

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE  
SECOND SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 727**

Introduced by Hansen, M., 26.

Read first time January 05, 2022

Committee: Urban Affairs

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to sanitary and improvement districts; to
- 2 amend section 31-735, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska; to
- 3 change the procedure for election of the board of trustees of a
- 4 district as prescribed; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the
- 5 original section.
- 6 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Section 31-735, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
2 amended to read:

3 31-735 (1) On the first Tuesday after the second Monday in September  
4 which is at least fifteen months after the judgment of the district court  
5 creating a sanitary and improvement district and on the first Tuesday  
6 after the second Monday in September each two years thereafter, the board  
7 of trustees shall cause a special election to be held, at which election  
8 a board of trustees shall be elected. The board of trustees shall have  
9 five members except as provided in subsection (2) of this section. Each  
10 member elected to the board of trustees shall be elected to a term of two  
11 years and shall hold office until such member's successor is elected and  
12 qualified. Any person desiring to file for the office of trustee may file  
13 for such office with the election commissioner, or county clerk in  
14 counties having no election commissioner, of the county in which the  
15 greater proportion in area of the district is located not later than  
16 fifty days before the election. If such person will serve on the board of  
17 trustees as a designated representative of a limited partnership, general  
18 partnership, limited liability company, public, private, or municipal  
19 corporation, estate, or trust which owns real estate in the district, the  
20 filing shall indicate that fact and shall include appropriate  
21 documentation evidencing such fact. No filing fee shall be required. A  
22 person filing for the office of trustee to be elected at the election  
23 held four years after the first election of trustees and each election  
24 thereafter shall designate whether such person ~~he or she~~ is a candidate  
25 for election by the resident owners of such district or ~~whether he or she~~  
26 ~~is~~ a candidate for election by all of the owners of real estate located  
27 in the district. If a person filing for the office of trustee is a  
28 designated representative of a limited partnership, a general  
29 partnership, a limited liability company, a public, private, or municipal  
30 corporation, an estate, or a trust which owns real estate in the  
31 district, the name of such entity shall accompany the name of the

1 candidate on the ballot in the following form: (Name of candidate) to  
2 represent (name of entity) as a member of the board. The name of each  
3 candidate shall appear on only one ballot.

4 The name of a person may be written in and voted for as a candidate  
5 for the office of trustee, and such write-in candidate may be elected to  
6 the office of trustee. A write-in candidate for the office of trustee who  
7 will serve as a designated representative of a limited partnership, a  
8 general partnership, a limited liability company, a public, private, or  
9 municipal corporation, an estate, or a trust which owns real estate in  
10 the district shall not be elected to the office of trustee unless (a)  
11 each vote is accompanied by the name of the entity which the candidate  
12 will represent and (b) within ten days after the date of the election the  
13 candidate provides the ~~county clerk or~~ election commissioner or county  
14 clerk with appropriate documentation evidencing the candidate's ~~his or~~  
15 ~~her~~ representation of the entity. Votes cast which do not carry such  
16 accompanying designation shall not be counted.

17 A trustee shall be an owner of real estate located in the district  
18 or shall be a person designated to serve as a representative on the board  
19 of trustees if the real estate is owned by a limited partnership, a  
20 general partnership, a limited liability company, a public, private, or  
21 municipal corporation, an estate, or a trust. Notice of the date of the  
22 election shall be mailed by the clerk of the district not later than  
23 sixty-five days prior to the election to each person who is entitled to  
24 vote at the election for trustees whose property ownership or lease  
25 giving a right to vote is of record on the records of the register of  
26 deeds as of a date designated by the election commissioner or county  
27 clerk, which date shall be not more than eighty days prior to the  
28 election.

29 (2)(a) For any sanitary and improvement district, a person whose  
30 ownership or right to vote becomes of record or is received after the  
31 date specified pursuant to subsection (1) of this section may vote when

1 such person establishes ~~the his or her~~ right to vote to the satisfaction  
2 of the election board. At the first election and at the election held two  
3 years after the first election, any person may cast one vote for each  
4 trustee for each acre of unplatted land or fraction thereof and one vote  
5 for each platted lot which such person ~~he or she~~ may own in the district.

6 (b) This subdivision applies to a district until the board of  
7 trustees amends its articles of association pursuant to subdivision (2)  
8 (d) of this section. At the election held four years after the first  
9 election of trustees, two members of the board of trustees shall be  
10 elected by the legal property owners resident within such sanitary and  
11 improvement district and three members shall be elected by all of the  
12 owners of real estate located in the district pursuant to this section.  
13 Every resident property owner may cast one vote for a candidate for each  
14 office of trustee to be filled by election of resident property owners  
15 only. Such resident property owners may also each cast one vote for each  
16 acre of unplatted land or fraction thereof and for each platted lot owned  
17 within the district for a candidate for each office of trustee to be  
18 filled by election of all property owners. For each office of trustee to  
19 be filled by election of all property owners of the district, every legal  
20 property owner not resident within such sanitary and improvement district  
21 may cast one vote for each acre of unplatted land or fraction thereof and  
22 one vote for each platted lot which such legal property owner ~~he or she~~  
23 owns in the district. At the election held six ~~eight~~ years after the  
24 first election of trustees and at each election thereafter, three members  
25 of the board of trustees shall be elected by the legal property owners  
26 resident within such sanitary and improvement district and two members  
27 shall be elected by all of the owners of real estate located in the  
28 district pursuant to this section, ~~and at the election held six years~~  
29 ~~after the first election of trustees and at each election thereafter,~~  
30 ~~three members of the board of trustees shall be elected by the legal~~  
31 ~~property owners resident within such sanitary and improvement district~~

