

LOUISIANA BOLL WEEVIL ERADICATION COMMISSION

April 03, 2024, 10:00 A.M.

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY
SCOTT RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER
212 MACON RIDGE ROAD
WINNSBORO, LA 71295

NOTE: THESE ARE TENTATIVE MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 03, 2024, MEETING OF THE BOLL WEEVIL ERADICATION COMMISSION. A FINAL VERSION OF THESE MINUTES WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE AFTER APPROVAL OF THE COMMISSION AT ITS NEXT, REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Jack Dailey at 10:08 a.m.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called by Tonya Pears.

Members present: Jack Dailey, Tim White, Dr. Ansel Rankins (representing Commissioner Strain), Ben Guthrie, John Frierson, Kody Beavers, Dr. Michael Salassi (representing LSU AgCenter), and Hank Jones. Alternate members present: Casey Cater, Jason Condrey, and Russ Ratcliff.

Members absent: None

A quorum was present.

Others present: Tina Peltier (LDAF), Angela Jackson, Esq. (LDAF Counsel), Tabitha Irvin, Esq. (LDAF Counsel), and Tanika Starks (Hearing Officer).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jackson took the time to update the commission on voting procedures.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Motion: Mr. Guthrie made a motion to re-elect Jack Dailey as Chairman and Tim White as Vice-Chairman. Mr. Beavers seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Mr. White made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2023, meeting. Mr. Frierson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

ADJUDICATORY HEARING

STIPULATED CASES

23-BWEC-04 – D & V FARMS/DAVID OR VALERIE GILMORE

Mr. Gilmore was not present nor represented by counsel.

The LDAF charged Mr. Gilmore with 23 violations of LAC 7:XV.323 (B) which requires cotton producers to destroy their stalks by December 31 of each crop year.

The LDAF recommended a fine of \$17,250.00 with \$16,750.00 of the fine suspended on the condition that no further violations occur through December 31, 2026. The remaining \$500.00 shall be made, due and payable within 30 days after the Commissioner of Agriculture’s final decision in the matter.

Mr. Dailey and Mr. Beavers recused themselves from this matter, citing a relationship with the Respondent as a neighbor and family member respectively.

Motion: Mr. White made a motion to find Mr. Gilmore/D & V Farms LLC in violation of the Boll Weevil Eradication Rules & Regulations, and to accept the stipulation and penalty as written. Dr. Rankins seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

23-BWEC-05 – TYLER GILMORE

Mr. Gilmore was not present nor represented by counsel.

The LDAF charged Mr. Gilmore with 23 violations of LAC 7:XV.323 (B) which requires cotton producers to destroy their stalks by December 31 of each crop year.

The LDAF recommended a fine of \$17,250.00 with \$15,320.00 of the fine suspended on the condition that no further violations occur through December 31, 2026. The remaining \$1,930.00 shall be made due and payable within 30 days after the Commissioner of Agriculture’s final decision in the matter.

Mr. Dailey and Mr. Beavers recused themselves from this matter, citing a relationship with the Respondent as a neighbor and family member respectively.

Motion: Mr. White made a motion to find Mr. Gilmore in violation of the Boll Weevil Eradication Rules & Regulations, and to accept the stipulation and penalty as written. Mr. Frierson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF MAINTENANCE FEES

Mr. Moreau advised the commission that he had spoken with each of the producers that had requested waivers, except for Clint Thomason. All had destroyed their cotton stalks as required by the Boll Weevil Eradication Rules & Regulations. Trent Clark was able to carry out his crop through to harvest. Mr. Moreau recommended a denial of Mr. Clark’s request for a waiver of maintenance fees.

Motion: Mr. White made a motion to approve the requests for waivers of maintenance fees as requested by: Mr. Thomason, HS Planting Co. Inc, Willis Nelson, and Courtney Nelson. Mr. Beavers seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: Mr. Guthrie made a motion to deny Mr. Clark's request for a waiver of maintenance fees. Mr. Frierson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Report from the Commissioner

Dr. Rankins gave an update on employee appointments within the division of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences. He updated the commission members on the Cotton Seed Bug Survey. Dr. Rankins reminded the commission to be mindful of new legislation during the current legislative session that can affect the agriculture industry.

Program Update

Mr. Moreau updated the commission on the current balance of the emergency fund. He also gave a brief description of the new mapping program that will be implemented this year.

Technical Advisory Committee

There was no update from the Technical Advisory Committee.

Farm Bureau Oversight Committee Report

Mr. Brian Breaux informed the commission that he continues to receive positive feedback from the commercial cotton producers.

Approval of ADA Rules

Motion: Mr. White made a motion to amend the agenda to add items regarding open meetings, rule changes and ADA requirements. Mr. Guthrie seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board heard and approved resolutions authorizing the LDAF legal department to promulgate rules regarding open meetings and ADA requirements, petitions for declaratory orders, and requests for rule changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Frierson. Mr. Beavers seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Dailey adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.