

**MINUTES OF THE
OKLAHOMA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
4850 N. Lincoln Blvd, Oklahoma City, OK**

Date and Time: Wednesday, February 8, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

Members Present: Phil Campbell, Chair
Laura Pollard, Vice Chair
Rick Godfrey, Treasurer
Mark Moehle, Member

Member Absent: None

Others Present: Becky Inmon, District Manager
Josh Kouri, Urban Soil Health Specialist
Bree Spaulding, Soil Conservationist, NRCS
Don Bartolina, Volunteer
John Chancey, OSU-OKC, guest
Kim Farber, guest

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Campbell called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and noted that a quorum was present and business could be conducted. Campbell noted this was a regular meeting of the Board of Directors and notice of the meeting was sent to the Oklahoma County Clerk’s office within the time specified by the law. The agenda was posted on the district’s website: www.okcountyconservation.com and at the entrance to the district office, 4850 N. Lincoln Blvd, Ste B, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, at 12:00 p.m. on February 7, 2023. The meeting was held in compliance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act, Title 25 of the Oklahoma Statutes, Section 301 and the following as amended.

2. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:

Minutes of January 4, 2023, Regular Meeting:

Board members received a copy of the January minutes for review. Godfrey made a motion to approve the January minutes as written. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

3. CONSIDERATION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON DISTRICT FINANCIAL ITEMS:

3a. Financial Statement for Period Ending January 31, 2023:

The Board reviewed the financial statement for the period of January 1-31, 2023, including the accounts payable and receivable and the January checking and money market statements. (Attachment 1) Pollard made a motion to approve the January financial statement as presented. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0. The Board also reviewed copies of the January credit card statement included with the financial statement.

3b. Employee Payroll Sheets and Time and Leave Records for Month Ending January 31, 2023:

Directors reviewed the payroll sheets and time and leave records for district staff Rebecca Inmon and Joshua Kouri. Pollard made a motion to approve the employee payroll sheets and time and leave records for January. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

3c. District's Monthly Reimbursement Claims Approved:

The Board reviewed the district's monthly reimbursement claims to the Conservation Commission. The five claims reviewed for approval were: District operating expense-\$812.73; Special Project, Kouri salary-\$558.70; NACD Technical Assistance grant administration-\$1,000; District Manager February salary-\$3,545.39; and Cost Share ED2 for Walt Traywick, Scott Eisenhauer, Rodney Hoffman, and Justin Warren -\$24,948. Godfrey made a motion to approve all five reimbursement claims as presented. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0. Inmon stated there would be \$4,625 left in the district's operating expense account once the claims were processed.

3d. District's Monthly Reimbursement Claims Ratified:

The Board reviewed the district's monthly reimbursement claims submitted to the Conservation Commission during January. The eight reimbursement claims submitted during January were: Cost Share Program Year 24 claim for Clint Spencer, \$7,500; District Manager January salary-\$3,545.39; Cost Share ED2 claim for Abraham Warren, Alexa Martin, and Alfred McKerson-\$18,738.82; Cost Share ED2 claim for Mary Mayhew and Joseph Tytanic-\$13,676.00; Cost Share ED2 claim for Carol Haggard, Brayden Malaske, Stephanie Collier, and Daniel Manek-\$30,000; Cost Share ED2 for Earl Rooms, RHD Industries Inc., and Delbert Coil Jr.-\$18,600; Cost Share ED2 for Thomas Rueb, LaDonna Laskey, Gregory Nowakowski, and Rex Lundy-\$27,568; Cost Share ED2 for Martha Coombs, Scott Malaske, Christi McBroom, Scott McBroom, and Calvin Thomas-\$36,623.77. Pollard made a motion to ratify all eight reimbursement claims as presented. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

3e. Set District Policy on Submitting Cost Share Claims:

