



SPARTA GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Minutes of Meeting on January 21, 2010

The Sparta Groundwater Conservation District Commission met on January 21, 2010 at 3:00 PM in the Town Hall, 1819 S. Railroad Ave., Arcadia LA 71001.

Commission Members Present: John Van Bennett, Phillip Lane, Chris Smith, Ben Lowery, Todd Culpepper, Samuel Little, Olevia McDonald, Ted W. McKinney, Billy Don Perritt, Jackie Perritt, Alice Stewart, Steve Lemmons, Dan Morgan. Ex-Officio Members: Gary A. Kennedy, Gary Hanson, Bill Chaumont. Commission's Representative on Louisiana Groundwater Resources Commission: Gene Coleman.

Commission Members Absent: Mack Calhoun, Willie Doherty, Leslie Thompson, Edward Dayton, George W. Rolfe, Jr.

The meeting was officially called to order by Chairman Todd Culpepper.

The invocation was given by Billy Perritt. Ted McKinney led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

Agenda Approval

Todd Culpepper asked for the agenda to be approved with one change, that Public Comments follow 'Welcome'. Chris Smith so moved; Olevia McDonald seconded; all approved.

Welcome and Public Comments

Todd Culpepper recognized legislator Rep. Sam Little. Dr. Bill Branch stated that he had arranged for LDNR officials to attend by speaker phone. Todd Culpepper invited Public Comments. There was one. Gene Coleman announced a meeting of the La. Groundwater Resources Commission, Feb. 3, 11:00 in the Old Fairgrounds Building in Shreveport.

Minutes

Todd Culpepper called for approval of the October 13, 2009 meeting minutes as distributed to members prior to the meeting. Ted McKinney so moved; Olevia McDonald seconded; all approved.

Treasurer Report (*Attachment 1*)

Billy Perritt distributed Profit and Loss, Summary Balance, and Income and Expense Details sheets, covering Oct. 1, 2009 through Jan. 21, 2010. Samuel Little moved to approve the report, Jackie Perritt seconded; all approved.

Other Reports

Long term Planning Committee (LTP) Chairman Alice Stewart reported:

- 1) *LTP Recommendation: Establish a Standing Administration Committee* to handle personnel matters, including pay, and arrange for office and program supplies. The committee will arrange regular meetings with personnel, to plan and oversee activities in keeping with the Commission's adopted goals and objectives. LTP will henceforth be responsible only for long term planning. Olevia McDonald so moved; Billy Perritt seconded; all approved.
- 2) *LTP Recommendation: Renew Contracts, with Changes:*
 - a. Dr. Branch, at his request: title changed to consultant; one-fourth time, \$1000 each month; 6 months contract. As currently, the \$1000/month stipend will include all travel and per diem expenses other than Commission-approved specific expenses.
 - b. Lindsay Gouedy, at her request: 1 year contract, \$2500/month (as current), flat \$500/month travel expenses, and payment bi-monthly on the 15th and 30th.

Discussion followed. Dr. Kennedy commented that contracts often provide a flat amount to cover contractors' costs. Billy Perritt commented that reimbursement tied to travel better serves the Commission. Lindsay distributed a one year activity plan to explain her 1 year contract request (*Attachment 2*).

Todd Culpepper entertained a motion to approve the Long Term Planning Committee's recommendation regarding contract renewals with the exception that Lindsay Gouedy's travel expenses will be reimbursed upon return of receipts. Phillip Lane so moved; John Van Bennett seconded; all approved.

3) *LTP Announcements and Information:*

- a. The Governor has announced new and renewed appointments for Sparta commissioners. One spot is unfilled-D. Woodward's replacement. Rick Hohlt announced that he is Lincoln Police Jury's nominee.
- b. Union County (AR) Water Conservation Board sends greetings and reports that UCWCB contract with La. Dept. Natural Resources has been fully executed (LDNR will assume costs of UCWCB's Sparta Recovery Project monitoring wells in Louisiana, a request made by Sparta Commission) (*Attachment 3*).
- c. La. DNR Conservation Office-Environment-Water Resources: Easy Access to Information (*Attachment 4*).
- d. Graphs showing slow Sparta water travel time and declining Sparta groundwater levels (*Attachment 5*).
- e. New well applications and permits will be sent to Sparta Commission and those who ask LDNR. One such -- for Arcadia Gas Storage salt dome project in Arcadia -- was distributed (*Attachment 6*).

Marketing and Public Relations Committee

Lindsay reported that website renovation continues. The address will continue to be 'spartaaquifer.com'. There will be a link to a Sparta Foundation page, also on the website, which page will provide for recognition of advocates for the Sparta and for donations to be used as seed money for Sparta conservation activities. Committee member Rick Hohlt commented that the page will provide an opportunity for donations like the \$24,000 raised in Ruston for the Sparta video.

