

## MINUTES

### CALL TO ORDER

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission met Tuesday, March 1, 2011, at the Reed Center located at 4750 Will Rogers Road in Midwest City, Oklahoma. The meeting was called to order at 7:35 a.m. by Chairman Mike Rooker. 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 25, 2011, at the front entrance of the Agriculture Building at 2800 N. Lincoln, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

### ROLL CALL

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

Mike Rooker, Chair  
George Stunkard, Vice Chair  
Dan Lowrance, Secretary  
Jim Grego, Member  
Matt Gard, Member

Others in attendance were:

Mike Thralls, Executive Director  
Steve Coffman, Financial Management and Human Resources Director  
Robert Toole, Conservation Programs Director  
Shanon Phillips, Water Quality Program Director  
Greg Kloxin, Water Quality Program Assistant Director  
Mike Kastl, Abandoned Mine Land Program Director  
Lisa Knauf Owen, District Services Director  
Mark Harrison, Information Representative  
Sheryl Gibson, Grants Accountant  
Kelly Mockabee, Administrative Officer  
Ron Hilliard, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist  
Gary O'Neill, Natural Resources Conservation Service Assistant State Conservationist  
Tom Christensen, Natural Resources Conservation Service Regional Conservationist-Central  
Blayne Arthur, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Associate  
Commissioner  
Joe Parker, Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts President Elect  
Kelli Parker, Citizen  
Trey Lam, Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts President  
Scotty Herriman, Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts Past President  
Kim Tweed, Executive Secretary

### MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made by Mr. Gard and seconded by Mr. Grego to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2011, Commission meeting as written. Those voting aye were: Gard, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

## **CLAIMS/FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Steve Coffman, Financial Management and Human Resources Director, presented the claims and financial statement as listed in Exhibit #1. A motion was made by Mr. Grego and seconded by Mr. Lowrance to approve the claims and financial statement. Those voting aye were: Gard, 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 #2. He recommended ratification of request (a) as it was previously approved by Chairman Rooker. A motion was made by Mr. Stunkard and seconded by Mr. Lowrance to ratify approval of the request listed as (a). Those voting aye were: Gard, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

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

## **CO-SPONSOR LAND AND RANGE JUDGING CONTEST**

Mr. Thralls stated that the National Land and Range Judging Contest will be held on May 3-5, 2011 in Oklahoma City and recommended that the Commission co-sponsor this event. A motion was made by Mr. Stunkard and seconded by Mr. Grego to co-sponsor the event. Those voting aye were: Gard, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

## **GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATION FOR FY2012**

Mr. Thralls outlined the Governor's FY2012 budget recommendation for the Commission as listed in Exhibit #3. He noted that the Commission is recommended to receive a 5% cut which would amount to nearly \$500,000. However, this cut includes the bond payment and staff is meeting with legislators to see if this payment could be held harmless from the cut. If so, the reduction would be approximately \$350,000. Mr. Thralls stated it would be difficult to take a cut of this amount without affecting people. He noted that the cut could be achieved by eliminating other operating expenses and district director meeting expenses or reductions of district and Commission employees.

Mr. Thralls stated that the Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission is recommended to be consolidated with the Commission and at the same time take a 51% cut. It would be very difficult to operate with a cut of this size. Mr. Thralls also stated that the salary of Ed Fite, OSRC executive director, of about \$45,000 is considerably lower than the Commission's division director salaries which are around \$65,000.

## **NAAML P DRAFT RESOLUTION**

Mike Kastl, Abandoned Mine Land Program Director, stated that the President's budget proposes that AML programs revert back to the 1980s system where states would compete against one another for funds annually. He presented a resolution passed by the National Association of AML Programs opposing the proposal and is requesting the support of the Commission.

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

**REMARKS BY TOM CHRISTENSEN, NRCS REGIONAL CONSERVATIONIST**

Ron Hilliard, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist, introduced Tom Christensen, NRCS Regional Conservationist, and his supervisor.

Mr. Christensen expressed his appreciation to the Commission for the partnership, stating their agency could not exist without state and local leaders. He then outlined NRCS program accomplishments for calendar year 2010.

Mr. Christensen outlined the proposed budget for 2012 stating that there is a recommendation for an increase in farm bill programs funding; however, the watershed program is recommended to receive no money. He stated that the agency will be under a continuing resolutions for 2011 until March 4 and should a government shut-down occur the agency is wanting the ability to use funding on hand to remain open.

Mr. Thralls stated that the Commission relies on technical assistance from the NRCS and particularly funding for the watershed program and any reductions would affect the Commission and districts in providing flooding protection in Oklahoma.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission will be held on Monday, April 4, 2011, 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. Gard and seconded by Mr. Lowrance to adjourn. Those voting aye were: Gard, Rooker, Stunkard, Lowrance and Grego. Nay votes: none. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:08 a.m.

---

Approved by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission on April 4, 2011.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CHAIR