

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

Date and Time: Wednesday, October 5, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

Members Present: Phil Campbell, Chair
Jan Kunze, Vice Chair, Entered meeting at 1:39 p.m.
Rick Godfrey, Treasurer
Mark Moehle, Member
Laura Pollard, Member

Member Absent: None

Others Present: Rebecca Inmon, District Manager
Larry Hood, Resource Conservationist, NRCS
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 11:45 a.m. on October 4, 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 September 7, 2022, Regular Meeting:

Board members received a copy of the September minutes for review. Moehle made a motion to approve the September minutes as written. Pollard 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 September 30, 2022:

The Board reviewed the financial statement for the period of September 1-30, 2022, including the accounts payable and receivable and the September checking and money market statements. (Attachment 1) Inmon noted some items regarding the financial statement. A check written to Fuzzell's Business Equipment in July had been lost in the mail. The lost check was cancelled and another check written to replace it. Due to an error on Kouri's Confirmation of Benefits (COB) statement related to his insurance, his payroll for July and August had to be corrected. He was overpaid by \$4.70 each month and a total of \$9.40 was deducted from his September check. An October 3 cost share reimbursement deposit is listed on the checking account reconciliation and will appear on the October bank statement.

The CARE invoice was submitted to OACD on September 29, and the payment should arrive soon. There are funds in the district account to cover the quarterly CARE salary for Inmon and Kouri. Moehle made a motion to approve the September financial statement as presented including payment of the employee's quarterly CARE salaries. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0. The Board also reviewed copies of the September credit card statement attached to the financial statement.

3b. Employee Payroll Sheets and Time and Leave Records for Month Ending September 30, 2022:

Directors reviewed the payroll sheets and time and leave records for district staff Rebecca Inmon and Josh Kouri. As stated earlier, Kouri's payroll for July and August had to be corrected. His September payroll is correct, but his paycheck was less than the amount shown on the payroll sheet due to the previous two months overpayment. Moehle made a motion to approve the employee payroll sheets and time and leave records for September. Pollard seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 4-0.

Kunze entered the meeting at 1:39 p.m.

3c. District's Monthly Reimbursement Claims:

The Board reviewed the district's monthly reimbursement claims to the Conservation Commission. The regular claim for operating expense was \$459.62, the special project claim for Kouri was \$558.70, and Inmon's salary/longevity claim was \$7,140.60. Moehle made a motion to approve the district's reimbursement claims to OCC. Pollard seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.

4. OLD BUSINESS:

Harden Park Improvement Project:

Kouri provided the board additional information regarding the RestoreOKC Harden Park Improvement project proposal initially discussed at the September meeting. The district has approximately \$1,000 set aside to assist with the project. In further discussions with RestoreOKC regarding types of trees needed, the updated proposal is to provide 10 fruit trees and wildflower seed already purchased by the district plus seven additional trees, two Bur Oak, three Red Maple, and two Chinese Pistache, for a total additional cost of \$913 before shipping and possible taxes. Restore will place signs in the park acknowledging the conservation district's support for the project along with acknowledgement in the media and online. After review, Moehle made a motion to approve the RestoreOKC Harden Park Improvement project proposal as presented by Kouri. Kunze seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.

5. CONSIDERATION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON DISTRICT OPERATION ITEMS:

5a. Monthly NRCS Performance Worksheet:

The Board reviewed the NRCS Performance Worksheet for the month of September. Spaulding noted the district staff had assisted with all required tasks as needed. Godfrey made a motion to approve the September worksheet. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, Kunze, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.

5b. Cost Share Program Year 24-Approve Performance Agreement Extension Requests, Cancellation Request, and Reallocation of Funds to Alternate:

- ✓ Jeffrey Canaday and Clint Spencer have both requested an extension to their cost share performance agreement practice deadline. Both producers have enlisted the same contractor and are waiting on him to construct their pond. With the current drought situation and dry conditions, NRCS technician Nick Owen has recommended both landowners be granted a 90-day extension. Otherwise, a water truck will have to be onsite during construction to achieve the compaction levels required by NRCS. Moehle made a motion to approve a 90-day performance agreement deadline extension for Jeffrey Canaday and Clint Spencer and to establish a new completion deadline of December 30, 2022. Pollard seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.
- ✓ Nikolaus Atkinson has requested the cancellation of his cost share performance agreement due to water issues discovered onsite. The water table at the site was too high and it made construction of the pond too costly. Moehle made a motion to cancel the performance agreement for Nikolaus Atkinson. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.
- ✓ The cancellation of the agreement for Nikolaus Atkinson and the construction of a much smaller pond by Steve Bateson have left the district with \$7,913.44 in unallocated funds that can be reallocated to one or more of the approved alternates. The next alternate in line for funding is the Lake Hiwassee Improvement Company whose performance agreement calls for brush management up to \$7,500. Following discussion, Pollard made a motion to reallocate \$7,500 to the Lake Hiwassee Improvement Company and to contact the other alternates if Lake Hiwassee declines the funds. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.

