

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

Date and Time: Wednesday, November 2, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

Members Present: Phil Campbell, Chair
Jan Kunze, Vice Chair
Rick Godfrey, Treasurer
Laura Pollard, Member

Member Absent: Mark Moehle

Others Present: Rebecca Inmon, District Manager
Josh Kouri, Urban Soil Health Specialist
Bree Spaulding, Soil Conservationist, NRCS
Don Bartolina, Volunteer

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 12:15 p.m. on November 1, 2022. 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 October 5, 2022, Regular Meeting:

Board members received a copy of the October minutes for review. Godfrey made a motion to approve the October minutes as written. Kunze seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, 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 October 31, 2022:

The Board reviewed the financial statement for the period of October 1-31, 2022, including the accounts payable and receivable and the October checking and money market statements. (Attachment 1) Inmon noted that all the CARE Program expenses should be paid this month. Pollard made a motion to approve the October financial statement as presented. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0. The Board also reviewed copies of the October credit card statement included with the financial statement.

3b. Employee Payroll Sheets and Time and Leave Records for Month Ending October 31, 2022:

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

3c. Employees Quarterly CARE Salary:

Directors reviewed the quarterly CARE payroll sheets for district staff Rebecca Inmon and Joshua Kouri. This is the final salary payment from the current CARE funds. Pollard made a motion to approve the quarterly CARE payroll sheets for October. Kunze seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

3d. District Manager Longevity Payment:

Directors reviewed the payroll sheet for the district manager's longevity payment. Inmon received her payment for 34 years of service on October 31. Kunze made a motion to approve the district manager's longevity payroll sheet. Pollard seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

3e. District's Monthly Reimbursement Claims:

The Board reviewed the district's monthly reimbursement claims to the Conservation Commission dated November 2, 2022. The regular claim for operating expense and salaries was \$552.82, the special project claim for Kouri's salary was \$558.70, and Inmon's salary claim was \$3,480.54. Pollard made a motion to approve the district's reimbursement claims to OCC. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, 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 October. Spaulding noted the district staff had assisted with all required tasks as needed. Kunze made a motion to approve the October worksheet. Pollard seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4b. Cost Share Program Year 24 Update:

- No update on the two remaining agreements to be completed. The recent rains should have provided enough moisture to build the ponds.
- Lake Hiwassee Improvement Company accepted the funds that came available when Nikolaus Atkinson canceled his performance agreement. They have hired a contractor and plan to have the work done later this month. Since their initial performance agreement had a deadline of September 30, 2022, the Board will need to extend their performance agreement deadline since they did not receive the funds until October. Pollard made a motion to extend the performance agreement deadline for Lake Hiwassee Improvement Company to December 30, 2022. Kunze seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4c. Review Emergency Drought Cost Share Program Changes, Review Applications, Approve Applicants, Establish Applicant's Practice and Set Maximum Payment Rate:

Directors reviewed the updated guidelines for the Emergency Drought Cost Share Program that became effective as of October 17, 2022.

- It is no longer necessary to certify drought conditions for practices in the program.
- Each county was allocated an additional \$64,935 to add to the original \$33,000.
- Pond clean outs and pasture taps completed after June 11, 2022 are now eligible to receive funding. These retroactive applications will not require a performance agreement.
- Pond clean out average cost has been increased to \$7,500 for large ponds, \$5,000 for medium, and \$2,500 for small.

The district received 13 applications during the sign-up. All applicants were determined to be eligible for funding. Directors received a list of the applications (names redacted), with practice, maximum cost share rate, application date, and ranking scores. The district can fund all 13 applications with the current funds available. The established completion deadline for all practices was set by the Conservation Commission as February 2, 2023. After review, Pollard made a motion to approve all 13 applications with the practice and maximum payment amount presented. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0. Approved applications with applicant names, conservation practice(s) and maximum payment rates are listed in the chart below.

