

**24-137. Consolidation of districts; procedure; petition; election.** (a) The governing body of any drainage district all or any portion of which is located within the boundaries of another drainage district and the governing body of the encompassing drainage district or the governing bodies of two or more adjacent drainage districts may adopt and submit to the board or boards of county commissioners in which the districts are located a resolution requesting the consolidation of the districts. Upon receipt of the resolution and subject to the provisions of K.S.A. 19-270, the board or boards of county commissioners shall meet jointly with the governing bodies of the drainage districts to determine the feasibility of the consolidation of the districts, the terms of consolidation, the handling of outstanding bonded indebtedness, the name of the consolidated drainage district and the effective date of the proposed consolidation. Following the joint meeting, the board or boards of county commissioners may adopt a resolution, or joint resolution, if the districts' boundaries cross county lines, approving the consolidation of the drainage districts. The resolution shall state the terms of the consolidation, the name of the consolidated district, the effective date of the consolidation and all other matters related to the consolidation. A certified copy of the resolution shall be sent to the governing body of each drainage district and the resolution shall be published at least once a week for two consecutive weeks in the official county newspaper of the county or counties in which the districts are located. Unless within 10 days after the last publication of the resolution a petition signed by not less than 30% of the qualified voters of any one of the drainage districts is filed with the county election officer of the county in which the district is located protesting the consolidation, the districts shall be consolidated as provided in the resolution. If a protest petition is filed, the county election officer shall call and hold an election in the manner provided by the general bond law to submit the question of consolidation for approval by the qualified voters of the districts. If the districts' boundaries cross county lines, the county election officer of each county shall cooperate in the calling of the election. If a majority of votes cast at the election favor consolidation, the drainage districts shall be consolidated as provided in the resolution. Within 20 days of the effective date of the consolidation, the secretary of the consolidated district shall send a certified copy of the resolution consolidating such districts to the secretary of state.

The terms of consolidation of any drainage districts shall require the payment of all outstanding bonded indebtedness and other indebtedness of each of the districts. No order of consolidation shall in any way reduce or impair the security of any creditor of either of the districts.

All bonds issued or other indebtedness outstanding prior to the effective date of the consolidation shall remain the liability of and lien against properties to which the liability attached prior to the consolidation of the districts.

If the proposed consolidation is not approved at such election, the question to consolidate such drainage district may not be submitted again until the expiration of at least one year from such election.

(b) Any drainage district organized pursuant to K.S.A. 24-601 to 24-640, inclusive, and amendments thereto, which has constructed a system of drainage works and improvements and has continued the operation, maintenance or improvement thereof beyond the expiration of the number of years for which such drainage district was to continue to exist as a public corporation, as stated in the articles of association for such drainage district, shall continue in existence and shall have the power to consolidate with another drainage district as provided by subsection (a). The levy and collection of any tax or special assessment or the expenditure of any money for the operation, maintenance or improvement of any such drainage district's system of drainage works and improvements during the calendar year immediately preceding the calendar year in which any such drainage district adopts any resolution pursuant to subsection (a) shall constitute conclusive evidence sufficient to qualify any such drainage district to utilize the provisions of subsection (a).

**History:** L. 1983, ch. 118, § 24; L. 1986, ch. 70, § 24; May 15.