

## MINUTES

### CALL TO ORDER

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission met Wednesday, September 5, 2007, at the Northwest Technology Center, Alva Campus Conference Room, 1801 11th Street in Alva, Oklahoma. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Dan Lowrance. 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 at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, September 4, 2007, at the front entrance of the Agriculture Building, 2800 N. Lincoln, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

### ROLL CALL

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

Dan Lowrance, Chair  
Virginia Kidd, Vice Chair  
Matt Gard, Secretary  
Mike Rooker, Member  
George Stunkard, Member

Others in attendance were:

Mike Thralls, Executive Director  
Ben Pollard, Assistant Director  
Jana Chicoine, Financial Management and Human Resources Administrative Officer  
Robert Toole, Conservation Programs Director  
Dan Butler, Water Quality Program Director  
Shanon Phillips, Water Quality Program Assistant Director  
Greg Kloxin, Water Quality Program Senior Technical Writer  
Mike Sharp, Information Technology Director  
Mark Harrison, Information Representative  
Joann Stevenson, Assistant Attorney General  
Ron Hilliard, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist  
Lanny Miller, Natural Resources Conservation Service Acting Assistant State Conservationist for Programs  
Jamey Woods, Natural Resources Conservation Service Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations  
Shelly Oliphant, Natural Resources Conservation Service District Conservationist, Alva Field Office  
Brian Ringels, Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Conservationist, Alva Field Office  
Clay Pope, Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts Executive Director  
Clint Olson, East Woods County Conservation District Director  
Tom McDowell, East Woods County Conservation District Director  
Jay Leeper, East Woods County Conservation District Director

David Lyon, East Woods County Conservation District Director  
Reva Maddox, East Woods County Conservation District Programs Coordinator  
Mickey Maddox, Guest  
Mike Goucher, Woods County Commissioner  
Dale Ross, Waynoka Schools Superintendent  
Steve Lohmann, Northwestern Oklahoma State University  
Tracie Leeper, Alva Schools  
Jim Barker, Alva Review-Courier  
Kim Tweed, Executive Secretary

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Mr. Lowrance introduced Clint Olson, East Woods County Conservation District Chairman. Mr. Olson introduced guests as listed above.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

A motion was made by Mr. Gard and seconded by Ms. Kidd to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2007, Commission meeting as written. Those voting aye were: Lowrance, Kidd, Gard, Rooker and Stunkard. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

**RESIGNATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTOR**

Mike Thralls, Executive Director, stated that Mr. J.D. Briggs, Adair County, has submitted his letter of resignation.

**DISTRICT DIRECTOR APPOINTMENTS**

Mr. Thralls presented recommendations for appointment of conservation district directors as listed in Exhibit #1. A motion was made by Mr. Stunkard and seconded by Mr. Rooker to approve district director appointments listed as First Recommendation in Exhibit #1 with terms to expire as indicated. Those voting aye were: Lowrance, Kidd, Gard, Rooker and Stunkard. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

**CLAIMS/FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Jana Chicoine, Financial Management and Human Resources Administrative Officer, presented the claims and financial statement as listed in Exhibit #2. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Stunkard and seconded by Mr. Gard to approve the claims and financial statement. Those voting aye were: Lowrance, Kidd, Gard, Rooker and Stunkard. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

**PRESENTATION OF COMMISSION AGREEMENTS**

Ben Pollard, Assistant Director, presented agreements for approval as listed in Exhibit #3. He recommended ratification of agreements listed as (a) through (d). A motion was made by Ms. Kidd and seconded by Mr. Stunkard to ratify said agreements. Those voting aye were: Lowrance, Kidd, Gard, Rooker and Stunkard. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

Mr. Pollard recommended approval of the amended agreement listed as (e). A motion was made by Mr. Stunkard and seconded by Ms. Kidd to approve said agreement. Those voting aye were: Lowrance, Kidd, Gard, Rooker and Stunkard. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

Mr. Pollard recommended approval of new agreements listed as (f) through (h). A motion was made by Mr. Gard and seconded by Mr. Rooker to approve said agreements. Those voting aye were: Lowrance, Kidd, Gard, Rooker and Stunkard. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

#### **PRESENTATION OF OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUESTS**

Mr. Thralls presented out of state travel requests for approval as listed in Exhibit #4. He recommended ratification of the request listed as (a). A motion was made by Mr. Stunkard and seconded by Ms. Kidd to approve said request. Those voting aye were: Lowrance, Kidd, Gard, Rooker and Stunkard. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

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

#### **STATUS REPORT OF AGREEMENT WITH THE NRCS NO. 68-7335-4-63**

Mark Harrison, Information Officer, presented a status report of the agreement with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to increase public awareness of services and assistance available from the NRCS, Conservation Commission and conservation districts as listed in Exhibit #5. He provided additional information as listed in Attachment A. He fielded several questions from Mr. Lowrance.

