

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission met Monday, February 6, 2012, at the Agriculture Building Board Room located at 2800 N. Lincoln in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chairman George Stunkard. He stated this was a regularly scheduled meeting in accordance with the Open Meeting Law, Title 25, Sections 301 and following as amended. The agenda for this meeting was posted February 2, 2012, at the front entrance of the building.

ROLL CALL

Kim Tweed, Executive Secretary, took roll call and the following members were in attendance:

George Stunkard, Chair
Dan Lowrance, Vice Chair
Jim Grego, Secretary
Karl Jett, Member
Mike Rooker, Member

Others in attendance were:

Mike Thralls, Executive Director
Ben Pollard, Assistant Director
Steve Coffman, Financial Management and Human Resources Director
Robert Toole, Conservation Programs Director
Shanon Phillips, Water Quality Program Director
Mike Kastl, Abandoned Mine Land Program Director
Mike Sharp, Information Technology Director
Lisa Knauf Owen, District Services Director
Mark Harrison, Information Representative
Janet Stewart, General Counsel
Kelly Mockabee, Financial Management and Human Resources Administrative Programs Officer
Shellie Willoughby, GIS Specialist
Dianne Ireton, AML Administrative Officer
Charlotte Stieber, former AML employee
Ron Hilliard, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist
Clay Pope, Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts Executive Director
Blayne Arthur, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Associate Commissioner
Keili McEwen, Office of the Governor
Justin Martino, eCapitol
Kim Tweed, Executive Secretary

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Grego led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made by Mr. Grego and seconded by Mr. Rooker to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2012, Commission meeting as written. Those voting aye were: Jett, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

DISTRICT DIRECTOR APPOINTMENTS

There were no recommendations of appointment received this month.

RECOGNITION OF COMMISSION EMPLOYEES

Charlotte Stieber, AML Program Administrative Officer, was recognized for 30 years of service upon her retirement. Ms. Stieber was presented a certificate from Keili McEwen with Governor Fallin's office and from the Commission.

Shellie Willoughby, GIS Specialist, was recognized for 15 years of service and Kelly Mockabee, Financial Management and Human Resources Administrative Programs Officer, was recognized for 30 years of service.

CLAIMS/FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Steve Coffman, Financial Management and Human Resources Director, presented the claims and financial statement as listed in Exhibit #2. A motion was made by Mr. Lowrance and seconded by Mr. Grego to approve the claims and financial statement. Those voting aye were: Jett, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

PRESENTATION OF AGREEMENTS

Ben Pollard, Assistant Director, presented agreements for approval as listed in Exhibit #3. He recommended approval of the amended agreement listed as (a). A motion was made by Mr. Lowrance and seconded by Mr. Rooker to approve the amended agreement as listed. Those voting aye were: Jett, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

Mr. Pollard recommended approval of the new agreements listed as (b) and (c). A motion was made by Mr. Rooker and seconded by Mr. Jett to approve the new agreements as listed. Those voting aye were: Jett, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUESTS

Mr. Thralls presented travel requests for approval as listed in Exhibit #4. He recommended ratification of the request listed as (a) as it was previously approved by Chairman Stunkard. A motion was made by Mr. Lowrance and seconded by Mr. Rooker to ratify approval of the request as listed. Those voting aye were: Jett, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

Mr. Thralls then recommended approval of the requests listed as (b) through (e). A motion was made by Mr. Grego and seconded by Mr. Lowrance to approve the requests as listed. Those voting aye were: Jett, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

EVENT SPONSORSHIPS

Mr. Thralls presented the following sponsorships and recommended approval:

- a. Oklahoma Soil and Water Conservation Society's "Communicating with New Producers: How to Reach Them, How to Teach Them" Workshop, March 20, 2012, OSU-OKC Campus, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
- b. Ouachita Mountains RC&D Inc. 4-State Forestry on the Grow Conference, March 7-10, 2012, Idabel, Oklahoma.

A motion was made by Mr. Jett and seconded by Mr. Rooker to sponsor the events as listed. Those voting aye were: Jett, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

RATIFICATION OF AML EMERGENCY

A motion was made by Mr. Lowrance and seconded by Mr. Rooker to ratify the Declaration of Abandoned Coal Mine Emergency, Emergency Name: David Turner; Emergency Number: OK 2012-01-01 (Exhibit #5). Those voting aye were: Jett, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

COST-SHARE PROGRAM YEAR 13 SPECIAL REQUEST

Robert Toole, Conservation Programs Director, stated that the Grady County Conservation District is requesting to add Well-Drilled, Cased, Shallow <100 foot - \$36.00 as a component to Water Well (642) to the Cost-share program Year 13. He is recommending approval of this practice statewide. A motion was made by Mr. Grego and seconded by Mr. Jett to approve the practice statewide. Those voting aye were: Jett, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

SUMMARIZATION AND UPDATE OF BEACHNER CONSTRUCTION CLAIM

Janet Stewart, General Counsel, summarized and updated the members on the Beachner Construction Claim for work on a Tar Creek site. She stated that the contract was awarded for \$2,276,837 in 2005. Construction began in March 2006 and ended in October 2007. However, the site required some rework by the company and in October 2009 Beachner filed an additional claim for \$1,027,067. The claim was reviewed by the Department of Central Services and after several meetings the claim was denied. Beachner has filed an appeal and an administrative hearing is set for March 15 with depositions in January and motions being filed in February.

