

OFFICIAL MINUTES  
STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD  
JANUARY 19, 1966

The State Soil and Water Conservation Board met in regular session in the First National Building, Temple, Texas, at 9:00 a.m. on January 19, 1966.

Board members present: J. C. Porter, Chairman, J. S. Sharp, A. F. Leesch, E. W. Wehman, and J. Frank Gray.

Others present: H. D. Davis, Executive Director and J. M. Norton of the State Board staff, C. W. Graham, Deputy State Conservationist of the Soil Conservation Service, Gilbert Kretzschmar, President and A. L. Bading, Executive Director of the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

The minutes of the Board meeting of December 7, 1965, were read and approved.

New applications for assistance under the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program were reviewed on Meridian & Neils Creek Watershed in Bosque, Coryell, and Hamilton Counties, and the San Felipe Creek watershed in Val Verde County near Del Rio. On motion by A. F. Leesch, seconded by E. W. Wehman, the Board disapproved the applications pending a field examination to determine feasibility.

Field examinations on the Lower Neches watershed and the Lower Sabine watershed were reviewed by J. M. Norton as being economically feasible for project development. On motion by J. S. Sharp, seconded by Frank Gray, the Board approved the Lower Neches Watershed and the Lower Sabine Watershed as feasible projects.

Mr. C. W. Graham discussed the present R C & D applications in Texas. The Southeast Area comprised of 10 counties and 8 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, though not chosen as one of the 10 initial projects for planning, has been approved by the Soil Conservation Service for planning out of present Soil Conservation Service funds, with assistance from other agencies and their programs as the "Southeast Texas Planning Area". Mr. Hal Storey of the Soil Conservation Service has been designated as coordinator. The R C & D application from the Bosque,

Palo Pinto, and Upper Leon Soil & Water Conservation Districts is still in the Governor's office awaiting official action. Mr. Davis stated that he had briefly discussed with Mr. Terrell Blodgett of the Governor's Office the need for the Board to be the designated State Agency on R C & D projects.

Mr. Graham reviewed a problem of inundating water wells and water sources by flood retarding structures in reference to the possible pollution of these water supplies. In view of the recent legislation concerning pollution, Mr. Graham requested the Board's assistance in checking with the Texas Water Pollution Board in an effort to work out an effective solution to the problem. Several structure sites are now being held up on construction because of this. On motion by E. W. Welman, seconded by Frank Gray, the Board authorized Mr. Davis to check into this and report back to the Board for appropriate action.

Mr. Graham reviewed the current planning status of Public Law 566 watersheds over the State. Choctaw Creek and Rush Creek watersheds are completed and in review. Bennett Creek is scheduled for completion February 1, 1966. Farmers Creek and Pecan Creek are scheduled for completion in March 1966. Some additional study has been requested by the sponsors of Running Water Draw, but it is nearly completed. North Cuero watershed is about 50 percent complete. Planning is beginning on McClellan Creek, Aquilla-Hackberry Creeks, Ruckers Creek, with Darr's Creek authorization requested. Consultants have completed their reports on the Cameron County watersheds with an increase in costs from an original estimate of some 10 million dollars to a new estimate of \$18,000,000. Much of this increase is new features being added in the project at the request of the sponsors, in right-of-way costs and legal fees as a result of high land values and the multiple problems involved.

Mr. Davis reviewed a copy of a letter from the Soil Conservation Service to Congressman White which stated that it was the policy of the U. S. Department of

Agriculture and the Soil Conservation Service to not approve watershed projects where the primary benefits were from the enhancement of production of crops that are in surplus. Even though this policy had been in effect for some time, there had been some question as to whose policy it was.

In view of the need in the near future for additional planning priorities the Board considered a list of watersheds on which tours and hearings had not been conducted, but which appeared to be ready for consideration for planning priorities. The Board established a tentative schedule to hold tours and hearings on the following watersheds:

- Red Deer Creek (Miami)
- Maverick County Watershed (Eagle Pass)
- Lipan Creek (Eden)
- South Concho (Eldorado)
- Upper Cibolo Creek (Boerne)
- Comal Creek (New Braunfels)
- Sanderson Canyon (Sanderson)
- Hog Creek (Waco)
- Berry Creek (Stephenville)
- Faulkenberry Creek (Groesbeck)
- Upper Navasota River (Groesbeck)

Mr. Davis reviewed our contacts with the Water Rights Commission in regard to the Donley County Soil & Water Conservation Districts' interest in setting up an Underground Water District. No problems were indicated in respect to delineating the underground reservoir in Donley County. Contacts with the Donley County people revealed that they were interested in protecting their underground supply. The Donley County Soil & Water Conservation District is considering the possibility of asking the Legislature for additional authorities necessary for conserving their underground water supply.

The Water Rights Commission also posed a problem of landowners and operators constructing dams on "navigable streams" without permits. By State law, a permit

is required in order to construct a dam on a navigable stream except by governmental agencies for flood control where no water is stored. The impact of this on the upstream flood prevention program is not known, however, Mr. Davis proposed that a team composed of a representative from the Water Rights Commission, State Soil and Water Conservation Board, and the Soil Conservation Service make a reconnaissance of some of the structures to determine what effect this might have on the program and if a problem exists, consideration be given to an effective solution. Mr. Graham stated that the retarding structures are not intended nor planned as conservation structures and that where water storage is planned, a permit is required before construction is begun. It was further thought that the law which established navigable streams might be changed or amended so as to put a more realistic meaning to such terms as "navigable streams" and delete those streams which have no practicability within the meaning of the term "navigable".