5c. Review and Approval Emergency Drought Relief Cost Share Program Participation & Guidelines:

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission announced an Emergency Drought (ED2) cost share program that begins on October 3, 2022 and ends on December 2, 2023. The allocation period for the program starts October 3, 2022 and ends December 2, 2022. The emergency drought program allocates \$33,000 to each county initially for practices such as cover crop, pasture and hayland planting (excluding bermudagrass), pipeline, pumping plant, pond clean out (livestock water only), pasture tap, watering facilities, and water wells. The board will need to establish local guidelines and practices. Each director was provided a copy of the ED2 cost share guidelines and some of the frequently asked questions and answers concerning the program. Following review, the board took action on the following items:

- ✓ District director participation: Godfrey made a motion that local district directors not be allowed to participate in the program. Kunze seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.
- ✓ Designated district representative: Moehle made a motion to designate Vice Chair Kunze as the designated representative to sign the Certification of Completion and Acceptance and Performance and Maintenance agreements with Pollard being the designated alternate. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.
- ✓ Designated technical representative: Kunze made a motion to designate NRCS soil conservationist Bree Spaulding as the district technical representative. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.
- ✓ Designate district technical representative: Pollard made a motion to designate Josh Kouri as the district technical representative. Kunze seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.

- ✓ Select local program conservation practices: Following review and discussion of the available conservation practices, Kunze made a motion to select water wells, pond clean out, pasture tap, pumping plant, and pipeline as the five practices to be approved for funding in Oklahoma County. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.
- ✓ Establish specific selection criteria/priority ranking system for selecting successful applicants: Following discussion, Godfrey made a motion to set the practice priority ranking order as 1) water well-1,000 pts, 2) pasture tap-750 pts, 3) pond clean out-600 pts, 4) pumping plant-400 pts, and 5) pipeline-200 pts, with water wells being ranked further according to other water sources available, pond clean out being ranked further by size of pond, and tie breakers being broken by date of application. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0. (Copy of ranking criteria attached.) All applicants must be experiencing drought conditions on their property.
- ✓ Set application period: Pollard made a motion to set the application period as October 10 through October 26. Godfrey seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.
- ✓ Set dates and places to advertise: A statewide media release has gone out regarding the program. Godfrey made a motion to advertise the local guidelines through social media and the district's website. Kunze seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0. Inmon stated she had been contacted by Natalie Hughes of KFOR-TV regarding the program and she would be notifying her regarding specific details of the local program.

5d. CARE Report-Outreach Meetings, End of Year Program Wrap-Up, Follow-Up Ideas, and Upcoming Zoom Meeting:

- ✓ Two CARE outreach events were completed in September. An event was held with Champion Steve Easom on September 17 with 23 people in attendance. The second event was held with Champion Kwame Mboya on September 26 with 41 people in attendance. The events were well received and attendees were provided with information about USDA programs, the CARE program, state cost share, and a soil health demonstration by OCC personnel. Easom's event provided additional information on beekeeping and pollinator habitat. The Mboya event concentrated on regenerative ag practices in an urban setting.
- ✓ Kouri and Champion Steve Easom attended the CARE wrap up event held at the Pontotoc Ridge Preserve near Ada on September 15.
- ✓ Directors were provided with a list of program follow-up ideas developed by OACD.
- ✓ There will be a CARE zoom meeting held October 26 to discuss details regarding a possible program continuation.

5e. Discuss Upcoming OACD Meetings, Approve Area Meeting Attendance:

The OACD area 2 meeting will be held on November 4 at the Meridian Technology Center in Stillwater. Directors reviewed the agenda which includes information about the CARE program, cost share programs, climate, soil health, urban conservation, online resource tools, and roundtable mini sessions. Josh Kouri will be leading the urban conservation discussion at the meeting. Registration is \$45 for in person or \$35 for virtual attendance, and registration is due by October 28. Following discussion, Moehle made a motion to pay for up to six people to attend the meeting. Kunze seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0. The OACD State Meeting is scheduled for February 26-28, 2023, at the Embassy Suites, 3233 NW Expressway in Oklahoma City, which is a new location for the meeting.