Mr. Pollard reported that this project was funded by the Natural Resources Conservation Service funds through the Conservation Commission. Staff will keep members apprised of the situation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OKLAHOMA CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mr. Rooker and Mr. Stunkard attended the National Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada and stated it was a good meeting.

Mr. Jett reported on attending a joint meeting with the Woods County and East Woods County Conservation Districts to discuss shared employee positions.

OKLAHOMA CONSERVATION COMMISSION STAFF

Administration - Executive Director: Mr. Thralls reported that the Governor's State of the State address is today. Several bills have been filed including one to consolidate the Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission with the Conservation Commission; however, not all members of the Scenic Rivers Commission concur with this consolidation. Mr. Thralls stated that should the Scenic Rivers Commission remain an independent agency there is a recommendation to move it from the Tourism cabinet to the Environmental cabinet.

Mr. Thralls recognized Austin Slaymaker, budget analyst with the Office of State Finance. A tour was held recently for the house and senate budget analysts as well as Mr. Slaymaker to look at conservation practices, watershed work, and the North Canadian River project.

Mr. Thralls attended the recent NACD annual meeting and stated that NRCS Chief White addressed the group, indicating it will probably be his last NACD meeting as Chief.

District Services Division: Lisa Knauf Owen, Director, reported on assisting the districts with payroll and W-2 issues during the past month. She stated that the Oklahoma Association of Conservation District Employees will be sponsoring the Sunday night event during the upcoming OACD state meeting. They are also hosting an employee training in March with over 70 employees already registered.

Ms. Owen stated that the Commission has received the four delinquent compilations and audits from the Pittsburg County Conservation District.

Water Quality Program: Shanon Phillips, Director, stated that the National Nonpoint Source Conference will be held in Tulsa in October. Staff will be showcasing Oklahoma's conservation partnership.

Ms. Phillips stated that with the approval of the agreement today, the program has received \$950,000 of the FY12 funding out of the \$2.3 million expected. Special funds from other states will be reallocated to entirely fund the North Canadian River project. Ms. Phillips stated that an additional \$127,000 of special funds should be received for FY12.

Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Program: Mike Kastl, Director, reported on the active sites in the 2010 grant as listed in the written report. He also reported on the 2011 grant.

Mr. Kastl stated that Mike Sharp would be attending the winter meeting of the AML association.

Financial Management and Human Resources Division: Mr. Coffman stated that the Commission's Affirmative Action plan was approved. He also reported that all 1099's have been mailed out.

Information Technology Division: Mike Sharp, Director, urged members to read an article in the Ron Hayes' newsletter.

Conservation Programs Division: Robert Toole, Director, stated that a written report was in the meeting packet and he yielded for questions.

Administration - Assistant Director: Mr. Pollard reported on attending the funeral of Jack Penner, former Area 2 member and current member of the Murray County Conservation District.

OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Clay Pope, Executive Director, stated that several legislative bills have been filed dealing with water.

OACD staff attended the NACD meeting to participate in the farm bill discussions. Sarah Pope represented the Association at a meeting in Washington, D.C. to discuss the lesser prairie chicken and the endangered species act. Mr. and Mrs. Pope will be making a presentation at the regional no-till conference in Spokane, Washington regarding Oklahoma's carbon program.

Mr. Pope stated that several applications have been received for participation in the Leadership Program and that Sarah Blaney is contacting foundations for funding for this program. The Kirkpatrick Foundation has agreed to a \$5000 sponsorship for the National Land and Range Judging Contest.

Mr. Pope discussed Oklahoma's carbon program stating that a national publication has named it the best carbon sequestration program on the globe.

Mr. Pope reported on water quality and the certainty approach to nonpoint source utilizing an agreement between the EPA, USDA and that state protecting agriculture producers who implement comprehensive conservation plans.

USDA-NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Ron Hilliard, State Conservationist, complimented Mr. Pope on his Farm Broadcast at the NACD annual meeting. Mr. Hilliard reported that Larry Caldwell has been named Fellow by the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers, which is its highest honor.

Mr. Hilliard attended a forum at the Enid Farm Show. He stated that Kevin Norton returned to Washington, D.C. to continue work on the farm bill. Mr. Hilliard stated that the NACD South Central Meeting will be held in Hot Springs, Arkansas August 5-8 and NACD will meet in San Antonio in 2013.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FORESTRY

Blayne Arthur, Associate Commissioner, discussed the Humane Society video on swine gestation, tail-docking and castration. She reported that Secretary Jim Reese participated in the lesser prairie chicken meeting in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Arthur stated that the communications department is working on a monthly program titled "Oklahoma Farmers Feeding Your Family" that will highlight a producer each month.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission will be held on Monday, March 5, 2012, in the Agriculture Building Board Room, 2800 N. Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma beginning at 9:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business a motion was made by Mr. Grego and seconded by Mr. Rooker to adjourn. Those voting aye were: Jett, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

Approved by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission on March 5, 2012.


CHAIR