



TEXAS STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD

SECOND FLOOR DENMAN BUILDING

TEMPLE

February 19, 20, 1953.

The State Soil Conservation Board met in College Station, Texas, February 19, 1953, with the following members present: Horace K Fawcett, Chairman, E W Wehman, C M Caraway, Sr, S J Payne,. Others present were V C Marshall, Executive Director, A C Spencer, Field Planning Engineer and Roy Gough, Assistant State Soil Conservationist.

The minutes of the last Board Meeting held in Mineral Wells, Texas, January 21, 22, and 23, 1953, were read and approved.

The dates of January 14 and 15, 1954, were approved as the time for holding the next Annual State Meeting of the District Supervisors in Fort Worth, Texas.

The moving of the offices of the State Board to the first floor of the Neuman Building was discussed and upon motion by C M Caraway, Sr, seconded by S J Payne, and unanimously passed, that the Executive Director be authorized to make such change if all details could be worked out satisfactorily.

A motion was made by C M Caraway, Sr, seconded by E W Wehman that the final allotment of the Five Million Dollar Grant made by the Texas Legislature to the several Soil Conservation Districts as presented to the Board, copy of same to be made a part of these minutes, was approved and the Chairman authorized to sign the claims for each District.

The Board discussed a probable vacancy in the position of one of the Field Planning Engineers. It was the unanimous decision of the Board to approve the employment of William R Heizer of DeLeon, Texas, if he should decide to accept the position.

Roy Gough, Assistant State Soil Conservationist of the Soil Conservation Service, discussed with the Board various phases of the Soil Conservation program as being carried on by his Department with the Soil Conservation Districts which was very encouraging.

On Friday morning, February 20, 1953, the Board met with Mr G G Gibson, Director of the Extension Staff, J D Prewitt, Associate Director, Paul G Haines, Soil and Water Conservation Specialist, Dr Lewis and Mr D W Williams, Assistant Chancellor. in a round table discussion of the many problems of Soil Conservation and their opportunities to assist in this work. The discussion lasted for four hours and it was the opinion of all present that much better relations would result from meetings of this type.

The meeting was adjourned at noon.


Horace K Fawcett, Chairman



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From February 1 through February 6 was spent traveling to and from and attending the Annual Meeting of the National Association of Soil Conservation Districts held in Omaha, Nebraska.

There were twenty persons from Texas who traveled by special car from Fort Worth leaving the evening of February 1st and arriving in Omaha the afternoon of February 2nd. The trip gave an opportunity to get personally acquainted with the Supervisors from various Districts and confer with them on current problems in the operation of their different Districts.

The Program of the National Convention is conducted somewhat differently to that of the State Program. General sessions were held at the opening of the meeting during luncheon and dinner periods. These general sessions had professional speakers for the principal portion of the program. Business was conducted in committee meetings such as Legislative, Finance, Publicity, etc. Area meetings were held to discuss problems that are peculiar to the United States. In the area in which Texas was included, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Arkansas made up this group.

It was impossible for one person to attend all sessions. I personally attended the meeting of the Finance Committee of the National Association and was given the assignment of writing the minutes for this particular committee.

The financing of the National Association is handled through assessments to the various Districts throughout the United States. These assessments are made on the number of cooperators within the District. How the money is raised is left to the individual Districts. Suggestions were made that Districts sell sustaining member - ships to banks, other businesses and individuals. A number of Districts suggested that the easiest way to raise money was through writing a letter to the individual cooperators. These Supervisors felt that the cooperators should finance the National Association Program since they are the ones who directly benefit from the activities of the Association and the local District. A budget of approximately \$125,000.00 was adopted by the National Association. This included a \$25,000.00 contingent fund to be used as a reserve. It was generally felt that the contingent fund was entirely contingent on being raised.

The Legislative Committee attracted more attention than any other group meeting. President Waters S. Davis sent out a questionnaire to all Supervisors in the United States prior to the convention. About six questions were asked which pertained to national legislation. In the general session President Davis announced the results of the poll and suggested that the Legislative Committee use the trend of thinking as a guide for drawing up any resolutions or congressional recommendations. The Supervisors, according to the questionnaire, were almost unanimous in their feeling that technical service should not be in any way related to the Extension Service. There was almost an equal division on where the Association should recommend that conservation payments through PMA be eliminated to permanent type practices. This division was sectional and almost corresponded to the Mason-Dixon Line. Southern delegates wished to retain the annual practices while Northern delegates wished to eliminate them. The question of whether or not SCD Supervisors wished to assume the full responsibility for the PMA Program should annual practices be eliminated was also controversial. Some delegates stated that if the Supervisors refused to

assume responsibility for the District Program that someone else would and the strength of Districts would rapidly decline. Other Supervisors stated that the administration of funds is an unpleasant and thankless task which consumes a large amount of time. These Supervisors could not see how Districts could assume this responsibility without the Supervisors being paid by the Federal Government. Anytime a Supervisor accepts pay from the Federal Government he is a Federal employee and therefore must do what he is told by the Federal Government. In the thinking of these Supervisors this would eliminate the local self determination and independence of the Districts and in the long run bring about their down fall.

One interesting feature of the National Association Meeting was the fact that the ladies were invited and formed an Auxilliary. Special programs of interest to the ladies, such as a tour through the packing companies, to Boy's Town, and arrangements for a style show were provided. The ladies seemed none too happy over not being invited to participate in the general programs of the convention, but otherwise everything worked out well. A square dance on one evening was arranged for general entertainment.

There were 1,437 registered delegates to the meeting from 47 states and two territories.

The importance and influence of the National Association of Supervisors can be expressed in the fact that the Secretary of Agriculture Benson called President Waters Davis and stated that the Department of Agriculture has not yet adopted its program affecting soil conservation. Mr. Benson stated, however, that before any definite policies that concern either Soil Conservation Districts or soil conservation in general are adopted, the National Association will be given an opportunity to appear before the committees and Departments.

There was a breakfast held for the State Board Members and employees to discuss State Board problems. Due to insufficient time, about the only matter discussed was what the various State Boards are doing to help train new Supervisors and develop the older Supervisors. Most State Boards do not have paid employees, other than one Executive Director and one person to do office work. In these States Supervisors' development is left strictly to the agencies.

The over all impression I received from attending the convention was the feeling that Texas has the best Soil Conservation District Law of any of the States that the State Board's program is more positive and that the Texas Soil Conservation District Program is more nearly in the hands of the farmers and ranchers than is true in any other State.

Respectfully submitted,


A. C. SPENCER
Field Planning Engineer

ACS:mmm