	NAME	PRACTICE	MAXIMUM PAY RATE
1	Clint Spencer	Water well	\$7,500
2	RHD Industries, Inc.	Water well	\$7,500
3	Abraham Warren	Water well	\$7,500
4	Martha Coombs	Pond clean out, pipeline	\$3,793
5	Ronald Henry	Pond clean out	\$7,500
6	Earl Rooms	Pond clean out	\$7,500
7	Willard Earl Davis	Pond clean out	\$6,000
8	Gary Marshall	Pond clean out	\$6,000
9	3-R Farms LLC	Pond clean out	\$7,500
10	Larry Hill	Pond clean out	\$7,500
11	Thomas Rueb	Pond clean out	\$7,500
12	Wayne Wells	Pond clean out	\$7,500
13	Leslie Lambeth	Pumping plant	\$2,105.69
		Total Allocated	\$85,398.69
		Total Available	\$97,935
		Unallocated	\$12,536.31

4d. Approval Additional Emergency Drought Program Signup, Set Special Meeting Date for Review of New Applications:

The district has \$12,356.31 remaining in unallocated funds, and the allocation period is open until December 2, 2022. The district can open another sign-up period, but the board would need to hold a special meeting to review the applications since the next regular board meeting is scheduled for December 7, which is after the allocation deadline. Following discussion, Kunze made a motion to open a second emergency drought sign-up period from November 7-16 and to schedule a special meeting on November 22, 2022, 1:30 p.m. to review any new applications. Pollard seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4e. Review and Approval New District Cooperative Agreements:

The Board reviewed the requests for new district cooperative agreements from Earl Rooms, Thomas Rueb, RHD Industries, Inc., Abraham Warren, Wayne Wells, Leslie Lambeth, Gary Marshall, and Martha Coombs.

All the new cooperative agreements are from applicants participating in the Emergency Drought conservation cost share program. Following review, Godfrey made a motion to approve the new cooperative agreements for Earl Rooms, Thomas Rueb, RHD Industries, Inc., Abraham Warren, Wayne Wells, Leslie Lambeth, Gary Marshall, and Martha Coombs. Pollard seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4f. CARE Program Report:

- Champion Kwame Mboya completed his conservation practice for a water well, and the invoice has been submitted to OACD for payment. Mboya is trying to get a grant from American Farmland Trust to help pay for the pump. Campbell expressed appreciation for the work Chris Sala and the FSA staff in Logan County had done in helping get the records established on the property Mboya leases.
- Kouri and Inmon participated in the Bison Roundup tour at the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve on October 27. CARE districts and Champions were invited by the Nature Conservancy to participate in a behind the scenes look at how the bison roundup is handled and its purpose. Preserve staff also shared information with the group about the Tallgrass Prairie and the bison management program. Kouri stated it provided a good opportunity to build on relationships with Nature Conservancy staff.
- Directors received a copy of the meeting notes from the OACD zoom meeting held October 26. OACD gave an update regarding funding and continuation of the CARE program. OACD has requested to reallocate \$268,000 of the remaining CARE budget to future months that would extend the current project for three more quarters ending June 30, 2022. They are still waiting on confirmation of that request. OACD is working on several other grant opportunities to help fund the program while waiting on USDA to release the RFP for more Conservation Collaboration grants which should be in late October or November. OACD has secured funding through the OCC Water Quality Division to continue doing demonstration projects on 16 current Champions including Steve Easom. The total payment would be for \$2,800, same as the previous payment.

4g. Set Schedule of Regular Board Meetings for 2023:

Directors were provided a copy of the 2023 calendar. The district normally holds regular board meetings at 1:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month except for May which is held on the second Wednesday. Following review of the calendar, Pollard made a motion to set the schedule of regular meetings dates for 2023 as January 4, February 1, March 1, April 5, May 10, June 7, July 5, August 2, September 6, October 4, November 1, and December 6. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

4h. Review Agenda, Discuss Upcoming Area 2 Meeting:

Directors reviewed the agenda for the OACD Area 2 meeting being held at the Meridian Technology Center in Stillwater on November 4. The agenda includes a session on the CARE program and a showing of the CARE video that includes several Oklahoma County producers. Kouri will also be speaking about urban conservation in the afternoon session. The employee session and directors business meeting will be held prior to lunch this year. Directors Pollard, Godfrey, and Campbell, plus Inmon, Kouri, and Spaulding are registered to attend the meeting.

