

OFFICE OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

DECEMBER 4, 2018
1:15 P.M.
DEAN LEE RESEARCH CENTER
8105 TOM BOWMAN DRIVE
ALEXANDRIA, LA 71302

PROCEEDINGS/MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Skains called the regular monthly Commission Meeting to order at 12:52 P.M. Mr. Randall Fletcher said the invocation and Mr. David Daigle lead in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called by Mr. Brad Spicer.

Members and Alternate Members present: Mr. Reggie Skains, Chairman; Dr. Ernest Girouard, Vice Chairman; Mr. John Compton, Secretary/Treasurer; Mr. Randall Fletcher: Mr. David Daigle, LACD President; Mr. Alan Williams, LACD 1st Vice-President; Mr. Ed Yerger; and Dr. Rogers Leonard, LSU AgCenter.

A quorum was present.

Others Present: Mr. Brad Spicer, LDAF-OSCD/Executive Director SSWCC; Mr. Joey Breaux, LDAF-OSWC; Mr. Tim Landreneau, Acting State Conservationist, NRCS; Mr. Sherrill Sagrera, Vermillion SWCD; Mr. John Girard, St. Martin SWCD; and Ms. Brenda Archer, Rapides SWCD

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Skains asked if there were any comments from the public or Commissioners and there were none.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chairman Skains asked for any comments from the public or Commission members about the October 23, 2018 State Commission minutes and there were none. Chairman Skains called for a motion to approve October 23, 2018 State Commission Meeting minutes.

Motion: Mr. John Compton made a motion to approve the October 23, 2018 State Commission Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ed Yerger and passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Chairman Skains said they would now take up Unfinished Business and asked Mr. Spicer to review the agenda items with the State Commission

NRCS/OSWC Farm Bill Cooperative Agreement

Mr. Spicer reported that several districts had earned over 50% of their funds already and asked Mr. Landreneau if there is a possibility of additional farm bill funds becoming available. Mr. Tim Landreneau said it may be possible if the NRCS funding is not cut.

LACD and NACD 2019 Annual Meetings

Mr. David Daigle said that he was looking forward to LACD meeting and it looks like it will be a good meeting with a number of state and national leaders on the program.

Mr. Spicer discussed the meeting agenda for Wednesday and Thursday. He said that Dr. Girouard will do a report on Vermillion SWCD's efforts to implement district programs that are specific to the Vermilion SWCD. He said that Governor Edwards and Commissioner Strain will speak Thursday and also the CEO of the Water Institute of the Gulf will be there to give a presentation about his trip to Israel and how Israel is able to sell their water to other countries. Mr. Spicer said Mark Davis will make a presentation at the Water Resources Committee meeting concerning the potential sales of water by the Sabine River Authority.

Mr. Spicer said there were a lot of items on the agenda for Thursday including the Master Farmers luncheon, the Awards dinner, and the LACDE function.

Mr. Spicer also reminded everyone that the NACD annual meeting is in San Antonio, Texas on February 2-6, 2019. Mr. Spicer urged everyone to consider attending the NACD meeting; as we need a good showing from Louisiana.

Area III and IV Election Convention Results

Chairman Skains said the next item is the State Commission Election Convention results for Area III and Area IV. He said the State Commission conducted Area III and Area IV State Soil and Water Conservation Commission Election Conventions earlier this morning.

Chairman Skains said the voting results of the Area III Election Convention are as follows

Area III- State Commission Member
Mr. Larry Sayes
Avoyelles Soil and Water Conservation District

Area III- State Commission Alternate Member
Mr. Ed Giering
Natchitoches SWCD

Chairman Skains asked if there were any public or Commission comments regarding the election and there were none. Chairman Skains asked for a motion to approve the election results.

Motion: Mr. Randell Fletcher made a motion to accept the election results from the Area III State Commission Election Convention naming Mr. Larry Sayes, Avoyelles SWCD as State Commission Member and Mr. Ed Giering, Natchitoches SWCD as State Commission Alternate Member. The motion was seconded by Mr. Max Johnson and passed unanimously.

