

OFFICIAL MINUTES  
STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD  
September 28, 1965

The State Soil and Water Conservation Board met a 7:30 PM in the Kyle Hotel at Temple, Texas, September 28, 1965. Board Members present: J. C. Porter, Chairman, E. W. Wehman, A. F. Leesch, and J. Frank Gray.

Others present: H. D. Davis, Executive Director, S. E. Jones, Assistant Executive Director, L. F. Stewart, O. F. Armstrong, and J. M. Norton of the State Board staff, Gilbert Kretzschmar, President, and A. L. Bading, Executive Secretary of the Texas Association of Soil Conservation Districts, and C. W. Graham, Deputy Conservationist, SCS, Temple, Texas.

The Minutes of the July 17, 1965 meeting of the State Soil Conservation Board were read and approved.

New watershed applications for assistance under Public Law 566 were presented to the Board on "Sanderson Canyon" in the Big Bend and Rio Grande-Pecos River Soil & Water Conservation Districts near Sanderson, Texas and "The Eastern Portion of Pine Island Bayou" in the Lower Neches Soil and Water Conservation District near Kountze, Texas. On motion by A. F. Leesch, seconded by Frank Gray, the Board disapproved the applications pending field examinations to determine feasibility.

An application for assistance under Public Law 566 on the Wichita Valley-Pond Creek Watershed was reviewed by the Board and accepted as an amendment to the Wichita County Watershed #180. On motion by A. F. Leesch, seconded by E. W. Wehman, the Board disapproved the amended application pending a preliminary survey to determine feasibility on the area not previously investigated.

An amended application to the Cornudas and North Draws Watershed to include Culp Draw adding an additional 18,870 acres as well as to add Otero County, New Mexico, as an official Co-sponsor of the project was reviewed by the Board. After determining that the feasibility of the project would not be impaired by the amendment, the Board approved the amended application on motion by A. F. Leesch, seconded by Frank Gray.

A favorable field examination on the Faulkenberry Creek Watershed at Groesbeck, Texas was reviewed for the Board by J. M. Norton. On motion by E. W. Wehman, seconded by Frank Gray, the Board approved the watershed as being feasible for project planning and development.

Harvey Davis reviewed supplemental project agreements which were signed by him on August 30, 1965 on Pecan Creek for \$19,500 and on Bennett Creek for \$20,000 for the purpose of work plan development on these watersheds. On motion by Frank Gray, seconded by A. F. Leesch, the Board ratified the action by Davis.

Correspondence with sponsors and interested persons relative to their watershed projects was reviewed with the Board. A letter from Paul Harvey, president of the Aquilla-Hackberry Creek WCID explained that their recent bond and tax election had just carried favorably and they were in a position to carry out their obligations in planning and developing the Aquilla-Hackberry Creeks Watershed project.

A letter from the San Antonio River Authority expressed their interest and desire to secure a planning priority on Ecletto Creek Watershed and urged the Board to favorably consider them when additional priorities were needed and set.

Another letter by Mr. Vernon L. Smith expressed interest in securing a preliminary survey on Hog Creek to determine feasibility.

Recent correspondence from Howard Boswell proposed a meeting with Joe Moore, Executive Director of the Texas Water Development Board, to review and discuss the Upstream Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program in Texas. This meeting was confirmed and set for October 5, 1965 in the Sam Houston Office Building in Austin.

J. C. Porter gave a report on recent meetings and activities of the Red River Authority in relation to the proposed major reservoir on Sweetwater Creek. He inquired of Mr. Graham as to the effect this reservoir might have on the development of the upstream program on this same watershed and as to whether a conservation storage reservoir could be constructed under Public Law 566 to provide municipal water for the interested towns. Mr. Graham stated that it would be necessary to meet with Freeze and Nichols, consulting engineers on the project, and evaluate data and information to determine the effect of the proposed reservoir on the upstream project.

Mr. Graham then reported to the Board that federal funds had been appropriated in the Agricultural Bill in the amount of \$94,000 to conduct River Basin planning in the Lower Rio Grande Valley during the 1966 fiscal year. The Texas Water Commission and the State Soil Conservation Board requested assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1962 to plan the lower Rio Grande Valley. It is felt that if a like or similar amount can be secured for the following fiscal year, a plan can be developed to cover the lower Valley area including the area of the new application on Lyford-Los Coyotes Watershed. The Basin planning will develop much of the field information and data, which though not complete, will greatly facilitate the development of the work plans on the watershed projects under PL 566.

Mr. Graham also reported that the Duck Creek Watershed Work Plan has been approved by Congress and is authorized for operations. The status of work plan development and planning currently under way was reviewed with the State Board by Mr. Graham. Consideration is now being given toward developing possibly 4 sites in the Running Water Draw Watershed for recreational storage. An estimate of \$171,000 has been made to seal the Clovis, New Mexico, site so as to hold water. The Texas sites will require a similar treatment which actually offers no assurance of permanence, as well as being very costly.