4i. Discuss Possible Lynn Institute USDA Grant:

Kouri reviewed the Lynn Institute USDA grant proposal. The Lynn Institute is a non-profit that has taken over operation of the small urban farm located on the Chesapeake Energy campus. It is a great facility that has not be utilized in the last few years. The Institute hopes to get the farm going again and turn it into a training farm for urban ag. They are applying for a grant through USDA that helps underserved

producers increase access to land, capital, and markets for produce. Kouri has been providing them technical assistance and wanted the board to be aware of the partnership opportunity going forward.

4j. District Vehicle Evaluation:

The district vehicle on loan from OCC was having maintenance issues, and the vehicle stalled out on Lincoln Blvd and had to be towed back to the office. Staff contacted OCC and was advised to tow the vehicle back to the office where they will probably surplus it out. Lisa Owen also told Inmon that OCC may have a better option for the district. Owen stated she would discuss the other vehicle option with the board and staff at the upcoming area meeting.

4k. Education Update:

- 1) The district sponsored a natural resource day with Putnam City Harvest Hills on October 7. Directors Campbell and Pollard assisted with the three rotations which included a skins and skulls wildlife presentation led by Pollard, a fishing clinic, and the 'Incredible Journey' water cycle activity. There were 70 fifth grade students who attended. The event was held at Shiloh Camp in Oklahoma City.
- 2) The district had three winners in the area poster contest. Local district winners in Division 1 and Division 3 also placed first in the area contest, while the Division 2 winner placed second. The area awards will be available at the area meeting. Inmon plans to deliver the local and area awards to the school sometime next week.

5. REPORTS:

5a. NRCS Activities:

Report presented by Bree Spaulding.

Spaulding reported she spent most of the month assisting with field visits for drought relief. She also assisted with outreach programs.

5b. District Directors:

Campbell and Pollard assisted with the natural resource day at Shiloh Camp on October 7. Pollard led the wildlife activity and Campbell assisted with the fishing clinic.

5c. District Staff:

(See full reports attached to original minutes.)

- ✓ Inmon plans to attend an Open Meetings Record Act seminar on November 14. The seminar is at Metro Tech from 1-4 p.m. The seminar is free and directors are welcome to attend.
- ✓ Inmon attended an OPERS retirement seminar on October 18. She stated her retirement date would be either February 1 or September 1, 2023. According to OPERS, her benefit will increase if she waits until September 1, so she is leaning towards that date.
- ✓ Kouri reported the district's tree giveaway was successful with 24 Yard-by-Yard participants getting trees. The district also provided 10 trees to RestoreOKC for its park improvement and 10 trees to Quayle Methodist for its food forest project.
- ✓ Kouri assisted OACD with a tour for directors from the Mississippi Association of Conservation Districts. They visited Commonwealth Farms as well as some of the local Yard-by-Yard participants.
- ✓ Another local OKC food hub is applying for a USDA grant and has asked for a letter of support from the district. The project wants to partner with existing organizations, like the conservation district, for services and information to help them establish their farm business.

5d. Watershed Tech - Bradley Martin:

(Report attached to original minutes.)

6. CORRESPONDENCE - Sirloin Club:

The annual Sirloin Club meeting is November 16, 11:30 a.m. at the Cattlemen’s Steakhouse. If any of the directors want to attend, they should RSVP by November 10.