Resolved, Mr. Mr. Larry Sayes, Avoyelles Soil and Water Conservation District will serve as the Area III Member of the State Commission and Mr. Ed Giering, Natchitoches Soil and Water Conservation District will serve as Area III Alternate Member of the State Commission with their terms beginning January 1, 2019 and expiring December 31, 2021.

Chairman Skains said the voting results of Area IV Election Convention are as follows:

Area IV – State Commission Member
Dr. Ernest Girouard
Vermillion Soil and Water Conservation District

Area IV – State Commission Alternate Member
Mr. Earl Garber
Acadia Soil and Water Conservation District

Chairman Skains asked if there were any public or Commission comments regarding the election and there were none. Chairman Skains asked for a motion to approve the election results.

Motion: Mr. Ike Boudreaux made a motion to accept the election results from the Area IV State Commission Election Convention naming Dr. Ernest Girouard, Vermillion SWCD as State Commission Member and Mr. Earl Garber, Acadia SWCD as State Commission Alternate Member. The motion was seconded by Mr. Robert Freeman and passed unanimously.

Resolved, Dr. Ernest Girouard, Vermillion Soil and Water Conservation District will serve as the Area IV Member of the State Commission and Mr. Earl Garber, Acadia Soil and Water Conservation District will serve as Area IV Alternate Member of the State Commission with their terms beginning January 1, 2019 and expiring December 31, 2021.

Chairman Skains congratulated the newly elected Members and Alternate Members on the State Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

NRCS State Conservationist Report

Chairman Skains said they would now take up New Business and asked Mr. Tim Landreneau to give the NRCS Report. Mr. Landreneau said that Mr. Kevin Norton was back in D.C. in a new assignment on a 120 detail as the Acting Associate Chief for NRCS starting on December 3, 2018.

Mr. Landreneau handed out a press release announcing that on December 3, 2018, Secretary Purdue announced Matthew J. "Matt" Lohr to serve as Chief of USDA-NRCS. Chief Lohr is a 5th generation farmer and was raised on a farm in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley and now owns and operates Valley Pike Farm, Inc. with his wife and their children. He said Chief Lohr also served on the Virginia House of Delegates and as Virginia's Commissioner of Agriculture.

Mr. Landreneau said that congressional- Farm Bill committee negotiations have reached an "agreement in principle". He said it appears that the Farm Bill will be sent to the president for his signature this month.

Mr. Landreneau said that EQIP was extended through FY 2019 at \$1.75 billion and NRCS is currently accepting applications, evaluating, and will begin enrolling new contracts.

Mr. Landreneau also said that CSP has no new enrollments but there are contracts in the 5th year that are eligible for renewal. He said if someone is signed up for renewal, they will be extended so they don't expire before the agreement runs out.

Mr. Landreneau handed out the September/December issue of the Conservation Update which highlights two Louisiana veterans. He said that even though these men didn't grow up in agriculture, they wanted to give it a try and requested technical and financial assistance from the soil and water conservation districts and NRCS and both are doing very well.

Mr. Landreneau said that concluded his report.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Skains said there were letters from Calcasieu, Vermillion, and Rapides SWCDs requesting approval for out of state travel for supervisors and secretaries to attend the NACD Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas.

Chairman Skains said that the first out of state travel request includes Mr. David Daigle, Calcasieu SWCD; Mr. Preston Broxson, Calcasieu SWCD; Mr. Jason Nolde, Calcasieu SWCD; Mr. Wesley Coffman, Calcasieu SWCD; Mr. Tom Lester, Calcasieu SWCD and Mrs. Rose Sharbeno, Calcasieu SWCD requesting approval to attend the NACD Annual Meeting on February 2-6, 2019 in San Antonio, TX. Chairman Skains asked for any comments from the public or the Commission members and there were none. He said if there were no comments, he would call for a motion to approve Calcasieu SWCD's out of state travel request.

