

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission met November 7, 2005, in the Agriculture Building Board Room, 2800 N. Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Rick Jeans. 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 November 3, 2005, at the front entrance of the building.

ROLL CALL

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

Rick Jeans, Chair
George Stunkard, Vice Chair
Dan Lowrance, Secretary
Virginia Kidd, Member
J.T. Winters Jr., Member

Others in attendance were:

Mike Thralls, Executive Director
Ben Pollard, Assistant Director
Jana Chicoine, Administrative Officer
Robert Toole, Conservation Programs Director
Dan Butler, Water Quality Program Acting Director
Mike Kastl, Abandoned Mine Land Program Director
Mike Sharp, Information Technology Director
Lisa Knauf, District Services Director
Mark Harrison, Information Representative
Dianne Ireton, Abandoned Mine Land System Coordinator
Sheryl Easton, Grants Specialist
Johnny Pelley, Watershed Technician
George Moore, Watershed Technician
Dennis Boney, Watershed Technician
Joe Creech, Stillwater Creek Project Coordinator
Jean Lemmon, Blue Thumb Quality Assurance Officer
Kim Shaw, Blue Thumb Education Coordinator
Karla Beatty, Education Coordinator
Tammy Sawatzky, Conservation Programs Administrative Officer
Jeff Packham, Journal Record
Caleb Sopteleon, Capitol Network News
Clay Pope, Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts Executive Director
Darrel Dominick, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist
Kevin Norton, Natural Resources Conservation Service Assistant State Conservationist
(Programs)

Steve Thompson, Department of Agriculture
Samuel Smith, Bryan Conservation District Director
Don Morris, Bryan Conservation District Director
Kim Tweed, Executive Secretary

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made by Mr. Winters and seconded by Mr. Stunkard to approve the minutes of the October 3, 2005, Commission meeting as written. Those voting aye were: Jeans, Stunkard, Lowrance, Kidd, and Winters. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

DISTRICT DIRECTOR APPOINTMENTS

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

CLAIMS/FINANCIAL STATEMENT

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

SERVICE AWARD RECOGNITION

Ben Pollard, Assistant Director, called on Dan Butler, Water Quality Interim Director. Mr. Butler recognized Jean Lemmon for five years of service to the state of Oklahoma and Joe Creech for ten years of service.

BRYAN CONSERVATION DISTRICT REQUEST FOR O&M FUNDS

Robert Toole, Conservation Programs Director, stated that twenty years ago a flood control structure was constructed with state funds and the design was done by the Commission using Natural Resources Conservation Service specifications. The Bryan Conservation District is requesting an allocation from watershed operation and maintenance funds to make repairs on this site. He stated that this was not a small watershed flood control structure

Don Morris and Sam Smith, District Directors with the Bryan Conservation District, attended the meeting. Mr. Morris stated that twenty years ago an 80 acre flood control structure was constructed with state funds. Last year the structure began having problems with the drawn down pipe, which was built with corrugated steel. He provided pictures of the site. Mr. Morris stated that the dam is in good condition but that the draw down pipe needs to be repaired. The district is recommending the use of a poly pipe enclosure. He stated that the Bryan Conservation District is requesting \$40,000 for this repair. The landowners will release the district from operation and maintenance responsibility after the repair and will release the easement to the district.

After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Lowrance and seconded by Mr. Stunkard to approve the request with the stipulation that the landowner will release the easement to the conservation district.. Those voting aye were: Jeans, Stunkard, Lowrance, Kidd, and Winters. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

COMMISSION AGREEMENT

Mr. Pollard presented an agreement for ratification with the City of Commerce where the city will serve as contractor for the Southeast Commerce Tar Creek AML Project; OCC will pay the city for work performed. A motion was made by Mr. Stunkard and seconded by Mr. Winters to ratify approval of the agreement. Those voting aye were: Jeans, Stunkard, Lowrance, Kidd, and Winters. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

WATER QUALITY FY2005 GRANT

Dan Butler, Water Quality Program Interim Director, presented the FY2005 319(h) grant with the Office of Secretary of Environment to provide staff support and funding to implement Oklahoma's Comprehensive Nonpoint Source Pollution Program including planning, assessment, education and implementation activities for approval. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Winters and seconded by Mr. Lowrance to approve the grant. Those voting aye were: Jeans, Stunkard, Lowrance, Kidd, and Winters. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUESTS

Mr. Thralls presented Out of State Travel Requests as outlined in Exhibit #4. A motion was made by Mr. Winters and seconded by Ms. Kidd to approve the travel requests. Those voting aye were: Jeans, Stunkard, Lowrance, Kidd, and Winters. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2006

Kim Tweed, Executive Secretary, presented a proposed schedule of Conservation Commission regularly scheduled meetings for Calendar Year 2006 as listed in Exhibit #5. A motion was made by Mr. Lowrance and seconded by Mr. Stunkard to approve the schedule as listed. Those voting aye were: Jeans, Stunkard, Lowrance, Kidd, and Winters. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

CONSERVATION COST-SHARE PROGRAM YEAR 8 ADDITIONAL PRACTICES

Robert Toole, Conservation Programs Director, presented requests from conservation districts for additional conservation practices for Conservation Cost-share Program Year 8 as listed in Exhibit #6 and requested approval. A motion was made by Mr. Lowrance and seconded by Ms. Kidd to approve the requests as listed. Those voting aye were: Jeans, Stunkard, Lowrance, Kidd, and Winters. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

FY2006 JOINT PLAN OF OPERATIONS

Lisa Knauf, District Services Director, requested approval of the FY2006 Joint Plan of Operations submitted by the Oklahoma County Conservation District. A motion was made by Mr. Stunkard and seconded by Mr. Winters to approve the plan. Those voting aye were: Jeans, Stunkard, Lowrance, Kidd, and Winters. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

ADDITIONAL OFFICE SPACE

Mr. Thralls stated that the Department of Agriculture received funding for the construction of a new laboratory. It is scheduled for completion in September 2007. This will open up office space on the third floor and a portion of the first floor of the Agriculture Building. It is staff's desire to house all Commission employees in the same building; therefore, staff is recommending that the Commission write a letter to Agriculture Secretary Terry Peach requesting additional office space in the building.

After discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Kidd and seconded by Mr. Stunkard to send a letter to Secretary Peach requesting additional office space for Commission employees. Those voting aye were: Jeans, Stunkard, Lowrance, Kidd, and Winters. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION COUNCIL FY2007 BUDGET

A motion was made by Mr. Winters and seconded by Mr. Stunkard to amend the Commission's FY2007 budget request to include the budget proposal of the Geographic Information Council as listed as Attachment A. Those voting aye were: Jeans, Stunkard, Lowrance, Kidd, and Winters. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM FINAL REPORT

Mike Kastl, Abandoned Mine Land Program Director, presented the final report of Emergency Watershed Protection Program. The Commission, through an agreement with NRCS, managed a number of debris removal contracts. The debris was a result of a 2002 ice storm.(see Attachment A). Dianne Ireton and Sheryl Easton were recognized for their work with the program.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OKLAHOMA CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEMBERS

Ms. Kidd reported on attending the groundbreaking ceremony for the Upper Red Rock Site 52 watershed construction project.. She also attended the Governor's Water Conference.

Mr. Lowrance also attended the Upper Red Rock ceremony and commended the Noble County and Garfield County Conservation Districts for hosting this event. Mr. Lowrance attended the OACD Area 1 meeting and commended the districts for a good meeting.

Mr. Stunkard praised the Conservation Programs Division for their work in hosting the recently held operation and maintenance workshops.

Mr. Winters commended Commission and OACD staff on the Area 1 meeting. He attended a rural economic development meeting in Woodward and in Elk City. Mr. Winters also attended the Wheatland RC&D annual banquet. He also reported on the land judging event held with Ellis County, Dewey County, Woodward County, Woods County, East Woods County and Harper County.

Mr. Jeans also attended the Red Rock Creek ceremony and the rural economic development meeting in Blackwell.

OKLAHOMA CONSERVATION COMMISSION STAFF

Mike Thralls, Executive Director, reported on attending the Red Rock Creek ceremony. He stated that within the last few months he has attended 50th anniversary bankers awards programs in Pawnee County, Murray County and Pittsburg County Conservation Districts.

Mr. Thralls also commended the Conservation Programs Division on their work in hosting the operation and maintenance workshops.

Mr. Thralls reported on attending the Area 1 meeting and commended Mr. Pollard, Ms. Knauf and Clay Pope for a great job with the program.

