

## MINUTES

### CALL TO ORDER

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission met Monday, December 12, 2022, in the Agriculture Building located at 2800 N. Lincoln Blvd in Oklahoma. The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Gary Crawley. He stated this was a scheduled regular meeting held in accordance with the Open Meeting Law, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, Sections 301 and following as amended. The agenda for this meeting was posted at 3:00 p.m. Thursday, December 8, 2022, at the front entrance of the Oklahoma Agriculture Building, 2800 N. Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, as well as on the agency's website [conservation.ok.gov](http://conservation.ok.gov).

### ROLL CALL

Bert Bitseedy, Administrative Assistant, took roll call and the following members were in attendance:

Gary Crawley, Chair, Area 5 Member  
Robert Priess, Area 2 Member  
Scotty Herriman, Area 3 Member

Members Absent:

Dan Herald, Secretary, Area 1 Member  
Clay Forst, Vice Chair, Area 4 Member

Others in attendance were:

Trey Lam, Executive Director  
Lisa Knauf Owen, Assistant Director  
Jeannie Parsley, Comptroller  
Janet Stewart, General Counsel  
Bryan Painter, Public Information Officer  
Bert Bitseedy, Administrative Assistant  
Clancy Green, District Services Division Director  
Trampas Tripp, Land Division Director  
Tammy Sawatzky, Conservation Programs Director  
Taylor Marshall, Cost-Share Program Coordinator for Conservation Programs  
Shanon Phillips, Water Quality Director  
Greg Kloxin, Assistant Director of Water Quality Division  
Maryanne Danzler-Kyer, Environmental Programs Officer  
Mike Sharp, Office of Geographic Information and Technical Services Director  
Johnny Pelley, Watershed Technician, Conservation Programs  
George Moore, Watershed Technician, Conservation Programs  
Paige Porter, Administrative Programs Officer, Conservation Programs  
Sarah Blaney, Executive Director, Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts  
Stacy Riley, Assistant State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Ed Casey, Director, Nowata County Conservation District  
Sydney Lee, Quorum Call

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS REGULAR MEETING**

A motion was made by Mr. Priess and seconded by Mr. Herriman to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2022 Commission meeting as written. Those voting aye were: Herriman, Crawley and Priess. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

## **CLAIMS/FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Commissioners reviewed the claims register, p-card statement, revenue summary and allotment budget / available cash report as provided by Ms. Parsley in Exhibit #1. She stated that the time period encompassed two monthly payrolls, a supplemental payroll and the start of payment of the drought program. A motion was made by Mr. Herriman and seconded by Mr. Priess to approve the financial reports as presented. Those voting aye were: Herriman, Crawley and Priess. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

## **RATIFICATION OF WETLAND AGREEMENTS**

Ms. Owen requested the ratification of two OCC Water Quality (wetlands) agreements and subsequent extensions for 2018 and 2019. Ms. Owen noted that these agreements inadvertently by-passed the Commission approval process at the time of execution. Ms. Owen recommended ratification of these agreements. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Priess and seconded by Mr. Herriman. Those voting aye were: Herriman, Crawley and Priess. Nay Votes: none. Motion carried.

## **PRESENTATION OF AGREEMENTS**

Ms. Owen presented an amended agreement for ratification listed as item “a” on Exhibit #2. The amendment provides the final award of funds for the 2022 allocation. Ms. Owen recommended ratification of this agreement. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Herriman and seconded by Mr. Priess to ratify the amended agreement. Those voting aye were: Herriman, Crawley and Priess. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

Ms. Owen presented two new agreements for approval listed as item “b-c” on Exhibit #2. The two agreements are to provide funds to the district for a full-time Area District Coordinator for Area 2, Murray County and Area 1, Ellis County, who will be working in the District Services Division under the supervision of Clancy Green. Ms. Owen recommended approval of the new agreements. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Priess and seconded by Mr. Herriman for approval of the new agreement as presented. Those voting aye were: Herriman, Crawley and Priess. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