Inmon requested the Board establish a policy stating how long to hold district cost share claims prior to a board meeting. The district has always submitted cost share claims as the producers turned in their paperwork and the claims were not held for board approval prior to submitting for reimbursement. Since all claims need to be approved by the Board, the policy should state whether claims will be held and how long or if claims will be submitted immediately and ratified by the Board as needed. After discussion, Moehle made a motion that cost share claims be submitted to OCC as soon as the producer files the appropriate paperwork and that cost share claims be ratified at the next meeting following submission of the claim. Pollard seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4. CONSIDERATION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON DISTRICT OPERATION ITEMS:**4a. Monthly NRCS Performance Worksheet:**

The Board reviewed the NRCS Performance Worksheet for the month of January. Spaulding noted the district staff had assisted with all required tasks as needed. Moehle made a motion to approve the January worksheet. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4b. Cost Share Program Year 24 Update:

There is only one participant remaining to complete their practice for Program Year 24 of the cost share program. Jeffrey Canaday was granted an extension for his pond until March 31. The cost to build the pond was higher than anticipated from his contractor, and he may possibly contact other vendors for bids. He was provided a copy of the district's contractor list.

4c. Emergency Drought Cost Share Program:

- Directors reviewed the latest ED2 cost share allocation report provided to the Conservation Commission on February 6. There are currently nine participants that have not completed their work. Three of those, Jenny Kouri, Clifford Webster, and Baylen Malaske, were just recently notified and will have until April 3, 2023, to complete their work.
- Participant Wayne Wells, pond clean out, and Leslie Lambeth, pumping plant, requested to have their agreement canceled. Mr. Wells complied with the requirement for a written request, and his name was removed from the list of participants and the funds reallocated to the next participant. Ms. Lambeth requested her agreement be canceled by phone; however, she failed to comply with the requirement for a written request following several reminders, and she did not complete her practice by the February 2 deadline. Moehle made a motion to cancel the ED2 cost share agreements for Wayne Wells and Leslie Lambeth. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.
- The district received requests for a 30-day extension to complete their practice from: Clint Spencer-water well, 3R Farms LLC-pond clean out, Jimmy Thomas-pond clean out & cover crop, Kenneth Weathers-pond clean out, and Joe Golden-water well & pumping plant. Following review, Pollard made a motion to grant participants Clint Spencer, 3R Farms LLC, Jimmy Thomas, Kenneth Weathers, and Joe Golden a 30-day extension to complete their practice for the emergency drought cost share program. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0. If a participant is unable to complete his practice by the March 2 deadline, he must make a written request for an additional 30-day extension.

4d. OACD Annual Meeting, February 26-28:

Directors reviewed the agenda for the upcoming OACD Annual Meeting scheduled for February 26-28, 2023, at the Embassy Suites Northwest in Oklahoma City. There will be a CARE Champion & Leadership Reception at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday evening. The agenda for Monday and Tuesday includes several breakout sessions and training opportunities. The deadline for early bird registration was February 3, and registration has been submitted for directors Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell and district staff Inmon and Kouri. The payment has not been submitted. The registration package is \$285/person and includes Monday lunch and banquet and the Tuesday lunch. Godfrey made a motion to approve payment of the registration for three directors and two staff at \$285/person. Pollard seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4e. Discuss Director Vacancy:

Directors are looking at candidates to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Jan Kunze. Directors discussed some of the qualities desired in anyone being considered for recommendation to fill the position. The Board is interested in finding someone willing to participate beyond regular meetings. The person should be willing to attend additional meetings and participate in activities such as Conservation Day at the Capitol and/or education events such as natural resource days. The vacant position is an elected position and the current term expires on June 30, 2023. Anyone appointed to serve now would also need to file during the regular filing period in May.

