

## Minutes of the Sparta Groundwater Conservation District Commission meeting on July 15, 2010

The Sparta Groundwater Conservation District Commission met on July 15, 2010 at 3:00 PM in the Jackson Parish Community Center, 182 Industrial Drive, Jonesboro LA 71251.

**Commission Members Present:** Ben Lowery, Mack Calhoun, Willie Doherty, Todd Culpepper, Edward Dayton, Olevia McDonald, Ted W. McKinney, Billy Don Perritt, Jackie Perritt, Alice Stewart. Also Present: Bill Chaumont, Gary Hanson, Dr. Gary Kennedy [ex-officio members]; Gene Coleman [Commission's representative on the Groundwater Resources Commission; Dr. Bill Branch and Lindsay Gouedy [staff]. **Commission Members Absent:** John Van Bennett, Rick Hohlt, Phillip Lane, Dan Morgan, Chris Smith, Mayor Leslie Thompson, Rep. Samuel Little, Steve Lemmons. (*Attachment 2*)

### Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, Agenda Approval, and Welcome

The meeting was officially called to order by Chairman Todd Culpepper. Doherty gave the invocation; Billy Perritt led in the pledge of allegiance. McDonald moved to approve the agenda (*Attachment 1*); Jackie Perritt seconded; all approved.

Representative Fannin said he had spoken with Mayor Norris, who reported that the City of West Monroe-Graphic Packaging project is proceeding after a delay caused by flooding; Graphic Packaging should be decreasing Sparta aquifer use within 12 months. He expressed appreciation for Smurfit Stone Container's water conservation efforts. Calhoun asked whether a West Monroe area lake construction project might receive funding for studies and permitting. Rep. Fannin emphasized the need to move from ground to surface water use; water availability and funding are issues. He reported that Louisiana ranks one or two among states in fresh water availability; others will want to purchase Louisiana's fresh water; "This is a big issue." Motivated by five recent Attorney General opinions that place a value on water (surface water may not be given away) and new Haynesville Shale-related water demand, new Surface Water Law was created this year; the law sunsets in two years, providing time for state water law to be developed; "It will take everyone (all stakeholder groups) to work this out".

### Public Comments

Culpepper invited Public Comments. Culpepper introduced Melissa Perry of the Jackson Parish School Board. Ms. Perry introduced Mike Craft, new manager Smurfit Stone Container plant in Hodge. Todd Slavant introduced himself as candidate for Louisiana 5<sup>th</sup> District U. S. Congressional seat, and he introduced his wife Angela.

### Minutes

Culpepper called for approval of the July 15, 2010 meeting minutes as distributed to members prior to the meeting and with correction pointed out by Stewart [page 2 Staff Report #8 –Union County (not 'Parish') Water Conservation Board—UCWCB]. Doherty so moved; McKinney seconded; all approved. (*Attachment 3*)

### Treasurer Report

Billy Perritt distributed a Summary Balance sheet as of July 13, 2010 and a Profit and Loss sheet, covering Jan. 1 through July 13, 2010. (*Attachment 4*) Calhoun moved to approve the report, Dayton seconded; all approved.

### Committee Reports

Administrative Committee. Chairman McDonald submitted a written report. (*Attachment 5*) She said that bank arrangements for direct payment of contractors were not possible; payment will be manual. Gouedy's activities and plans were reviewed.

Long term Planning Committee (LTP). (*Attachment 6*) Chairman Stewart reported.

LTP met just prior to this Sparta Commission meeting, Stewart, Culpepper, and McKinney attending. The committee:

- recommended that the Sparta Commission accept, as its document, 'The Sparta Aquifer in Louisiana and Its Management', with an amendment based on recommendations of UCWCB chairman Robert Reynolds concerning the section on 'New Demand for Water'. The document and amendment had been emailed earlier to all commissioners, and the amendment was distributed at this meeting in print. Upon the commission's approval of the LTP report, the paper will be used by the marketing/PR committee as a source of information for the website.
- recommended that the Sparta Commission spend up to \$100 to publish the document for distribution to legislators and others.
- distributed to commissioners notes from the Louisiana legislature website on the new Surface Water Law.

McDonald moved to make 'Sparta Aquifer in Louisiana and Its Management' the Sparta Commission's public document and to spend up to \$100 to make the document available, the copying to be the responsibility of the LTP Committee. Jackie Perritt seconded, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Marketing and PR Committee. Gouedy announced that the committee had met June 23 to discuss information to be on the Sparta Display.

