

CHAPTER 349

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS

Referred to in §24.2A, 331.209, 331.303, 331.434

Publication and posting of notices, see also chapter 618

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349.1 Time of selection.

The board of supervisors shall, at the January session each year, select the newspapers in which the official proceedings shall be published for the ensuing year.

[R60, §314; C73, §307; C97, §441; SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5397; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.1]

Referred to in §347.13, 455B.305A, 455H.207

349.2 Source of selection.

Such selection shall be from newspapers published, and having the largest number of bona fide yearly subscribers, within the county. When counties are divided into two divisions for district court purposes, each division shall be regarded as a county.

[C73, §307; C97, §441; SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5398; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.2]

349.3 Number.

The number of such newspapers to be selected shall be as follows:

1. In counties having a population of less than fifteen thousand, two such newspapers, or one, if there be but one published therein.

2. In counties having a population of more than fifty thousand, divided into two divisions for court purposes, three such newspapers in each such division, not more than two of which shall be published in the same city.

3. In counties having a population of less than fifty thousand, divided into two divisions for court purposes, two such newspapers in each such division.

4. In all other counties, three such newspapers, not more than two of which shall be published in the same city.

[C73, §307; C97, §441; SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5399; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.3]

349.4 Application — contest.

Any publisher who desires that the publisher’s newspaper be so selected may make written application therefor to the board of supervisors at any time prior to the making of the selection. If more applications are filed than there are newspapers to be selected, a contest shall exist.

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5400; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.4]

349.5 Contest — verified statements.

In case of a contest, each applicant shall deposit with the county auditor, in a sealed envelope, a statement, verified by the applicant, showing the names of the applicant’s bona

vide yearly subscribers living within the county and the place at which each such subscriber receives such newspaper, and the manner of its delivery.

[C97, §441; SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5401; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.5]

Referred to in [§349.6](#)

349.6 Determination of contest — evidence.

1. The county auditor shall, on the direction of the board while it is in session, open the envelopes which have been deposited as provided under [section 349.5](#). The board may receive other evidence of circulation. In counties in which two newspapers are to be selected, the two newspapers showing the largest number of bona fide yearly subscribers living within the county shall be selected as such official newspapers. In counties in which three newspapers are to be selected, the three showing the largest number of such subscribers shall be selected except when such three newspapers are all published in the same city, in which case the two newspapers in such city having the largest lists of such subscribers and the newspaper having the next largest list of such subscribers and published outside such city, shall be selected as such official newspapers.

2. For purposes of [this section](#), in counties where there are more newspapers than the number required for official county newspapers, newspapers under common ownership published in the same city, and having approximately the same subscriber list or offered for sale in or delivered to the same geographic area, shall be treated as one newspaper. Each such newspaper under common ownership should be considered eligible for publishing public notices, but such newspapers shall be treated as one newspaper for payment purposes to allow for flexibility in notice publication schedules.

[C97, §441; SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5402; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.6]

[86 Acts, ch 1013, §1](#); [2019 Acts, ch 24, §104](#); [2020 Acts, ch 1063, §185](#)

349.7 Subscribers — how determined.

The board of supervisors shall determine the bona fide yearly subscribers of a newspaper within the county, as follows:

1. Those subscribers listed by the publisher whose papers are delivered, by or for the publisher, by mail or otherwise, upon an order or subscription for same by the subscriber, and in accordance with the postal laws and regulations, and who have been subscribers at least six consecutive months prior to date of application.

2. Those subscribers who have been subscribers at least six consecutive months before the date of application, whose papers are regularly delivered by carrier upon an order or subscription, or whose papers are purchased from the publisher for resale and delivery by independent carriers who have filed with the publisher a list of their subscribers.

[C39, §5402.1; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.7]

[86 Acts, ch 1183, §1](#)

349.8 Tie lists.

When newspapers are, by equality of circulation, equally entitled to selection as an official newspaper, the board shall, in the presence of the contestants, determine the question by lot.

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5403; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.8]

[2020 Acts, ch 1063, §186](#)

349.9 Fraudulent lists.

No newspaper shall be selected as an official newspaper when it is made to appear that the verified list deposited by the applicant contains the names of persons who are not bona fide subscribers within the county and that such names were knowingly and willfully entered on such list by the applicant, or at the applicant's instance, with intent to deceive the board.

[SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5404; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.9]

Referred to in [§349.10](#)

349.10 New date fixed if all rejected.

If all certified statements are rejected under the provisions of [section 349.9](#), the board shall fix a new date for the selection of official newspapers and nothing in [this chapter](#) shall be construed to prevent the applicants so rejected from filing new certified statements.

[SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5405; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.10]
[2021 Acts, ch 80, §221](#)

349.11 Appeal.

Any applicant may, within twenty days after the selection of official newspapers, appeal to the district court from the decision of the board of supervisors as to the selection of any or all newspapers so selected by filing in the office of the county auditor a bond for costs, in a sum and with sureties to be approved by said auditor, and by serving upon each applicant, whose selection the appellant desires to contest, and the county auditor, a notice of appeal.

[SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5406; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.11]
Referred to in [§349.13](#)
Presumption of approval of bond, [§636.10](#)

349.12 Transcript.

The auditor shall forthwith file with the clerk of the district court a transcript of all the proceedings before the board, together with all papers filed in connection with said matter.

[SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5407; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.12]
Referred to in [§349.13](#)

349.13 Trial of appeal.

An appeal under [section 349.11](#) shall be triable de novo as an equitable action without formal pleadings at any time after the expiration of twenty days following the filing of the transcript as provided in [section 349.12](#).

[SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5408; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.13]
[2022 Acts, ch 1021, §86](#)
Trial on appeal, [§624.4](#)

349.14 Publication pending contest — interest payable.

After the selection by the board of supervisors of official newspapers, no publisher shall receive pay for publishing official proceedings until the contest is finally determined, insofar as the publisher is concerned. After determination of the contest, payment for publications made during the contest shall include interest at the rate of one-half percent per month calculated from date of publication to the date of payment, less thirty days.

[C97, §441; SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5409; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.14]
[86 Acts, ch 1183, §2](#)

349.15 Division of compensation.

If in any county the publishers of two or more newspapers, at least one of which by reason of its location and circulation is entitled to be selected as a county official newspaper, have entered into an agreement to publish the official proceedings or have united in a request to have their publication selected for such purposes, and such agreement or request has been filed with the board of supervisors prior to the naming of the official newspapers, the board of supervisors shall designate each of them a county official newspaper, but the combined compensation of the newspapers so requesting or agreeing, added to that of the other official newspaper or newspapers, if any, shall not exceed the combined compensation allowed by law to two official newspapers in counties having a population below fifteen thousand or to three official newspapers in counties having a population of fifteen thousand or more.

[SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5410; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.15]

349.16 What published.

There shall be published in each of the official newspapers at the expense of the county during the ensuing year:

1. The proceedings of the board of supervisors, as furnished by the county auditor, excluding from the publication of those proceedings the canvass of the various elections, as provided by law; the complete text of any questions or propositions submitted to the registered voters of the county by the board of supervisors, which shall be published with the required notice of a general or special election; and witness fees of witnesses before the grand jury and in the district court in criminal cases.

2. The schedule of bills allowed by the board of supervisors.

3. The reports of the county treasurer, including a schedule of the receipts and expenditures of the county and the current cash balance in each fund in the treasurer's office together with the total of warrants outstanding against each of the funds as shown by the warrant register in the auditor's office. A listing of warrants outstanding is not required if the county issues checks in lieu of warrants and there are no remaining outstanding warrants issued by the county.

4. A synopsis of the expenditures of township trustees for road purposes as provided by law.

[R60, §313; C73, §304; C97, §441; SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5411; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.16]

[2006 Acts, ch 1070, §19, 31](#); [2018 Acts, ch 1133, §1](#); [2019 Acts, ch 59, §106](#)

Referred to in [§349.17](#), [357.1B](#), [358.3](#), [358.32](#)

349.17 Official publication fee.

The cost of official publications provided for in [section 349.16](#) shall not exceed the fee provided in [section 618.11](#) for the publication of legal notices. An official publication shall not be printed in type smaller than six point.

[C73, §307; C97, §441; SS15, §441; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5412; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.17]

[86 Acts, ch 1183, §3](#); [89 Acts, ch 214, §2](#)

349.18 Supervisors' proceedings — each payee listed — publication.

1. All proceedings of each regular, adjourned, or special meeting of a board of supervisors, including the schedule of bills allowed, shall be published immediately after the adjournment of the meeting.

2. The publication of the schedule of the bills allowed shall include a list of all claims allowed, including salary claims for services performed, showing the name of the person or firm making the claim, the reason for the claim, and the amount of the claim, except that the publication of claims shall comply with the following:

a. The names of persons receiving relief shall not be published.

b. The salaries paid to persons regularly employed by the county shall only be published annually showing the total amount of the annual salary.

c. If the reason for the claims is the same, two or more claims made by the same vendor, supplier, or claimant may be consolidated if the number of claims consolidated and the total consolidated claim amount are listed in the statement. However, the board shall provide at its office upon request an unconsolidated list of all claims allowed.

3. a. The county auditor shall furnish a copy of the proceedings to be published, within one week following the adjournment of the board. The county auditor shall include either a summary of all resolutions or the complete text of resolutions adopted by the board in the furnished copy of the proceedings. As used in [this subsection](#), "summary" means a narrative description of the resolution setting forth the main points of the resolution in a manner calculated to inform the public in a clear and understandable manner the meaning of the resolution and to provide the public with sufficient notice of the policy stated or action to be taken, as resolved by the board in the resolution. The narrative description shall include the title of the resolution, an accurate and intelligible synopsis of the essential elements of the resolution, a statement that the description is a summary, the location and the normal business hours of the office where the full text of the resolution may be inspected, and the effective date of the resolution. Legal descriptions of property set forth in a resolution shall be described in full. The narrative description shall be written in a clear and coherent

manner and shall, to the extent possible, avoid the use of technical or legal terms not generally familiar to the public. When necessary to use technical or legal terms not generally familiar to the public, the narrative description shall include definitions of those terms.

b. In addition to the requirements in paragraph “*a*”, if a county operates an internet site, the county auditor shall post the full text of all resolutions adopted by the board on the internet site. Any posted summary or text of a full resolution shall include links directing readers to information relevant to the content of the resolution.

[C27, 31, 35, §5412-a1; C39, §~~5412.1~~; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §349.18]
83 Acts, ch 123, §158, 209; 84 Acts, ch 1069, §1; 2006 Acts, ch 1018, §4; 2018 Acts, ch 1133, §2

Referred to in §331.504