#### **FY2008 JOINT PLANS OF OPERATION**

Mr. Pollard recommended approval of FY2008 Joints Plans of Operation as submitted by the following conservation districts: Checotah, Garfield County, Jackson County, Kiamichi, McIntosh County, Ottawa County, Pittsburg County, Tulsa County. A motion was made by Ms. Kidd and seconded by Mr. Stunkard to approve said plans. Those voting aye were: Lowrance, Kidd, Gard, Rooker and Stunkard. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

#### **REVISIONS TO THE LITTER EXPORT PROGRAM**

Dan Butler, Water Quality Program Director, requested approval of revisions to the litter export program approved during the August 2007 meeting as listed in Attachment B. Discussion was had on nutrient management plans and whether or not those are required to be eligible for the program. Ron Hilliard, NRCS State Conservationist, stated that field offices are being bombarded with questions regarding nutrient management plans. Mr. Butler reported that the Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry advised staff that if producers had submitted a plan but it has not been approved due to a backlog at the Department, that the producer would still be eligible. Mr. Lowrance directed Mr. Butler, Mr. Hilliard and Assistant Attorney Joann Stevenson to discuss the matter.

After discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Kidd and seconded by Mr. Rooker to approve the revisions as presented and as listed in Attachment B. Those voting aye were: Lowrance, Kidd, Gard, Rooker and Stunkard. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

#### **PRESENTATION BY/TO THE EAST WOODS COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

The East Woods County Conservation District board members and district employees were scheduled to show a DVD presentation of the district but was cancelled due to equipment failure.

They provided attendees with a folder depicting district activities. Clay Pope, OACD Executive Director, stated that the district was named Outstanding District of the Year at a ceremony held at the State Capitol during Conservation District Week. He stated that the district had received a cash award in the amount of \$2500 from Chesapeake Energy. He then presented directors and staff with a sign naming them the outstanding district.

#### **REPORT ON SUGAR CREEK L-44 IN CADDO COUNTY**

Robert Toole, Conservation Programs Director, gave a presentation on Sugar Creek Upstream Flood Control Site L-44 in Caddo County stating that the county was heavily hit with flooding during recent rains. The site experienced a 500 year rain event causing auxiliary spillway flow and a near breach situation. Heavy rainfall sloughed off huge amounts of the back toe of the dam. The district activated its emergency action plan involving local, state and federal agencies as well as private citizens to assist with this emergency. The Commission's watershed technicians brought in 2 pumps with the capability of pumping out 3000 gallons per minute per pump. These pumps ran for 4 days and when the water level was drained enough to see the tower, the techs were then able to remove the restricter plate allowing more water to flow.

Mr. Lowrance thanked Mr. Toole, Mr. Hilliard, and others involved in working on this emergency. He expressed the importance of emergency action plans for watershed sites.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

#### **OKLAHOMA CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Mr. Rooker reported on attending the RC&D State summit and participating in SeptemberFest at the Governor's Mansion.

Mr. Gard attended the Technology Field Day in Chickasha as did Mr. Thralls and Ed Crall. He also attended a field day in El Reno.

#### **OKLAHOMA CONSERVATION COMMISSION STAFF**

Mr. Lowrance stated that due to time constraints and the fact that the written reports are included in the meeting packet that oral reports will be reduced.

Mr. Thralls expressed appreciation to the East Woods County Conservation District for their work with conservation throughout the years. He mentioned the leadership provided by past board member Vernon McNally. Mr. Thralls also stated that the district has had 2 teachers named outstanding teachers of year: Tracie Leeper and Gail Swallow.

Mike Sharp, Information Technology Director, stated that 55 sites have been identified for AML reclamation in LeFlore County. He stated that an emergency occurred in the city of McAlester over the weekend and staff is responding to that issue. He reported on Tar Creek activities stating that Blu Hulse with Senator Inhofe's office toured the site and was very pleased.

Mr. Pollard echoed Mr. Thralls' appreciation to the East Woods County Conservation District. He stated that he has worked for the Commission for almost 30 years and appreciated the leadership and guidance that Mr. McNally provided over the years. Mr. McNally would say that conservation did not begin in Washington, D.C. nor in Oklahoma City but at the local board level.

**OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

Clay Pope, Executive Director, stated that OACD is monitoring the farm bill, agriculture appropriation issues and interim studies. He echoed the comments of the partnership in working with flooding challenges this past month. A meeting is scheduled in Kingfisher on September 6 to discuss flooding in that town. He is working on area meetings. Mr. Pope stated that Western Farmers will sponsor the youth awards again this year and that Chesapeake Energy will also sponsor awards. Mr. Pope stated that the National Association of Conservation Districts is holding a hearing on confined animal feeding operations in the near future. He stated that the executive board retreat is scheduled for September 14-15.

**USDA-NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**

Ron Hilliard, State Conservationist, provided a written report. He reported receiving a message during the meeting that the U.S. Senate will not consider the Farm Bill this month.

Mr. Hilliard stated that a new Assistant State Conservationist for Programs will be announced soon as the deadline for that position closes on September 6. He also stated that the new State Resource Conservationist will be announced soon.

**USDA-FARM SERVICE AGENCY**

No representative present.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission will be held on October 1, 2007, 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, Mr. Lowrance adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

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Approved by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission on October 1, 2007.

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CHAIR