4f. Approval Payment of NACD Dues:

Directors reviewed the annual dues notice from the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). There are different levels of dues payment including Platinum, Diamond, Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Contributor. Last year, the district paid dues of \$750. Chair Campbell noted the district had benefited from several NACD programs throughout the year. Following discussion, Pollard made a motion to approve a dues payment in the amount of \$750. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4g. Discuss Friends of Blue Thumb Grant:

The district has been awarded a \$500 grant from Friends of Blue Thumb to hold a volunteer appreciation event in 2023. It is suggested the district invite Oklahoma County volunteers and those from surrounding Cleveland and Canadian Counties. There are also some retired volunteers that can be invited along with the Blue Thumb staff. Inmon will work with Cheryl Cheadle to come up with a list of people to invite and select a good date this spring, perhaps in April.

4h. Approval Choctaw Elementary Seed Packet Proposal:

Kouri presented the Board a proposal from Choctaw Elementary for pollinator seed packets. The school wants to provide seed packets to all students in pre-K through fifth grade as a gift to the students for their participation in a fundraiser at the school. Since the school has a tight budget, they reached out to the district about providing the wildflower seeds. The school also asked if the district could provide information about planting the seeds, how the plants could promote pollinators and help other wildlife, and the importance of pollinators in our ecosystem. The school believes the project will help students develop an appreciation for nature and educate them on how they can become better stewards of the environment. The school needs approximately 370 small packets. The district has the seed on hand and it would be a great opportunity for outreach to the school. Following discussion, Pollard made a motion to provide Choctaw Elementary with 370 pollinator seed packets. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4i. Review Friends of NACD Grant Award Proposal, Approve Direct Credit Authorization:

Kouri reported the district was awarded a \$2,500 grant from Friends of NACD. The grant application was for \$2,000 to purchase native plants for urban conservation projects and \$500 to fund a workshop on the use of native plants for urban conservation. Awards will be announced by NACD during the annual meeting in New Orleans. Kouri presented the board with an overview of the project and a proposal for utilizing the funds, along with an information flyer to be used for advertising.

- Projects must use native plants to address resource concerns (soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat)
- Grant stated we would fund up to two large projects (\$500 each), up to four medium projects (\$250 each) and use the rest of the funds to support small projects (\$50 to \$100 each) depending on the scale and quality of applications received
- Grant stated we would reserve funding for at least one project for an applicant/group who is primarily non-English speaking to meet NACD goals
- Projects must be completed in time to comply with NACD deadline of March 31, 2024.

Kouri plans to advertise the availability of the grants through Yard by Yard, social media, and workshops. Grants will be available to schools, churches, nonprofits, and businesses, but they must agree to allow district signage at the project site. The grant funds will be received from NACD by direct credit. Pollard made a motion to approve the direct credit authorization for NACD. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4j. Approval New District Cooperator Agreements:

Directors reviewed the requests for district cooperative agreements from Alexa Martin, Brayden Malaske, and Scott Malaske. All three are participants in the emergency drought cost share program. Godfrey made a motion to approve the new cooperative agreements for Alexa Martin, Brayden Malaske, and Scott Malaske. Pollard seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4k. Approval First Access Registration:

An email was sent to districts from Executive Director Trey Lam to inform everyone that as of February 1, the State of Oklahoma will offer First Access registration to nonprofits, school districts and political subdivisions like conservation districts. The district would need to register as a GovDeals buyer and then request to join First Access. The district may also be required to submit documents to demonstrate it qualifies under the state statute. Inmon requested the Board decide if they wanted the district to request to join First Access. Pollard made a motion for the district to register and request to join First Access. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4l. Approval Change in Regular March Meeting Date:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 1. Inmon requested the regular meeting be moved back a week to avoid a conflict with the OACD Annual Meeting. In addition, it is possible the Conservation Commission may vote on Program Year 25 of the State Cost Share Program at their March meeting which is held the first Monday of the month. Moving the meeting to March 8 would allow the board to meet following the Commission meeting so the cost share program could be voted on in a timelier manner. Pollard made a motion to reschedule the regular March meeting to March 8, 1:30 p.m., at the district office. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

5. REPORTS:**5a. NRCS Activities:**

Report presented by Bree Spaulding.