5f. Discuss Possible Sponsorship of OACD Youth Contests:

OACD has requested districts consider helping sponsor the annual youth contests which cost approximately \$15,000 to host each year. Levels of sponsorship include district level-\$100, platinum district-\$250, partner-\$250, 2nd place-\$500, 1st place-\$1,000, and national winner-\$5,000. Kunze made a motion to sponsor the OACD youth contests at the district level of \$100. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Kunze, Pollard, Godfrey, Moehle, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.

5g. Local Work Group Meeting Scheduled Following Board Meeting-Discuss Survey Results:

Directors reviewed the agenda for the local group meeting being held immediately following the board meeting. Directors discussed the locally led resource concern surveys received throughout the year and the top concerns expressed by landowners. The top five concerns were brush management, livestock water, soil erosion, herbaceous weed control, and gully erosion. Other concerns were inadequate feed and forage, water quality, and loss of wildlife habitat. Among landowners who want to be notified about next year's cost share sign-up, the most requested practices are brush management, livestock water-including ponds and water wells, and grass planting. Chair Campbell and director Godfrey will represent the board at the local work group meeting.

5h. Education and Outreach Report:

- 1) September 13 - Kouri taught 5th grade science classes at Oklahoma Christian School about the water cycle and water conservation. There were 80 students who participated.
- 2) September 24 - Kouri set up a booth at the TinkerFest science education event where attendees could participate in pollinator themed activities.
- 3) October 7 - A natural resource day event is scheduled with Putnam City Harvest Hills Elementary 5th grade classes. The event will be held at Shiloh Camp in Oklahoma City. There will be three rotations at the event: wildlife skins and skulls, the water cycle, and a fishing clinic. Harvest Hills has 70 students this year.
- 4) Directors reviewed the poster contest entries. The number of entries continues to decline, but several of the entries received were very good. Winning entries will be submitted to the OACDE area representative Patti Christian for the OACD area poster contest competition.

6. REPORTS:**6a. NRCS Activities:**

Report presented by Larry Hood and Bree Spaulding.

- ✓ NRCS staff has been participating in several training opportunities.
- ✓ The deadline for the Grassland Conservation Initiative is October 16.
- ✓ The deadline for EQIP applications is December 9.

6b. District Directors:

- ✓ Pollard attended the CARE outreach event held at the farm of Kwame Mboya on September 26.
- ✓ Chair Campbell attended the CARE outreach events for Champions Easom and Mboya.
- ✓ Campbell also attended the Drought Commission meeting held recently.
- ✓ Campbell reported the fencing contractor hired for Kickapoo Site 4 was no longer available and a new contractor would need to be identified for the project.

6c. District Staff (Inmon and Kouri):

(Reports attached to original minutes.)

- ✓ The employee report includes a quarterly update of accomplishments for the Joint Plan of Operations. (Copy of report attached.)
- ✓ The annual compilation is not yet completed. The auditor lost one of her employees and she is running behind in completing audits and compilations.
- ✓ Inmon reminded directors she would be on vacation October 10-14.

7. CORRESPONDENCE:

OSU Extension:

OSU Extension and USDA are holding a series of programs across the state for veterans and beginning farmers. There will be a meeting in Edmond on October 20 and 6 p.m. Spaulding plans to attend.

Trey Lam-Oklahoma Conservation Commission:

Trey Lam, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, announced that Trampas Tripp has accepted the position of Division Director for the Abandon Mine lands Program. The position came open when Robert Toole retired at the end of August.

8. NEW BUSINESS: None

9. ANNOUNCE NEXT BOARD MEETING AND ADJOURN:

Chair Campbell announced the next meeting was scheduled for November 2, 2022, 1:30 p.m. There being no further business, Kunze made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:17 p.m. Moehle seconded the motion. Aye votes: Godfrey, Moehle, Kunze, Pollard, and Campbell. Nay votes: none. Motion passed 5-0.

Approved as Written: Phil Campbell
Chair, Board of Directors

Date: 11.2.2022

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, October 5, 2022
Becky Inmon, District Manager