Motion: Mr. Ed Yerger made a motion to approve Mr. David Daigle, Calcasieu SWCD; Mr. Preston Broxson, Calcasieu SWCD; Mr. Jason Nolde, Calcasieu SWCD; Mr. Wesley Coffman, Calcasieu SWCD; Mr. Tom Lester, Calcasieu SWCD and Mrs. Rose Sharbeno, Calcasieu SWCD request to attend the NACD Annual Meeting on February 2-6, 2019 in San Antonio, TX. The motion was seconded by Mr. John Compton and passed unanimously.

Chairman Skains said the second out of state travel request comes from Vermillion SWCD. He said Dr. Ernest Girouard is requesting approval to attend the NACD Annual Meeting on February 2-6, 2019. Chairman Skains asked for any comments from the public or the Commission members and there were none. He said if there were no comments, he would call for a motion to approve Vermillion SWCD's out of state travel request.

Motion: Mr. Ed Yerger made a motion to approve Dr. Ernest Girouard, Vermillion SWCD request to attend the NACD Annual Meeting on February 2-6, 2019 in San Antonio, TX. The motion was seconded by Mr. John Compton and passed unanimously.

Chairman Skains said the last out of state travel request comes from Rapides SWCD. He said that Ms. Brenda Archer is requesting approval to attend the NACD Annual Meeting on February 2-6, 2019 in San Antonio, TX. Chairman Skains asked for any comments from the public or the Commission members and there were none. He said if there were no comments, he would call for a motion to approve Rapid SWCD's out of state travel request.

Motion: Mr. Ed Yerger made a motion to approve Ms. Brenda Archer, Rapides SWCD request to attend the NACD Annual Meeting on February 2-6, 2019 in San Antonio, TX. The motion was seconded by Mr. John Compton and passed unanimously.

Mr. Spicer said the next item was a Draft Resolution from the Lower Mississippi River Sub-Basin Committee in support of funding the LDAF Louisiana Office of Soil and Water Conservation. He said that this is the same resolution the Commission approved last year. Chairman Skains called for a motion to approve the draft resolution in support of LDAF Office of Soil and Water Conservation.

Motion: Dr. Ernest Girouard made a motion to approve the draft resolution in support of funding for LDAF Office of Soil and Water Conservation. The motion was seconded by Mr. David Daigle and passed unanimously.

Mr. Spicer said the next item is an article about Mr. David Daigle receiving an award for longleaf pine restoration effort. Mr. Daigle said he received the Longleaf Alliance Landowner of the Year Award and that they had an excellent meeting and bus tours. He said the Longleaf Alliance did a great job and that everything was well received by the nearly 200 attendees.

Mr. Spicer said the next item is a letter from the National Governors Association, National Conference of State Legislators and NASDA to the Senate and House Leadership requesting that Congress act on the Farm Bill before the end of the year.

Mr. Spicer said the next item is an email he received from the Water Institute of the Gulf on Governor Edwards and CEO Justin Ehrenwerth participating in a signing ceremony with Water Research Institute. Mr. Spicer said he has asked Justin Ehrenwerth to discuss his trip to Israel at LACD meeting in January.

Mr. Spicer said the next item addresses the decision by the Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission to delay the Ohio Governor's order to designate eight watersheds that drain into Lake Erie as distressed watersheds. He said this order would have put into motion a series of actions that would have affected about 7000 farmers in Northwest Ohio.

Mr. Spicer said the next item is an article on No-Till Farming. He said the article discusses five tips for No-Till farming. He said the tips include residue management, cover crops, different types of equipment used, record keeping and seeking technical and financial help from NRCS and Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Mr. Spicer said the next three articles cover a wide range of topics dealing Soil Health followed by an article covering the issues associated with the recent wildfires in the Western US. He said the article discusses the problems and possible solutions that should be evaluated and possibly implemented to reduce the frequency and to control wildfires.

Mr. Spicer said the last article covers the measures that the state of Missouri is using to control and possibly eliminate their feral hog population. He said it includes a ban on hunting feral hogs in selected areas of the state.

