hearing on the formation of the proposed local district.

Publication of resolution of intention, however improvement initiated.

The resolution of intention, whether adopted on the initiative of the board or pursuant to a petition of the property owners, shall be published in at least two consecutive issues of a newspaper of general circulation in the proposed local district, the date of the first publication to be at least fifteen days prior to the date fixed by such resolution for hearing before the board.

SEC. 25. Notice of the adoption of the resolution of intention shall be given each owner or reputed owner of any lot, tract, parcel of land or other property within the proposed improvement district by mailing said notice at least fifteen days before the date fixed for the public hearing to the owner or reputed owner of the property as shown on the tax rolls of the county treasurer at the address shown thereon. The notice shall refer to the resolution of intention and designate the proposed improvement district by number. Said notice shall also set forth the nature of the proposed improvement, the total estimated cost, the proportion of total cost to be borne by assessments, the estimated amount of the cost and expense of such improvement to be borne by the particular lot, tract or parcel, the date, time and place of the hearing before the board of park and recreation commissioners; and in the case of improvements initiated by resolution, the notice shall also state that all persons desiring to object to the formation of the proposed district must file their written protests with the secretary of the board before the time fixed for said public hearing.

Notice of adoption of resolution of intention—Contents.

SEC. 26. Whether the improvement is initiated by petition or resolution, the board of park and recreation commissioners shall conduct a public hearing at the time and place designated in the notice to property owners. At this hearing the board shall hear objections from any person affected by the formation of the local district and may make such changes in the boundaries of the district or such modifications in the plans for the proposed improvement as shall be deemed necessary: *Provided*, That the board may not change the boundaries of the district to include or exclude property not previously included or excluded without first passing a new resolution of intention and giving a new notice to

Public hearing, however improvement initiated.

Proviso.

property owners in the manner and form and within the time herein provided for the original notice.

Jurisdiction of board after hearing.

SEC. 27. After said hearing the board of park and recreation commissioners shall have jurisdiction to overrule protests and proceed with any such improvement initiated by petition or resolution: *Provided*, That the jurisdiction of the board to proceed with any improvement initiated by resolution shall be divested by a protest filed with the secretary of the board prior to said public hearing for the improvement signed by the owners of the property within the proposed local improvement district which is subject to sixty percent or more of the cost of the improvement as shown and determined by the preliminary estimates and assessment roll of the proposed improvement district.

Proviso.

Board procedure on finding for formation of district.

SEC. 28. If the board of park and recreation commissioners finds that the district should be formed, it shall by resolution order the improvement, adopt detailed plans of the local improvement district and declare the estimated cost thereof, acquire all necessary land therefor, pay all damages caused thereby, and commence in the name of the park and recreation district such eminent domain proceedings as may be necessary to entitle the district to proceed with the work. The board shall thereupon proceed with the work and file with the county treasurer its roll levying special assessments in the amount to be paid by special assessment against the property situated within the improvement district in proportion to the special benefits to be derived by the property therein from the improvement.

Assessment roll.

Notice of filing of assessment roll—Procedure for approval.

SEC. 29. Before approval of the roll a notice shall be published once a week for two consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the local district, stating that the roll is on file and open to inspection in the office of the secretary, and fixing the time, not less than fifteen or more than thirty

days from the date of the first publication of the notice within which protests must be filed with the secretary against any assessments shown thereon, and fixing a time when a hearing will be held by the board of park recreation commissioners on the protests. Notice shall also be given by mailing, at least fifteen days before the hearing, a similar notice to the owners or reputed owners of the land in the local district as they appear on the books of the treasurer of the county in which the park and recreation district is located. At the hearing, or any adjournment thereof, the commissioners may correct, change or modify the roll, or any part thereof, or set aside the roll and order a new assessment, and may then by resolution approve it. If an assessment is raised a new notice similar to the first shall be given, after which final approval of the roll may be made. When property has been entered originally upon the roll and the assessment thereon is not raised, no objection thereto shall be considered by the commissioners or by any court on appeal unless the objection is made in writing at, or prior, to the date fixed for the original hearing upon the roll.

SEC. 30. Whenever any land against which there has been levied any special assessment by any park and recreation district shall have been sold in part or subdivided, the board of park and recreation commissioners of such district shall have the power to order a segregation of the assessment.

Segregation of assessments, board power.

SEC. 31. Any person desiring to have such a special assessment against a tract of land segregated to apply to smaller parts thereof shall apply to the board of park and recreation commissioners of the park and recreation district which levied the assessment. If the board determines that a segregation should be made, it shall by resolution order the county treasurer to make segregation on the original assessment roll as directed in the resolution. The

Procedure for segregation of assessment.

Procedure for segregation of assessment.

segregation shall be made as nearly as possible on the same basis as the original assessment was levied, and the total of the segregated parts of the assessment shall equal the assessment before segregation. The resolution shall describe the original tract, the amount and date of the original assessment, and shall define the boundaries of the divided parts and the amount of the assessment chargeable to each part. A certified copy of the resolution shall be delivered to the county treasurer who shall proceed to make the segregation ordered upon being tendered a fee of three dollars for each tract of land for which a segregation is to be made. In addition to such charge the board may require as a condition to the order of segregation that the person seeking it pay the district the reasonable engineering and clerical costs incident to making the segregation.

Dissolution.

SEC. 32. Any park and recreation district formed under the provisions of this act may be dissolved in the manner provided in chapter 53.48, relating to port districts.

Short title.

SEC. 33. This act may be cited as the "Recreation Districts Act for Class AA counties."

Passed the House March 1, 1957.

Passed the Senate February 27, 1957.

Approved by the Governor March 9, 1957.