- ✓ Emailed September minutes to directors for review, submitted August 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
- ✓ Prepared quarterly tax reports and quarterly OESC report
- ✓ Prepared monthly financial statement for Board
- ✓ Updated all financial worksheets including CARE and NACD grant funds
- ✓ Assisted cost share participants and prepared claims as needed, contacted participants regarding cancellation and/or performance agreement extension requests
- ✓ Participated in Yard-by-Yard certification with Kouri on September 2
- ✓ CARE outreach activities:
 - Made preparations and assisted with outreach events for Steve Easom on September 17 and Kwame Mboya on September 26
 - Made field visit with Kouri to Mboya on Sept 22
 - Submitted Easom CARE invoice for payment to OACD
 - Submitted quarterly CARE invoice and report to OACD
- ✓ Filed papers for notary renewal with Walker Stamp and Seal
- ✓ Mailed invitations and surveys to local work group members for meeting on October 5, prepared meeting agenda, compiled local meeting survey information
- ✓ Made contacts and preparations for upcoming natural resource day with Harvest Hills Elementary
- ✓ Prepared employee September payroll sheets, prepared and submitted preclaim summaries to OCC, prepared corrected July and August payroll for Kouri due to Confirmation of Benefits (COB) error
- ✓ Reviewed JPO updates with Kouri, prepared quarterly report for board
- ✓ Updated monthly earnings records and leave records for employees
- ✓ Prepared October 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
September Activity Report (Oct. 5th, 2022)
Joshua Kouri, Urban Soil Health Specialist**

➤ **Contacts**

- 32 total contacts in September (24 individuals)
- Six in-person CTA visits, w/ follow-up information provided
- Four outreach events:
 - Taught 5th grade science classes at Oklahoma Christian School about the water cycle and water conservation (80 students)
 - CARE field days for Steve Easom and Kwame Mboya (60-80 total attendees)
 - Participated in TinkerFest science education event at Science Museum Oklahoma with a pollinator conservation-themed activity (5000 attendees)

➤ **Educational Activities:**

- Attended Master Composter training course from Ok. County OSU Extension to receive training on composting to better assist urban clients in Oklahoma County
- Attended Conservation Planning Workshop from NRCS and NACDE in Stillwater to learn about the technical process of writing conservation plans and be better equipped to write useful plans for district clients
- Toured Midwest Plant Propagation native plant nursery to learn about growing native plants and using them for landscaping purposes
- Wrote/edited and distributed Yard by Yard newsletter

➤ **Outreach Planning:**

- 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
 - 5 trees to Central Park Community Gardens
 - 19 trees for a giveaway drawing for Yard by Yard participants in OK. County
- Planning for "Fall Festival" events at the Ok. County OSU Extension farmers market and at the Science Museum Oklahoma
- Planning educational video on the process of converting a lawn into a native plant landscape (collaborating with Midwest Plant Propagation/Galt Landscaping)
- Met with staff from Will Rogers Gardens and Marten Park Nature Center to discuss urban conservation education and collaboration

➤ **Office Activities:**

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

➤ **Ongoing Projects:**

- Providing technical assistance and possible 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)

JPO quarterly update – October 5

- ✓ Completed farm tours – Easom and Mboya
- ✓ Cost share – Guess, Bateson, and Stanfield are completed, taking requests for next year
- ✓ Two producers assisted with soil health evaluations
- ✓ Water quality promoted at CARE events/ education activities
- ✓ Improve water quantity & water supply – 5 cost share ponds planned, 3 completed
- ✓ Technical assistance so far are:
 - Cher Portnoff-Steuwe (OKC)
 - Steve Riggs (Mustang)
 - Devin Murphy (OKC)
 - Laura Pollard (Edmond)
 - Connie Holiman (Edmond)
 - Crestwood HOA (Stillwater)
 - Jami Poor (OKC)
 - Quayle UMC (OKC)

- ✓ Collaborate with partners: Crown Heights, Harden Park, Restore OKC, Community Park Garden, Quayle Methodist
- ✓ Working with Cheryl Cheadle on Yard-by-Yard newsletter
- ✓ Monitor Beautiful Restoration, office pollinator habitat sites
- ✓ Urban project partners identified: Erin Herman, Chesapeake garden, Quayle, Harden Park/Restore OKC
- ✓ NRD – Harvest Hills in October
- ✓ Poster contest entries received
- ✓ Worked with Steve Easom, Hives to Heroes Project for veterans, promoted USDA and district programs
- ✓ Trainings completed are: **Add directors**
 - BlueSTEM science education event
 - Master Composter course through the extension office
 - NACDE Conservation Planning workshop
 - Doug Tallamy "Nature's Best Hope" urban conservation seminar
 - "Economics of Adaptation" seminar
 - Yard by Yard statewide Zoom training on August 23 (Josh and Becky)
 - OKIE811 training (Josh and Becky)
 - July OCC district TEAMS training (Josh and Becky)
 - Statewide Women in Ag (Inmon and Kunze)

- ✓ Volunteers utilized for TinkerFest upcoming NRD
- ✓ Campbell attended NACD regional meeting
- ✓ Manage TA grant for Kouri salary
- ✓ Annual work group meeting scheduled for October 5
- ✓ Annual compilation material with auditor
- ✓ Completed Annual Report to OCC
- ✓ Local operational agreement with NRCS updated and reviewed in August