

# **LOUISIANA BOLL WEEVIL ERADICATION COMMISSION MINUTES**

**April 08, 2025, 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 08, 2025, 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 10:03 a.m.

## **ROLL CALL**

The roll was called by Tonya Peairs.

Members present: Jack Dailey, Tim White, Dr. Ansel Rankins (representing Commissioner Strain), Kurt Moreau, Kody Beavers, Russ Ratcliff, Dr. Michael Salassi (representing LSU AgCenter), and Hank Jones. Alternate members present: Casey Cater and Stephen Logan.

Members absent: Ben Guthrie

A quorum was present.

Others present: Tina Peltier (LDAF), Angela Jackson, Esq. (LDAF Counsel), Tanika Starks (Hearing Officer), Mr. Andre' Doyle (A D Farms), Shelly Kerns (LSU Agcenter), Dawson Kerns (LSU Agcenter), Bobby Skeen (La. Cotton & Grain Assoc.), Madison Plaisance (Farm Bureau) and Martin Close (LDAF).

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion:** Mr. White made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 3, 2024, meeting. Mr. Beavers seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next annual Boll Weevil Eradication Commission meeting will be held in April 2026.

## **ADJUDICATORY HEARING**

### **STIPULATED CASES**

#### **25-BWEC-01 – JASON ARCH YERGER**

Mr. Yerger was not present nor represented by counsel.

The LDAF charged Mr. Yerger with 31 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 \$23,250.00 with \$21,375.00 of the fine suspended on the condition that no further violations occur through December 31, 2027. The remaining \$1,875.00 shall be made due and payable within 30 days after the Commissioner of Agriculture's final decision in the matter.

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

#### **25-BWEC-03 – RICHARD B. TISER II**

Mr. Tiser was not present nor represented by counsel.

The LDAF charged Mr. Tiser with 31 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 \$23,250.00 with \$22,625.00 of the fine suspended on the condition that no further violations occur through December 31, 2027. The remaining \$625.00 shall be made due and payable within 30 days after the Commissioner of Agriculture's final decision in the matter.

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

#### **25-BWEC-05 – WESLEY KIRK FORD**

Mr. Ford was not present nor represented by counsel.

The LDAF charged Mr. Ford with 31 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 \$23,250.00 with \$20,250.00 of the fine suspended on the condition that no further violations occur through December 31, 2027. The remaining \$3,000.00 shall be made due and payable with 30 days after the Commissioner of Agriculture's final decision in the matter.

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

#### **25-BWEC-06 – CATER PLANTING COMPANY/GARY CATER**

Mr. Cater was not present nor represented by counsel.

The LDAF charged Mr. Cater with 31 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 \$23,250.00 with \$22,750.00 of the fine suspended on the condition that no further violations occur through December 31, 2027. The remaining \$500.00 shall be made due and payable within 30 days after the Commissioner of Agriculture's final decision in the matter.

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

#### **CONTESTED CASES**

##### **25-BWEC-04 – ROBERT COLE RINGLE**

Mrs. Ringle was not present nor represented by counsel.

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

Ms. Jackson called Mr. Kurt Moreau as a witness. Mr. Moreau was sworn in by Ms. Starks. Ms. Jackson presented Mr. Moreau with documents labeled LDAF 1, charge letter dated March 7, 2025, certified mail receipt and tracking by USPS for identification and provided copies to the commission. Mr. Moreau detailed the extent of his investigation, including attempts to contact Mr. Ringle. He informed the commission that, to date, the stalks have been destroyed.

Mr. Moreau then recommended a penalty of \$23,250.00 with \$22,060.00 of the fine suspended on the condition that no further violations occur through December 31, 2027. The remaining \$1,190.00 shall be made due and payable within 30 days after the Commissioner of Agriculture's final decision in the matter.

**Motion:** Mr. Ratcliff made a motion to find Mr. Ringle in violation of the Boll Weevil Rules & Regulations. Mr. White seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:** Mr. White made a motion to accept the recommended penalty. Mr. Beavers seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **25-BWEC-07 – A D FARMS/ANDRE' DOYLE**

Mr. Doyle, owner of A D Farms, was present and sworn in.

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

Ms. Jackson entered LDAF 1 into evidence which included the charge letter dated March 7, 2025, the signed certified mail receipt, and the USPS tracking showing that the certified mail was delivered on March 10, 2025.

Mr. Doyle pleaded no contest to the charges against him.

**Motion:** Mr. White made a motion to accept the no contest plea. Mr. Beavers seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The LDAF recommended a fine of \$23,250.00 with \$22,087.00 of the fine suspended on the condition that no further violations occur through December 31, 2027. The remaining \$1,163.00 shall be made due and payable within 30 days after the Commissioner of Agriculture's final decision in the matter.

Mr. Doyle requested a reduction of the penalty from the commission due to hardship. Mr. Moreau agreed that the LDAF would accept a reduction in penalty because Mr. Doyle has been up front and honest throughout the entire investigation.

**Motion:** Mr. White made a motion to fine Mr. Doyle \$23,250.00 with \$22,750.00 of the fine suspended on the condition that no further violations occur through December 31, 2027. The remaining \$500.00 shall be due and payable within 30 days after the Commissioner of Agriculture's final decision in the matter. Mr. Beavers seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF MAINTENANCE FEES**

**Motion:** Mr. Beavers made a motion to accept and approve the waivers of maintenance fees for all who had made the request. Mr. Ratcliff seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Report from the Commissioner**

Dr. Rankins gave an update on employee appointments within the division of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences and how Governor Landry's hiring freeze will affect the department. He also gave a brief description of pre-filed bills in the current legislative session that can affect the agriculture industry. There was a brief discussion regarding control of the feral hog population.

### **Program Update**

Mr. Moreau updated the commission the number of commercial and non-commercial producers for the 2024 crop year, on the current balance of the emergency fund, and monies turned over to collections. He also gave a brief demonstration of the new mapping program that was implemented last year.

### **Technical Advisory Committee**

There was no update from the Technical Advisory Committee.

### **Farm Bureau Oversight Committee Report**

Ms. Madison Plaisance replaced Mr. Brian Breaux, who retired in 2024. The commission informed her what type of information Mr. Breaux provided in his updates and look forward to working with her in the future.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. White. Mr. Beavers seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Dailey adjourned the meeting at 12:13 p.m.