Ms. Owen presented amended agreements for approval listed as item “d-i” on Exhibit #2. Ms. Owen reviewed each of the amended agreements with Commissions and recommended approval. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Herriman and seconded by Mr. Priess for approval of the amended agreements. Those voting aye were: Herriman, Crawley and Priess. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

## **OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL REQUESTS**

Mr. Lam presented two out of state travel requests for approval listed as items “a-b” on Exhibit #3. Mr. Lam recommended approval of the two requests. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Priess and seconded by Mr. Herriman for approve out of state travel requests as presented. Those voting aye were: Herriman, Crawley and Priess. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

## **CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTOR APPOINTMENTS**

Ms. Green discussed with Commissioners recommendation of Conservation District Director Appointments (Exhibit #4). After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Herriman and seconded by Mr. Priess to approve the district director appointments as presented. Those voting aye were: Herriman, Crawley and Priess. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

## **REVISED EMERGENCY DROUGHT COST-SHARE PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

Mr. Lam and Ms. Marshall, Cost Share coordinator reviewed revisions made to the Emergency Drought Cost-Share Program Guidelines with Commissioners as presented in Exhibit #6. The guidelines were updated to allow for changes based on the Drought Commission's recommendations. Ms. Marshall reported that to date 150 claims have been processed for a total of \$800,000. Two conservation districts did not allocate all of the funds provided and returned \$260,068. An amount of \$4.5 Million has not been released and is still located in the drought fund. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Herriman and seconded by Mr. Priess to ratify the revisions to the Emergency Drought Cost-Share Guidelines as presented. Those voting aye were: Herriman, Crawley and Priess. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

## **OKLAHOMA WATER RESOURCES BOARD AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN GRANT APPLICATION**

Ms. Shanon Phillips, Water Quality Director, presented a grant application to the Oklahoma Water Resources Board American Rescue Plan to the Commissioner's for possible ratification. The grant, if funded, would be to implement a statewide septic repair/replacement program in which the funds would be available late spring or early summer. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Preiss and seconded by Mr. Herriman to ratify submission of the grant proposal. Those voting aye were: Herriman, Crawley and Priess. Nay votes: none. Motion carried.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments

## **NEW BUSINESS**

No new business

## **CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP REPORTS**

*USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service:* Stacy Riley, NRCS, noted that Amanda Mathis was on leave. Ms. Riley noted that NRCS has had some personnel updates; new hires start date for December 19, 2022 for Ag Engineer, Technician from Chickasha has retired, and the passing of an employee within the agency, Alan Messenger. She also reported, NRCS has been assisting with the drought cost share, processing applications. The 2023 EQIP sign up was completed by December 9, 2022, 26 million for applications to be ranked, a total of 80 CSP renewals, 200 grassland initiative contracts, 50 applicants for the wetland reserve, Ag land easement program with eligible entities to keep lands as working lands. In the upstream flood control program, rehabilitation project plans for Uncle John and Sallisaw sites are underway and the Lower Bayou plan for new construction is close to completion.

*Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts:* Sarah Blaney, announced the partnership luncheon after the meeting, and noted the approval of the CARE budget reallocation. The allocation will allow to pay for the continuation of the project in 8 districts including North Caddo,

Oklahoma, Nowata, Adair, Pittsburg, Logan, Cherokee, and LeFlore CCD. All 27 champions have completed the 1<sup>st</sup> round of their demonstration projects and 16 champions had been identified to continue on to round 2. The Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project submitted an application for an Equity Agreement with NRCS, which is a 2-year agreement and approximately \$150,000 for 6 conservation districts and OACD. Another agreement for \$50,000 was signed for assistance with the CARE project for 1 year, this will assist with the outreach and education with the SDA and veteran producers. OACD is partnered with Playa Lake Joint Venture (PLJV) to provide some outreach assistance with their CIG grant. PLJV met with 3 districts (Woods, Beaver, Upper Washita) to get started. Each of these districts will receive \$9K over 3 years for their assistance. OACD will receive \$6K over 3 years for assistance. The focus groups for this grant will be held in December 2022 and January 2023. FreshRx received \$50,000 for 2 years, this grant will begin to draw down the indirect in February 2023. Upcoming events;