It was brought out that the last of the watersheds which were granted a planning priority would initiate planning in the not too distant future and that an additional priority for planning might be needed. Toward this end, the State Board reviewed those watersheds which were in a state of readiness for a priority. On motion by E. W. Wehman, seconded by A. F. Leesch, the Board granted a planning priority to the Darr's Creek Watershed contingent upon the Darr's Creek Water Control and Improvement District passing their bond and tax election which they have scheduled for the near future.

Mr. Davis reviewed the changes in travel and per diem allowance for supervisors and Board and staff members as a result of the amendments to the Soil Conservation Law. It was at first thought that the new rates for travel and per diem would have to be paid this year, but after discussing this with Judge J. C. Davis of the Attorney General's Office, it was brought out that the Board could set the rates at the previous standard with the exception of attendance at the Annual State Meeting and at State Board member elections. On motion by E. W. Wehman, seconded by A. F. Leesch, the Board approved payment of \$4.00 per day and 5 cents per mile for supervisors making regular board meetings,

and \$10.00 per day each for 2 supervisors to attend the State Meeting not to exceed two days and one to attend State Board member elections with travel at 8 cents per mile for one car on each occasion. This rate to prevail for the 1966 fiscal year.

On motion by E. W. Wehman, seconded by Frank Gray, the Board approved \$20.00 per diem for Board members in accordance with new legislation. Also, the Board members and H. D. Davis, as of September 1, 1965 are on actual expense for meals and lodging and will need to submit itemized expenses. Receipts are not called for. The staff will be on the State per diem rate.

After reviewing the budget and taking into account the added expense of the increased travel and per diem, Mr. Davis anticipates that the travel account in the budget will be about \$2,000 short. The Board directed Mr. Davis to attempt to secure special funds to offset any deficiency from the Governor's Emergency fund after the Annual State Meeting is over and a more exact figure can be obtained.

Mr. Porter gave an account of the meeting he and A. L. Black had with Mr. Heatley, State Representative, at Paducah. The responsibilities of the State Board, Soil Conservation Districts, and the Soil Conservation Service were reviewed and discussed. It was suggested that a follow up meeting be arranged to include Mr. H. N. Smith of the Soil Conservation Service. This was arranged and a good meeting was had and progress was made in finding solutions to problems that had developed.

Mr. Davis reported on recent correspondence and a visit from Mr. M. M. Hatcher of Dallas on a proposition of Soil Conservation Districts in the Pecos area participating in a Natural Gas Distributing Company under a Non-Profit Corporation set-up. The districts would receive any profits and at

the end of 10 years become owners of the company. L. F. Stewart reported on contacting Chairman of two Boards of Supervisors in the area as to the Company and the operation and their opinion concerning taking on this responsibility. Harvey Davis gave a report on discussions he had with Judge J. C. Davis of the Attorney General's office on this proposition. After discussing the proposition, the Board took the following position:

1. Soil and Water Conservation Districts are authorized, as political subdivisions of State Government, to operate in a governmental capacity in accordance with statutes under which they were created and for the purpose for which they were created.
2. Any statutes specifically authorizing soil and water conservation districts to enter into such an activity as a Natural Gas Distribution System are unknown to the State Board.
3. Even if it is legal for districts to participate in such activities, the interest of the district supervisors involved could very easily be divided to the extent that soil and water conservation activities would be hampered and neglected.

Based on the above items, the State Soil and Water Conservation Board came to the conclusion that it would recommend that districts not become involved in activities as proposed by Mr. Hatcher.

As a result of favorable comments on the cartoon in the last State Board "Newsletter", the State Board on motion by A. F. Leesch, seconded by E. W. Wehman resolved to compliment Tom Norton for his efforts in assisting the State Board in promoting the Annual State Meeting of District Supervisors to be held in Corpus Christi in October.

A recent application for assistance in developing a Resource Conservation and Development Project in the Upper Leon and Bosque Soil & Water Conservation Districts was reviewed with the Board. The application was well prepared and presented the desires and needs of the local people toward developing a well rounded program to overcome the problems in the application area together with the guidance of the local people in a maximum effort to fully develop the natural resources. The State Board authorized Harvey Davis to recommend approval of the application by the Governor.

The agenda for the Annual Meeting in Corpus Christi was reviewed and discussed with assignments being made with Board and Staff members for participation in the meeting. Mr. Lewis David, has requested to be on the program in order to give information pertaining to the forthcoming ASCS program. Mr. David's request was approved.

Mr. A. L. Bading reviewed congressional action on several items of interest to the Soil and Water Conservation Program. (1.) A House of Representatives amendment to the Small Reclamation Projects appears to be inapplicable for districts. (2) Efforts to set up a "Revolving Fund" for technical assistance in establishing conservation practices has met strong Congressional opposition. (3) It appears as if the present limitation of 5,000 acre feet of flood storage will be raised to 12,500 acre feet during this session of Congress. It apparently now has favorable support from other agencies.

There being no further business, the State Board meeting adjourned at 10:45 P. M.

  
Chairman

  
Secretary

Oct. 14, 1965  
Date

I hereby certify that the attached is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the State Soil Conservation Board meeting held on September 28, 1965.

October 14, 1965  
Date

Harvey D. Davis  
Executive Director