Spaulding stated she was busy with EQIP rankings. Oklahoma County received \$50,000 in funds. It looks like most of the contracts for Oklahoma County will be small so the funds could go further.

5b. District Directors:

- ✓ Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell planning to attend the OACD Annual Meeting.
- ✓ Campbell gave an update on Kickapoo Site 4. Worked with a contractor to get a bid put together, now just need to get the bid turned in. Fencing will not be completely replaced. Wire will just be re-stretched with some new posts. He is still working to get the other needed repairs done.
- ✓ Campbell visited with the Conservation Commission about getting another vehicle as was previously discussed. The Commission has a Chevy Suburban available but it has a short in the door that drains the battery, and fleet management has been unable to make the repairs. OCC may release the vehicle to the district and let the district find a dealer to handle the repair.

5c. District Staff:

(Written reports attached to original minutes.)

- Inmon presented her report and noted the upcoming activities for February.

- Kouri reviewed his report. He is planning a series of five spring workshops to teach Yard by Yard participants how to implement practices. He is coordinating with community partners to organize speakers and locations. He presented the board with copies of the first workshop scheduled on March 4 at the Science Museum Oklahoma.
- Kouri’s report also included a thank you letter and photos from partner Central Park Community Garden detailing how they utilized the materials provided by the district.

6. CORRESPONDENCE:

OACD - Conservation Day:

Conservation Day at the Capitol is scheduled for April 18, 2023. Those attending will meet at the Conservation Commission office at 8:30 a.m. Directors should RSVP to Sarah Blaney if planning to attend.

7. NEW BUSINESS: None

8. ANNOUNCE NEXT BOARD MEETING AND ADJOURN:

Chair Campbell announced the next meeting is rescheduled for March 8, 2023, 1:30 p.m. There being no further business, Pollard made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:48 p.m. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Godfrey, Moehle, Pollard, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

Approved as Written: 
Chair, Board of Directors

Date: 3-8-2023

Cc: Oklahoma Conservation Commission
Bill Jordan, President, OACD
Phil Campbell, Area II Director, OACD
Brandon Burns, District Conservationist, Team 10

Robert Priess, Area II Commissioner
Joe Caughlin, President Elect, OACD
Stacy Riley, Acting State Conservationist, NRCS
Brent Pannell, Assist State Cons, Field OP, Zone 2, NRCS

Oklahoma County Conservation District
Activity Report, February 8, 2023
Becky Inmon, District Manager

- ❖ Emailed January regular meeting minutes to directors for review, submitted December regular and special meeting approved minutes to OCC, emailed minutes to partners
- ❖ Prepared and submitted reimbursement claims to OCC including payroll, operating expense, and cost share
- ❖ Reconciled monthly bank statements and balanced checkbook
- ❖ Prepared monthly payroll tax reports, made payments online
- ❖ Prepared monthly financial statement for Board
- ❖ Participated in CARE zoom meeting on January 4
- ❖ Updated all financial worksheets including NACD grant funds
- ❖ Assisted cost share participants, filed ED2 claims, made numerous contacts with participants, prepared cost share payments to producers
- ❖ Submitted monthly ED2 Cost share allocation report to Conservation Commission
- ❖ Prepared and mailed out annual W2's, submitted W2's and W3 online
- ❖ Prepared and submitted 1099 Misc. forms to cost share participants
- ❖ Entered W2 data in OKTap as required
- ❖ Submitted quarterly TA grant reports to NACD including final report for TA2020 and initial report for TA2021
- ❖ Prepared change of meeting notice for February, submitted to County Clerk and OCC
- ❖ Participated in Blue Thumb education zoom training on January 24
- ❖ Prepared updated 2023 payroll and earnings records
- ❖ Assisted OACDE President with award information
- ❖ Prepared employee January payroll sheets, prepared and submitted preclaim summaries to OCC
- ❖ Updated monthly earnings records and leave records for employees
- ❖ Prepared February board meeting agenda, meeting packets with district financial and operations information, posted agenda as required
- ❖ Assisted NRCS with correspondence and Farm Bill program requests and other duties as needed
- ❖ Assisted NRCS staff with information for TA requests as needed
- ❖ Posted information to social media and website as needed