## Staff Report

Dr. Bill Branch distributed a written report. (*Attachment 7*) He also:

- complemented Rep. Fannin and legislators' progress on surface water law, and complemented Olevia McDonald, Gary Hanson, and the Groundwater Resources Commission's Advisory Task Force (GWRCATF); as it has in the past, it is expected that the Task Force will be instrumental in helping further the development of state water law.
- spoke of meetings of the Red River Valley Association (RRVA) and Ouachita River Valley Association at which Arkansas and Louisiana elected officials spoke; the Sparta Commission is a member of both organizations.
- reported on the Groundwater Management District Association summer meeting in Little Rock in June. Dr. Branch's written report of the meeting provides much valuable information on water management practices in Arkansas and elsewhere.
- advised that the USGS 2010 survey of state water supply and use is underway; report should be published in 2012. He urged encouragement of water system managers to give good information. He, with Bill Chaumont of Louisiana Rural Water Association (LRWA), said that reporting has been good in Sparta 'areas of groundwater concern' and the Haynesville Shale region, but elsewhere is poor. Chaumont recommended a mandate that water suppliers meter and keep better records.
- spoke of the need to motivate parish educators to invite the Farm Bureau's 'Ag in the Classroom' to be taught in the fall.
- spoke of DEQ's Lincoln Parish, "Protect Drinking Water One Drop at a Time", designed to spur the public's participation in protecting their area's drinking water; the need to plug abandoned oil wells to protect aquifer water quality is one area of emphasis. Sparta Commission's Lincoln Parish residents, Hohlt, McDonald, and McKinney, are involved in the campaign.
- announced the upcoming LRWA annual training for operators of Louisiana wastewater and drinking water systems.

Lindsay Gouedy, with PowerPoint presentation, reported outreach since March and some planned activities (*Attachment 8*):

- represented Sparta Commission and/or participated in meetings and events, including the Mississippi River Commission, LRWA training, RRVA, UCWCB, Earth Day in Ouachita Parish, Jackson Parish School Board and Jackson Parish Library program, Lincoln Parish 4-H Achievement Day, Claiborne Parish WaterFest;
- assists with Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom lesson plans (water is one of two focus topics this year) and develops, often with others, educational products, some of which she demonstrated at this meeting;
- is currently setting WaterFest dates in Lincoln and Jackson Parish. Union and Morehouse parishes may also be interested;
- demonstrated the Sparta Commission's new Portable Table Top Display-should be completed within one month;
- announced a Nov. Five K-1 Run to encourage participation in water conservation, Squire Creek facility donated for the event;
- demonstrated 'Sparta Education Donors Website Advertising Sales Agreement';
- announced that the renewed website spartaaquifer.com is live;
- announced upcoming OWL Center program and Louisiana Ag Teacher's Association Workshop;
- announced an Idea Place application for a National Science Foundation grant – support letters will be requested.

## General Business:

1. Dayton introduced Terry Emory, Supervisor of Water and Wastewater programs for the City of West Monroe, as Sparta Commission member who would be taking his place in the fall. Ms. Emory reported on Graphic Packaging plan to decrease its Sparta use by 10 mgd, starting with transitioning to use of West Monroe's wastewater treated to drinking water standards, currently 7 mgd. River flooding had delayed progress but construction resumed at the end of May. More than \$16 million has been secured, mostly from Capital Outlay, DEQ, and City of West Monroe funding. Expected completion date is late September 2011. Ms. Emory distributed a written 'Sparta Recycle Project Update.' (*Attachment 9*) Calhoun praised the program and added description.
2. Culpepper announced that Sparta Foundation 501(c)3 status is expected to be announced within one month.
3. Lindsay's Sparta website update was presented in her earlier report.
4. Regarding commissioners' terms ending in October, Stewart announced that most nominations are complete.
5. His term ending, Gene Coleman thanked the commission for the opportunity to serve on the Groundwater Resources Commission. Culpepper entertained nominations for the seat. McDonald, McKinney, and Stewart offered to serve. Billy Perritt moved that the names be submitted for the Governor's selection. Calhoun seconded, and all approved.

Culpepper announced that the next meeting of the Sparta Commission will be in Claiborne Parish on October 21 at 3:00 p.m., with the usual pre-meeting informal gathering beginning at 2:00.

Gary Hanson, who serves on the GWRCATF and heads the Red River Watershed Management Institute, provided history of state water policy development meetings. McDonald suggested that he have a place on the next meeting's agenda.

There being no further business, McDonald moved to adjourn; McKinney seconded; all approved.

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William 'Todd' Culpepper, Chairman

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Alice Stewart, Secretary

Note: Attachments are filed with the minutes in the Sparta Commission office.