

Minutes
TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD
March 15, 1995

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board met on March 15, 1995
at 8:00 a.m. in its Hearings Room at 311 North Fifth Street, Temple, Texas.

Board Members present were:

Paul Robertson, Chairman
Charles D. "Buddy" Clark, Vice Chairman
C. F. "Dick" Schendel, Member
Albert Evans, Member
Harvey Davis, Member

Staff members present were:

Robert G. Buckley, Executive Director
William C. Neiser, Assistant Executive Director
James M. Moore, Assistant Executive Director
Mel Davis, Assistant Executive Director
Leonard Pietzsch, Jr., Chief Accountant
Randy Jones, Human Resources Director
Cherié King, Director of Programs
Judy Jacobs, Accountant
Beade O. Northcut, Engineer
Maria Pinto, Hydrologist
Clyde Gottschalk, Director-Information/Education
Mahendra Mohite, Engineer Assistant
Bo Spoons, Director of Programs
Vicki Davis, Administrative Technician

Others present were:

Wes Oneth, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Guillermo Benavides Z, Jr., Association of Texas SWCDs

Chairman Robertson called the meeting to order and welcomed those present.

On motion of Harvey Davis, seconded by Buddy Clark, the minutes of the
February 16, 1995 Board meeting were approved as mailed. Motion carried.

Mel Davis presented district director appointments for consideration. Mr. Davis advised the Board the following appointments appeared to be in order:

Luis Munoz, Zapata SWCD #335
Jeanette Carlton, Long Leaf SWCD #439
Jon Capps, Kaufman-Van Zandt SWCD #505
Felton Wright, Mills County SWCD #554

On motion of Albert Evans, seconded by Dick Schendel, the appointments were approved as presented.

Bill Neiser reported on the status of districts not having their audits or financial statements in at this time. Funds are being withheld from these districts until their audits and financial statements are received.

Bill Neiser stated that the expenditure report for the six month period ending February 28, 1995 showed expenditures to be on track with the operating budget.

Bill Neiser reported that Runnels SWCD #232 has requested the balance of their FY 94 Technical Assistance funds. According to State Board files the district had not requested the funds by letter before the cutoff date. The district pointed out a discrepancy in our guidelines for districts which they felt had caused the error. Staff agreed that the misunderstanding was partially our responsibility.

Harvey Davis made a motion to grant a waiver in this instance and pay the 20% Technical Assistance funds allocation to the Runnels District from available FY 94 funds. The motion was seconded by Buddy Clark and passed by the Board. Mr. Neiser stated that the guidelines would be revised for FY 95 to prevent this problem from reoccurring.

Mr. Neiser reported that the agency's 1996-97 legislative appropriation request has been through the Senate Finance Committee hearing and markup. Bob Buckley explained that Articles before the House and Senate at the present time, if left unchanged, would reduce our employee level to the average FY 94 full time equivalent.

Randy Jones informed the Board that we now have 59 employees on the payroll and that an Engineer for the Weslaco Regional Office and a secretary for the Statewide Management Program will report to work on March 1, 1995.

Clyde Gottschalk reported on the ongoing activities of the Information/Education staff and showed the new S.B. 503 video to the Board. The Board voiced their approval of the video and its distribution was discussed.

Wes Oneth presented his report, informing the Board that the Full House Agriculture Committee will conduct a field hearing on April 25th in Lubbock; the USDA State FAC Group wrote the Secretary of Agriculture asking for exceptions to two office closings; and updated them on the progress of certain watersheds.

Memo Benavides presented a report from the Association of Texas SWCDs concerning NACD's MOU Steering Committee meeting in Atlanta and requested input from the Board and discussed a letter he had mailed to districts reporting on the NACD Convention in New Orleans.

Bob Buckley gave a legislative update on those bills affecting the agency and/or soil and water conservation.

James Moore explained tables containing '95 cost share information and '95 certified WQMP numbers; reported that NRCS will be loaning our Weslaco Regional Office temporary space until construction of their permanent office is complete; and that field investigations were being planned to study irrigation practices as requested by the Board at its last regular meeting.

Mr. Moore then updated the Board on 319 activities.

James Moore reported that staff has been working with TNRCC on their confined animal feeding operation rule changes. New rules will be published with "critical water quality areas" being changed to "dairy outreach areas." Harvey Davis brought up Mark McFarland's meeting with dairy people and the matter was discussed. He expressed concern that TNRCC may not be giving small dairy producers information on or opportunity to comply with the S.B. 503 program. It was decided that Board staff should request a formal meeting concerning the matter and report their findings to the Board before further action is considered.

Mr. Moore went over a recommended amendment to the Clean Water Act developed at the State Board sponsored work group meeting held February 21, 1995.

James Moore reported on a meeting of the Corpus Christi Bay National Estuary Program and TNRCC's pollution potential indexing. He explained concerns being expressed about their system and stated that he had asked that they defer any other studies until present and past findings were compared.

Mr. Moore presented the Board with a handout on proposed Coastal Management Program boundary lines and asked for their input on where the boundary should be located. After discussion, a motion was made by Albert Evans, seconded by Harvey Davis to work toward acceptance of the 10 foot contour line as the boundary. Motion carried.

James Moore reported that Board staff would man a booth at the upcoming Gulf of Mexico Symposium March 28 - April 1.

Mr. Moore informed the Board that we had been approached by NRCS and Experiment Station personnel concerning a lawsuit involving the Edwards Aquifer and endangered species. The potential for State Board and district involvement in water conservation activities was discussed. Wes Oneth gave further explanation and stated that he will keep the Board updated on this matter.

James Moore explained that the Pesticides in Groundwater Management Plan is presently being revised and presented Board members with drafts of available sections. The Board will be mailed copies of the final draft scheduled to be sent to EPA on April 1st.

Cherié King presented a report on area awards programs.

Mel Davis discussed future State Meeting sites and asked for Board input. The Board voiced their desire to investigate Ft. Worth as a possible future meeting sight. Mr. Davis stated that he would make a site inspection and report his findings to the Board at the May meeting.

Mel Davis reported on State Board member election delegates and stated that updates were being sent to the field representatives to urge all the districts to designate their delegates.

Bill Neiser reported on Board member travel.

The Board set the next meeting date as May 17, 1995.

On motion of Buddy Clark, seconded by Harvey Davis the Board approved travel for Paul Robertson to attend the Spring NACD Board Meeting in Washington, D.C., March 26-28, 1995. Motion carried.

Paul Robertson called the meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

Paul E. Robertson
Chairman

Dieki A. Davis
Secretary

5-17-95
Date

I certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the board meeting held on March 15, 1995.

5-17-95
Date

Robert M. Buckley
Executive Director