ELECTION OF STATE COMMISSION OFFICERS

Chairman Skains said the next agenda item is the election of officers for Soil and Water Conservation Commission for calendar year 2019. Chairman Skains said the current offices are as follows:

Reggie Skains – Chairman
Ernest Girouard – Vice Chairman

Randall Fletcher – Secretary/Treasurer

Chairman Skains opened the floor for nominations.

Motion: Dr. Ernest Girouard made a motion to nominate Mr. Reggie Skains, D'Arbonne SWCD, as Chairman with the term beginning January 1, 2019 and expiring December 31, 2019. The motion was seconded by Mr. Randall Fletcher and passed unanimously.

Motion: Mr. Randall Fletcher made a motion to nominate Dr. Ernest Girouard, Vermillion SWCD as Vice-Chairman with the term beginning January 1, 2019 and expiring December 31, 2019. The motion was seconded by Mr. David Daigle and passed unanimously.

Motion: Mr. John Compton made a motion to nominate Mr. Larry Sayes, Avoyelles SWCD as Secretary/Treasurer with the term beginning January 1, 2019 and expiring December 31, 2019. The motion was seconded by Mr. David Daigle and passed unanimously.

Chairman Skains said the new officers for calendar year 2019 are as follows:

Reggie Skains – Chairman
Ernest Girouard – Vice-Chairman
Larry Sayes – Secretary/Treasurer

SUPERVISORS RESIGNATION/APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS

Chairman Skains said there were no resignations/appointments/reappointments at this time.

DISTRICT AUDITS

Mr. Spicer said he is reminding the districts that all districts that needed to turn in audits to the Legislative Auditor Office must do so by December 31, 2018.

ETHICS

Mr. Spicer said he wanted to remind supervisors and district staff that they must get their ethics training certificates done and turned in by December 31, 2018. He said he has a call in to the Ethics Committee requesting they schedule a training session at LACD meeting but at this time there is no guarantee that they will be available to do the training.

DISTRICT INSURANCE

Mr. Spicer said that he has reviewed the insurance proposal for the districts. He said that they were in discussion with Turrentine Insurance and that it looks like there may be a \$1,300 increase due to an increase in district employees and a claim. Mr. Spicer said as a result this will be a slight increase in insurance cost to the districts effective January 2019.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Reggie Skains asked if there were any additional comments from the public of Commission members. Chairman Skains thanked Dr. Rogers Leonard for arranging the meeting place and for providing coffee. Mr. Spicer thanked Ms. Brenda Archer and the Rapides SWCD for their assistance in the Commission Election convention and for Ms. Archer's assistance with the State Commission meeting.

Dr. Leonard said that December and January would be busy months with several meetings of national organizations and state agricultural meetings. He said that the recent Pesticide Safety

Dr. Girouard said that Mr. Earl Garber had received an award for his rice growing association.

Mr. Randall Fletcher said his district had the misfortune of losing a supervisor, Mrs. Lucille Thompson. He said she was probably Louisiana's oldest supervisor at 100 years old and that she never missed a meeting and was very active district board member up to her recent death.

Mr. Joey Breaux said that Upper Delta SWCD has entered into an agreement with NRCS and asked for the SSWCC approval for funding for Watershed Planning in the Upper Terrebonne Basin. Chairman Skains called for a motion to approve Upper Delta SWCD entering into an agreement with NRCS for Watershed Planning in Terrebonne Basin.

Motion: Mr. Randall Fletcher made a motion to approve Upper Delta SWCD entering into an agreement with NRCS for Watershed Planning in the Upper Terrebonne Basin. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ed Yerger and passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING

Chairman Skains reported the next meeting will be Tuesday, January 22, 2019 at 1:15 PM in the Veterans Auditorium, 5825 Florida Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Skains asked if there were any other comments from the public or Commission members and there were none.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Skains said if there was no other business or comments from the public or Commission members, he will accept a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Mr. Randall Fletcher made a motion to adjourn at 1:44 P.M. The motion was seconded by Mr. John Compton and passed unanimously.



Reggie Skains, Chairman
State Soil and Water Conservation Commission