Mr. Davis discussed a petition to withdraw a portion of the San Jacinto Soil and Water Conservation District #425 and annex it to the Polk County Soil and Water Conservation District #436. On motion by E. W. Wehman, seconded by A. F. Leesch, the Board authorized Mr. Davis to set and hold a hearing on this proposition in order to determine if there is a need for an election.

A group representing the Bitter, Oaks, John Mann, Polecat Creeks watershed was not able to meet with the Board as had been planned due to severe weather conditions but Mr. Paul Montgomery called in and spoke with J. C. Porter and Mr. Davis. Their interest was to discuss their readiness for re-consideration of a planning priority. In view of their lack of sufficient funds on hand to handle the local responsibilities, they were informed that if arrangements could be made with counties involved to assume these responsibilities, the Board would accept such assurance and they would be ready for consideration.

Mr. Kretzschmar reviewed the financial problems of the Texas Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts with the Board. He expressed the need and desire of the Association to reduce its budget while keeping an active association functioning at the same time. Mr. Kretzschmar requested that the State Board consider furnishing additional assistance to the Association in an advisory and coordinating capacity in order that some of the expenses of the Association could be reduced. Mr. Kretzschmar also requested that the Board consider providing additional field men to work more closely with districts. After much discussion, a motion was made by E. W. Wehman and seconded by A. F. Leesch that the State Soil and Water Conservation Board furnish additional and direct assistance to the Association in an advisory and coordinating capacity. Such additional assistance to begin at a future date to be determined by the needs of the Association. The motion carried.

The meeting place for the 1967 Annual Statewide Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors was reviewed and discussed. Mr. Davis reviewed the invitations and correspondence from several places, together with information on facilities and accommodations. On motion by E. W. Wehman, seconded by J. S. Sharp, the Board approved Fort Worth, Texas, to be the place for the 1967 Annual Meeting with the Hotel Texas as the headquarters.

On motion by J. S. Sharp, seconded by E. W. Wehman, the Board approved the date of October 17, 18, 19, 1967 for the Annual Meeting.

Mr. Davis presented a request from the Frio County Soil and Water Conservation District to change its name to the Frio Soil and Water Conservation District. Due to approximately 15 percent of the land and some 140 operating units being located in Atascosa County making Frio County misleading, the Board approved the change of the name to the Frio Soil and Water Conservation District, on motion by E. W. Wehman, seconded by A. F. Leesch.

Mr. Davis discussed the Annual Meeting of the National Association of Conservation Districts to be held in New Orleans on February 7-10, 1966, and our work with the Committees of the Texas Association in preparation for the meeting. On motion by A. F. Leesch, seconded by J. S. Sharp, the Board authorized six members of the staff to attend and participate in the NACD meeting. On motion by E. W. Wehman, seconded by J. S. Sharp, the Board authorized Frank Gray to attend the annual NACD meeting as a Member of the State Board.

Work in relation to developing a "working agreement" or "memorandum of understanding" with the Parks and Wildlife Department in response to a resolution at last year's Annual State Meeting was discussed. The need for cooperation and coordination in a survey of existing and proposed recreational facilities on rural and agricultural lands over the State further emphasizes the need for such an agreement. A letter from Mr. Charles Croslin, Administrative Assistant of the Parks and Wildlife Department, expressed their willingness to cooperate in such an endeavor. Further contacts are planned with Mr. Weldon Watson. The Board appointed Mr. Leesch to work with Mr. Davis in developing procedures and detail on the proposed working arrangement and to report to the Board at a later meeting.

Mr. Davis discussed a recent meeting with Glen Ivy of the Texas Research League in which it was brought out that the League was making a study of all the special purpose districts created over the State dealing with water. From their study, recommendations will be made to the Governor relative to their organization, responsibilities, operation, and administration.

Mr. Davis reviewed the PACT meeting of January 17, 1966.

Mr. Davis reported that the recent publications of the Board were being well received. Several complimentary letters have been received on the biennial report, "Glimpses of Soil and Water Conservation in Texas". Many favorable comments have

been made on the pamphlet, "What do you know about the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and Soil and Water Conservation Districts". Many districts are desiring quantity supplies of this brochure for their many varied programs. Davis stated several districts had been given permission to reproduce the pamphlet at their own expense since the Board was not in a financial condition to fulfill all the requests.

Mr. Davis reminded the Board that it would soon be time to prepare and submit its Budget Request for the 1967-68 biennium. The Board agreed to prepare its Budget Request at the next regular meeting on March 16, 1966.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

  
Chairman

  
Secretary

March 16, 1966  
Date

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the State Soil and Water Conservation Board meeting held on January 19, 1966.

3-16-66  
Date

Dear Sir:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your minutes dated January 19, 1966.

Thanks very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