1 ~~and two members shall be elected by all of the owners of real estate~~  
2 ~~located in the district pursuant to this section.~~ If there are not any  
3 legal property owners resident within such district or if not less than  
4 ninety percent of the area of the district is owned for other than  
5 residential uses, the five members shall be elected by the legal property  
6 owners of all property within such district as provided in this section.

7 (c) Any public, private, or municipal corporation owning any land or  
8 lot in the district may vote at an election the same as an individual. If  
9 more than fifty percent of the homes in any sanitary and improvement  
10 district are used as a second, seasonal, or recreational residence, the  
11 owners of such property shall be considered legal property owners  
12 resident within such district for purposes of electing trustees. For  
13 purposes of voting for trustees, each condominium apartment under a  
14 condominium property regime established prior to January 1, 1984, under  
15 the Condominium Property Act or established after January 1, 1984, under  
16 the Nebraska Condominium Act shall be deemed to be a platted lot and the  
17 lessee or the owner of the lessee's interest, under any lease for an  
18 initial term of not less than twenty years which requires the lessee to  
19 pay taxes and special assessments levied on the leased property, shall be  
20 deemed to be the owner of the property so leased and entitled to cast the  
21 vote of such property. When ownership of a platted lot or unplatted land  
22 is held jointly by two or more persons, whether as joint tenants, tenants  
23 in common, limited partners, members of a limited liability company, or  
24 any other form of joint ownership, only one person shall be entitled to  
25 cast the vote of such property. The executor, administrator, guardian, or  
26 trustee of any person or estate interested shall have the right to vote.  
27 No corporation, estate, or irrevocable trust shall be deemed to be a  
28 resident owner for purposes of voting for trustees. Should two or more  
29 persons or officials claim the right to vote on the same tract, the  
30 election board shall determine the party entitled to vote. Such board  
31 shall select one of their number chairperson and one of their number

1 clerk. In case of a vacancy on such board, the remaining trustees shall  
2 fill the vacancy on such board until the next election.

3 (d) For any sanitary and improvement district which has been in  
4 existence for at least ten years, which has less than seventy property  
5 owners entitled to vote for trustees, which has at least two resident  
6 property owners, and in which less than ten percent of the area of the  
7 district is owned for other than residential uses, the board of trustees  
8 may amend its articles of association as provided in section 31-740.01 to  
9 provide for a reduction in the number of trustees on the board from five  
10 members to three members to be effective at the beginning of the term of  
11 office for the board of trustees elected at the next election. At the  
12 next election and at each election thereafter, two members of the board  
13 of trustees shall be elected by the legal property owners resident within  
14 such sanitary and improvement district and one member shall be elected by  
15 all of the owners of real estate located in the district pursuant to this  
16 section. Every resident property owner may cast one vote for a candidate  
17 for each office of trustee to be filled by election of resident property  
18 owners only. Such resident property owners may also each cast one vote  
19 for each acre of unplatted land or fraction thereof and for each platted  
20 lot owned within the district for a candidate for the office of trustee  
21 to be filled by election of all property owners. For the office of  
22 trustee to be filled by election of all property owners of the district,  
23 every legal property owner not resident within such sanitary and  
24 improvement district may cast one vote for each acre of unplatted land or  
25 fraction thereof and one vote for each platted lot which such legal  
26 property owner ~~he or she~~ owns in the district.

27 (3) The election commissioner or county clerk shall hold any  
28 election required by subsection (1) of this section by sealed mail ballot  
29 by notifying the board of trustees on or before July 1 of a given year.  
30 The election commissioner or county clerk shall, at least twenty days  
31 prior to the election, mail a ballot and return envelope to each person

1 who is entitled to vote at the election and whose property ownership or  
2 lease giving a right to vote is of record with the register of deeds as  
3 of the date designated by the election commissioner or county clerk,  
4 which date shall not be more than eighty days prior to the election. The  
5 ballot and return envelope shall include: (a) The names and addresses of  
6 the candidates; (b) room for write-in candidates; and (c) instructions on  
7 how to vote and return the ballot. Such ballots shall be returned in the  
8 return envelope to the election commissioner or county clerk no later  
9 than 5 p.m. on the date set for the election. If the ballot is not  
10 returned in the return envelope, such ballot shall not be counted. If  
11 more than one ballot is included in the same return envelope, such  
12 ballots shall not be counted and shall be reinserted into the return  
13 envelope which shall be resealed and marked rejected.

14       Sec. 2.   Original section 31-735, Reissue Revised Statutes of  
15 Nebraska, is repealed.