- National Wildlife Federation Outreach Training – January 4th – 5th (invitation only)
- Rural Coalition Winter Forum January 18-20th in Washington, D.C.
- OK Legislative Session Begins Feb. 6th
- NACD Annual Meeting Feb. 11-15th in New Orleans
- State Meeting, February 26-28th at the Embassy Suites Northwest Expwy in Oklahoma City

## **STATUS REPORTS**

### **OKLAHOMA CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Mr. Herriman –Thankful for Bryan Painter and his service, he was appreciative of all he did for OCC and for his hard work and efforts with “The Ripple Effect.”

Mr. Priess –Expressed his appreciation for Bryan Painter’s service as well.

### **OKLAHOMA CONSERVATION COMMISSION STAFF**

*Executive Director: Trey Lam.* Mr. Lam reported that the November area meetings went well. He stated that districts are getting the job done in delivering the drought assistance program. He praised the financial team for completing claims with a great turn around time. “Keep OK Beautiful” banquet went well, and Shanon will report on the awards received by Blue Thumb. Trey noted he attended the National Wildlife Federation outreach training in Tulsa. He indicated that Sarah Blaney did a great job on putting the training together. Mr. Lam noted that each district should have someone responsible for content on social media, like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter; Tik Tok is not allowed by the state. Mr. Lam announced PIO Bryan Painter is leaving OCC with his last day being December 16, 2022. Mr. Painter will be transitioning to Oklahoma Baptist University as a Director of Marketing and Communications.

*Water Quality Program: Shanon Phillips, OCC Water Quality Division Director,* Ms. Phillips spoke about proposal to OWRB for septic tank replacements statewide program. Ms. Phillips noted that the agency was a finalist for 5 awards and won 2 at the Keep OK Beautiful banquet. Yard by yard won the Governors’ state award and the “K through 12 Keep OK Beautiful Educator” award, volunteer Karen Chapman was nominated by the City of Norman for “Keep OK Beautiful Affiliate Champion.” Ms. Phillip also states there was a report in the packet, and she would be happy to answer any questions.

*Office of Geographic Information and Technical Services: Mike Sharp, Director,* Dr. Sharp stated that there was a report in the packet, and he would be happy to answer any questions.

*Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation: Trampas Tripp, Director.* Mr. Tripp stated that there

was a report in the packet, and he would be happy to answer any questions. Mr. Tripp noted the new division name change from AML to the Land Management Division. The division has had to cancel a contract based on an AG directive regarding McGirt at the end of December for AML. Mr. Tripp also noted that they have received 2 cost estimates for repair of an old WPA channel in the town of Okemah. He is also working with OSU to develop new course for the unpaved roads program and has awarded 3 grants to County Commissioners in Lincoln County for the pilot program.

*District Services:* Clancy Green, Director, Ms. Green stated that there was a report in the packet, and she would be happy to answer any questions. She also reported that she was standing in for Rhonda at the Creek County board meeting as they had requested assistance.

*Conservation Programs:* Tammy Sawatzky, Director. Ms. Sawatzky stated that there was a report in the packet, and she would be happy to answer any questions. She also stated that George Moore and Johnny Pelley have been conducting video piping inspections throughout the state.

*Assistant Director:* Lisa Knauf Owen. Ms. Owen noted that the month of November was shortened by area meetings and holidays. She noted that district claims turnaround time is averaging about 5 days. Completed and submitted a report to Auburn University on the feral swine control projects.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

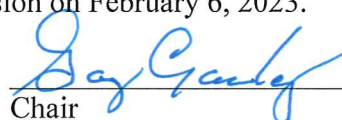
After discussion, the Commissioners agreed to cancel the next regular meeting of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission that was set for Monday, January 9, 2023 and will begin the next meeting on Monday, February 6, 2023, at the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture Building, 2800 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma at 9:30 a.m.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. Crawley declared the meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

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Approved by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission on February 6, 2023.

  
Chair