Lisa Knauf, District Services Director, reported on attending board meetings in Texas, Stephens, Blaine, Garfield, Beaver and North Caddo Conservation Districts. She also participated in the Women in Agriculture Conference hosted by the McClain County, Cleveland County and Garvin Conservation Districts. Ms. Knauf provided training to the new district secretary at Grant County.

Dan Butler, Water Quality Acting Director, reported on attending the Governor's Water Conference and stated the theme was more on water quantity than water quality. Staff is continuing its commitment to the Environmental Protection Agency and the Office of the Secretary of Environment to get caught up on reports. Staff had ten reports approved and submitted an additional 22 for approval.

Mike Kastl, Abandoned Mine Land Director, reported on two active projects in Rogers County as outlined in the written report. Mr. Kastl stated that there will be a photo opportunity at the Club Lake project on November 22 with area legislators. He reported that staff will submit the 2006 grant for approval this month.

Jana Chicoine, Financial Management and Human Resources Administrative Officer, stated that staff held health insurance option period meetings this month and is finalizing the FY2007 budget request. The division will be hosting the full staff meeting on December 5 at the Harn Homestead and invited Commission members to attend.

Mike Sharp, Information Technology Director, stated that staff is struggling with the issue of e-mail spam for the Commission and the districts and is looking at a new in-house system to reduce spam e-mails.

Mr. Sharp provided copies of pre-bid specifications for the Tar Creek West Commerce project.

Robert Toole, Conservation Programs Director, reported on the success of the recently held operation and maintenance workshops and commended his staff, Tammy Sawatzky, George Moore, Dennis Boney and Johnny Pelley, for their work with these workshops. He thanked Mr. Pollard for

providing the risk management session along with Karla Beatty and Eldon Merklin for their participation. Mr. Toole thanked NRCS employees Johnny Green, Larry Caldwell and Arville Bass for their participation. A total of 112 people participated in these workshops.

Ben Pollard, Assistant Director, stated that a luncheon will be held prior to the full staff meeting on December 5 and invited Commission members to attend.

Written reports from each division are attached.

OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Clay Pope, Executive Director, thanked Information Officer Mark Harrison for his work in getting conservation articles published and/or aired. He also thanked staff for their work with the operation and maintenance workshops. Mr. Pope thanked staff for their work with the OACD Area 1 meeting and commended the East Woods County CD for hosting the meeting. The state meeting planning committee will be meeting soon to begin preparations for that meeting.

Mr. Pope stated that Kingfisher County Conservation District has approached him about hosting a burn workshop this spring. He reported a meeting held with Dewey County and Ellis County Conservation Districts along with the High Plains RC&D and the Nature Conservancy regarding red cedar.

Mr. Pope will be attending the budget meeting scheduled for November 15. He also reported that an interim study meeting will be held on November 22. Mr. Pope stated that conservation district directors have been attending rural development meetings hosted by a legislative committee.

Mr. Pope reported that the Nature Conservancy will be sponsoring the Outstanding Landowner Award in Oklahoma with a \$1500 contribution. Chesapeake Energy is sponsoring the Outstanding District Award with a \$2500 donation.

Mr. Pope reported on meeting with the Oklahoma Municipal League regarding water quantity and water quality issues.

Mr. Pope reported that the Oklahoma County CD is working with the Harn Homestead to construct an outdoor classroom on that property. He also attended a meeting in Utah with his counterparts. Mr. Pope will be attending a meeting with the Nature Conservancy and the Scenic Rivers Commission to discuss the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

USDA-NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Darrel Dominick, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist, thanked members and staff for their leadership. Mr. Dominick thanked the staff for their work with the operation and maintenance workshops. He also thanked Mike Kastl for his work with the Emergency Watershed Protection program.

Mr. Dominick stated that the NRCS may receive a twenty percent cut in FY2006 technical assistance dollars.

Mr. Dominick stated that staff is working on comprehensive nutrient management plans and that a swat team is being organized to assist with this program.

A summary of activities for the NRCS is attached.

USDA-FARM SERVICE AGENCY

No representative present.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission will be held on December 5, 2005, 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. Lowrance and seconded by Ms. Kidd to adjourn. Those voting aye were: Jeans, Stunkard, Lowrance, Kidd, and Winters. Nay votes: none. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Approved by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission on December 5, 2005.

CHAIR