7. NEW BUSINESS: None

8. ANNOUNCE NEXT BOARD MEETING AND ADJOURN:

Chair Campbell announced the next meeting is scheduled for December 7, 2022, 1:30 p.m. There being no further business, Kunze made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:06 p.m. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Godfrey, Pollard, Kunze, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

Approved as Written: 
Chair, Board of Directors

Date: 12.7.2022

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
Amanda Mathis, Acting State Conservationist, NRCS
Brent Pannell, Assist State Cons, Field OP, Zone 2, NRCS

Oklahoma County Conservation District
Activity Report, November 2, 2022
Becky Inmon, District Manager

- ✓ Emailed October minutes to directors for review, submitted September approved minutes packet to OCC, emailed minutes to partners
- ✓ Prepared and submitted monthly reimbursement claims to OCC
- ✓ Reconciled monthly bank statements and balanced checkbook
- ✓ Prepared monthly payroll tax reports, made payments online
- ✓ Submitted quarterly OKTap report to OTC
- ✓ Prepared monthly financial statement for Board
- ✓ Updated all financial worksheets including CARE and NACD grant funds
- ✓ Participated in annual local work group meeting on October 5, prepared meeting minutes
- ✓ Assisted with natural resource day event with Harvest Hills Elementary on October 7
- ✓ Submitted local poster contest entries to OACDE for area contest
- ✓ Assisted applicants with emergency drought cost share sign up, made contacts with Program year 24 participants regarding performance agreement extensions and funding for alternate
- ✓ Submitted quarterly TA grant report to NACD
- ✓ Submitted digital copies of watershed easements for Kickapoo 4 and Bear Fall Coon 32 to Conservation Commission as required
- ✓ Ordered poster contest awards from MTM, notified Grove Valley teacher regarding area poster winners
- ✓ CARE outreach activities:
 - Participated in Bison roundup at Tallgrass Prairie Preserve with other CARE districts and Champions
 - Participated in CARE zoom meeting on October 26-discussion of program continuation
 - Submitted Mboya CARE invoice for payment to OACD
 - Promoted OACD's CARE video launch on social media, contacted participants in the video
- ✓ Prepared employee October payroll sheets, prepared and submitted preclaim summaries to OCC, prepared quarterly CARE payroll for Inmon and Kouri, and prepared annual longevity payroll for Inmon
- ✓ Updated monthly earnings records and leave records for employees
- ✓ Prepared November 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 updates to website and social media as needed

**Oklahoma County Conservation District
October Activity Report (Nov. 2nd, 2022)
Joshua Kouri, Urban Soil Health Specialist**

➤ **Contacts**

- 80 one-on-one contacts in September (61 individuals; 19 SDA contacts)
- Assisted producers with applying for Emergency Drought Cost Share program and assisted NRCS staff with site visits
- Eight in-person CTA visits, w/ follow-up information provided
- Two Yard by Yard certifications
- Six outreach events (approx. 215 reached):
 - Information tables at OSU farmers market and Myriad Gardens pumpkin patch
 - Skype a Scientist video call to 5th grade class
 - Natural Resource Day for Harvest Hills Elementary 5th graders
 - Participated in Fall Festival science education event at Science Museum Oklahoma with a pollinator conservation-themed activity
 - Hosted urban conservation tour for directors of Mississippi Cons. Dists.
 - Use the 44 fruit trees paid for with urban conservation funds to support local projects:
 - 10 trees to RestoreFarms' Harden Park improvement project
 - 10 trees to Quayle UMC's food forest project
 - 24 trees for a giveaway for Yard by Yard participants in OK. County

➤ **Educational Activities:**

- Completed Master Composter training course from Ok. County OSU Extension to receive training on composting to better assist urban clients in Oklahoma County
- Met with staff of Oklahoma Biological Survey to discuss cooperation on urban conservation outreach and citizen-science projects
- Attended the "Bison Roundup" at the Nature Conservancy's Tallgrass Prairie Preserve

➤ **Outreach Planning:**

- Presenting on urban conservation at Area 1, 2, and 4 meetings in November

➤ **Office Activities:**

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

➤ **Ongoing Projects:**

- **OKC Food Hub – nonprofit to increase market access for urban farmers through aggregation/distribution. Can we write them a letter of support for a USDA grant?**
- Providing technical assistance and funding for RestoreOKC park project
- Continued assistance for Spencer Youth in Sports Association's microgreens project
- Continued assistance for Crown Heights Park's wildflower area (2022 annual project)
 - Johnson grass has been sprayed, mowed, and covered with cardboard and mulch—ready to plant in the spring!