Staff Report

Dr. Bill Branch and Lindsay Gouedy distributed a report of their outreach and other activities and plans. (*Attachment 7*)

Dr. Branch reported:

- 1) Groundwater Resources Task Force has once again met without a quorum, frustrating members, who include the Sparta Commission representative Olevia McDonald and Sparta Commission ex officio member Gary Hanson. Rep. Jim Morrison, who serves on the Task Force, has said he will help make changes. The Task Force's purpose is to make recommendations for the state's groundwater resources plan. Instead, the Groundwater Resources Commission (GWRC) is developing the plan without the advice of this multi-stakeholders' group.
- 2) The Drinking Water (formerly Well-Head) Protection Program has been put into place in Ouachita, Bossier, Natchitoches, Caddo, and LaSalle parishes and is underway in Lincoln. Dr. Branch encouraged participation in the water information and conservation education program.
- 3) A proposal has been submitted to EPA to support the Sparta Commission's education efforts for one year, starting in July. If successful, La Tech's Dept. of Agricultural Sciences will provide salary and benefits as a match.
- 4) Representatives of the Ouachita River Valley Authority (ORVA), and possibly the Red River Waterway Commission and Red River Valley Association (RRVA), will go to Washington D.C. to seek funding for US Army Corps of Engineering river and basin projects. (see General Business Item 4 below)
- 5) Flakeboard America's water recycling program (today's address), was mentioned at the most recent GWRC meeting in Mandeville and is on the agenda of the GWRC's Feb. 3 meeting in Shreveport.

Lindsay Gouedy reported:

- 1) National and state Groundwater Awareness Week: March 7-13. She will be setting up activities in several parishes.
- 2) La. Groundwater Resources Commission meets in Shreveport on Feb. 3—she encouraged attendance.
- 3) In Oregon, follow-up of La Tech Dept. of Ag Sciences program last year, she shared water resources information.

Speaker: Joseph Perry, manager of Flakeboard America in Simsboro

Flakeboard makes particle board, which requires water for cooling, resin curing, and washing equipment. Flakeboard uses about 800,000 gallons of Sparta water/month. Recycling at a cost of about \$20,000 can reduce water use to perhaps one-third of current use. Rainwater collection is planned, too. Saving water is to avoid restrictions. Mr. Perry encourages industries to follow suit in conserving water and to meter water use. Lindsay Gouedy educated Flakeboard employees about conservation.

General Business

- 1) Sparta Foundation establishment as a 501(c)3 organization for receiving donations and gifts for conservation efforts. Todd Culpepper and Alice Stewart have been completing paperwork. Commission's authorization at Oct. 13 meeting last year included payment of application expenses and Todd Culpepper to sign paperwork.
- 2) Cooperative agreements with parishes, cities, towns, villages. On motion by Steve Lemmons, seconded by Dan Morgan, the Commission unanimously authorized Todd Culpepper to sign the cooperative agreement papers.

- 3) Scheduled 2nd annual Ground Water Districts Management Association meeting in Little Rock, June, 2010. Dr. Branch stated that, at the first meeting, consultants argued for large districts for ease of management but others argued emphatically for smaller districts in the interest of local control.
- 4) Red River Valley Association membership. Gary Hanson, a RRVA member, and Dr. Branch encouraged the Sparta Commission to join the RRVA as it has ORVA. On motion by Billy Perritt, seconded by Phillip Lane, the Commission voted unanimously to join RRVA and pay the \$250 membership fee.
- 5) Economic Development. LSU AgCenter Rural Community Development agent Dora Ann Hatch has proposed a Saturday luncheon meeting to formulate the Sparta Foundations goals and objectives so that Commission members and staff can go into parishes with a uniform message. Todd Culpepper will announce details in weeks to come.

Comments. Todd Culpepper entertained comments before the meeting closed. Among topics:

- 1) Permitting of water wells. Concerns were expressed about 2 mgd of Sparta water permitted for a natural gas salt dome storage project in Arcadia, when other industries have spent money to conserve. Suggestions were to review for completeness LDNR's procedure for notifying of new wells permitted and to request LDNR to permit only after economic/environmental studies indicate that Sparta-sparing alternatives are not feasible. Dr. Branch stated that he would give LDNR's perspective: that La. is a 'rule of capture' state and LDNR is acting within its authority. Gary Hanson said that some Sparta water will be sold for salt dome leaching; on the positive side, there's some recycling, source of water must now be reported; and local groups are beginning to work with water users to find optimal alternatives in the public interest. Todd Culpepper said he would attend La. GW Resources Commission meeting in Shreveport and asked to Gene Coleman to comment on concerns at that meeting.
- 2) Tiffany Clason, representing Senator Vitter, stated, in response to discussions about grant applications, that Senator Vitter is always glad to issue Letters of Support for worthy projects.

Arrangements for Next Meeting. Billy Perritt moved to meet in Union Parish, Apr.15; Dan Morgan seconded; all approved.

Adjournment. Samuel Little moved to adjourn; Ted McKinney seconded; all approved. The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

SS: Todd Culpepper, Chairman

SS: Alice Stewart, Secretary