Upcoming:

- Dam Watch training on February 9
- Meet with Jean Lam about Land Judging materials on February 17
- January 20 – HOLIDAY
- Input 1099 information into OKTap
- Attend State Meeting February 27-28

**Oklahoma County Conservation District
January Activity Report (Feb. 8th, 2023)
Joshua Kouri, Urban Soil Health Specialist**

➤ **Contacts**

- 27 one-on-one contacts in December (8 SDA contacts)
- Four in-person CTA visits w/ follow-up information provided
- Two outreach projects (approx. 200 reached):
 - Wrote and distributed quarterly Yard by Yard newsletter, with conservation resources and program announcements for participants (approx. 150 reached)
 - Created and launched a new Facebook group for Yard by Yard to that current participants can support and teach interested potential participants (approx. 50 joined in the first three days)

➤ **Educational Activities:**

- Attended the National Wildlife Federation's "Growing Conservation" workshop to learn about effective messaging, reaching new audiences, and planning successful outreaches
- Met with the coordinator of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts' "Virginia Conservation Assistance Program," (a cost-share program specifically targeted at urban conservation practices) to discuss program success and issues that would be relevant to developing a similar program in OK
- Attended the No Till on the Plains conference to network with producers, educators, and researchers in soil health principles
- Participated in several Zoom trainings for the Ecosystem Services Market Program project from OACD to learn about getting producers paid for conservation practices

➤ **Outreach Planning:**

- Continued planning a spring workshop series to teach Yard by Yard participants how to implement practices. Coordinating with community partners to organize speakers and locations.
 - Five partner sites/organizations identified and agreed upon
 - 16 guest speakers contacted and scheduled (3 pending)
 - 13+ partner organizations to be involved
- Overseeing the development of Yard by Yard: Grounds, a program expansion to incorporate businesses, schools, churches, and parks that implement YxY practices.
- Coordinating with OACD to film educational video series.
- **Received a \$2500 grant from Friends of NACD** to fund the purchase of native plants from local sources to support urban conservation projects in the county

➤ **Office Activities:**

- Email / phone
- Updating OCCD website and Facebook page
- Coordinating Yard by Yard program

➤ **Project Updates:**

- Received a thank you letter from Central Park Community Gardens

Thank You!

To our friends at the Oklahoma County Conservation District:

Our team at the Central Park Community Garden is elated with gratitude for your 2022 gift of a \$2,000 grant. With your support, we were able to provide the needed supplies to rejuvenate the garden after several years of rest. We now have a foundation to host educational activities for youth, workshops and demonstrations for residents and work days for volunteers.

With this funding, we purchased supplies and equipment for the garden including water hoses, sprinklers, water timer, gloves, and a much-needed weedeater. Additionally, we were able to establish some initial outreach efforts with the purchase of plant ID tags, seed packets and a sharing library - which has been a hit and getting all kinds of attention from the neighborhood.

Additionally, we'd also like to extend a special thank you for gifting us with several pounds of wildflower seed mix. We recently utilized them to seed a newly established prairie in our garden with students from Aztec Charter School.

OCCD's support of pollinator outreach in our community is helping to increase awareness about the plight of the pollinators, as well as increase native wildlife habitat beneficial to our fluttery friends.

Come by for a visit anytime! The garden is always open.

From the bottom of our wild hearts, THANK YOU!

Sincerely,



Katie Hawk
Central Park Community Garden

NW 31st & Shartel Ave in OKC
CentralParkCommunityGarden.org
centralparkcommunitygardenokc@gmail.com



a people & pollinator paradise



Thank You!



a people & pollinator paradise