

Minutes of the Sparta Groundwater Conservation District Commission meeting on October 20, 2011

The Sparta Groundwater Conservation District Commission met on October 20, 2011 at 2:20 PM in the Louisiana Political Museum, 499 East Main, Winnfield, LA 71292.

Commission Members Present: Billy Don Perritt, Ben Lowery, Todd Culpepper, Rick Hohlt, Mack Calhoun, Willie Doherty, Joe Stevens, Ted W. McKinney, Olevia McDonald, and Jackie Perritt. Also Present: Dr. Gary Kennedy, Ben McGee [ex-officio members]; Lindsay Gouedy [educator]. **Commission Members Absent:** Rep. Samuel Little, Dan Morgan, Steve Lemmons, Chris Smith, Alice Stewart, George W. Rolfe, Jr., Terry Emory, and John Van Bennett. (*Attachment 2*)

Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, Agenda Approval, Welcome, Public Comments

The meeting was officially called to order by Chairman Todd Culpepper. Willie Doherty led the invocation and Billy Perritt the pledge of allegiance. Hohlt moved to amend the published agenda to move items that needed action by the commission that required a quorum because Mr. Calhoun needed to leave before meeting concluded. The contract consideration – Administrative Committee report was moved to after election of officers. Ted McKinney moved to accept the agenda with changes; Hohlt seconded; all approved. (*Attachment 1*)

Culpepper welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged elected officials. Doris Leeper, Police Juror, Winn Parish was introduced.

There were no public comments given.

Minutes of last meeting

Culpepper called for approval of the July 21, 2011 meeting minutes, which had been distributed to members prior to the meeting. Billy Perritt moved to accept the minutes as distributed; Lowery seconded; all approved. (*Attachment 3*)

Treasurer Report

Billy Perritt presented the treasurer report; Summary Balance sheet as of September 30, 2011 as well as Jan – Sept 2011 Profit and Loss sheet. Rick Hohlt moved to accept the treasury report; McKinney seconded; all approved. Mr. Perritt also presented the budget for 2012. Hohlt reminded commission that we are working a year in advance for Educator's salary and the monies are in place. Billy Perritt moved to approve the budget; Calhoun seconded; all approved. (*Attachment 4*)

Election of Officers for 2012

Billy Perritt moved to retain the same slate of officers – McDonald reminded the commission that she would not serve on commission in 2012. It was recommended that the same slate of officers would serve except for assistant secretary – Terry Emory would replace Olevia McDonald. The officers for 2012 are: chairman Culpepper, vice-chairman Calhoun, treasurer Billy Perritt, secretary Stewart, assistant secretary Emory; Jackie Perritt seconded; all approved.

Contract Renewal for Lindsay Gouedy

Olevia McDonald, chair of Administrative Committee, recommended renewing Lindsay's contract for the period of January 1, -December 31, 2012. Mack Calhoun moved to renew contract; Ted McKinney seconded; all approved.

Presentations:

1. Union County Water Conservation Board representative thanked the commission for their past support in requesting a portion of the funding from Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) required to monitor recovering wells that extend into north Louisiana. It is time to fund this project again and the Board is asking for the commission to support these efforts by requesting LDNR to make contributions. The specific request is \$35,370.00 approximately ¼ of the \$137,500 required for the program. Rick Hohlt moved to submit resolution to LDNR; Jackie Perritt seconded; all approved.

2. Glen Austin and Steve Bates with the Dugdemona Soil and Water group informed the commission of the ongoing project to construct the Port deLuce Water Reservoir for Winnfield and Winn Parish fresh water use. Mr. Doherty told the group that Winnfield is suffering with water supply and need an alternate water source. Mr. Bates told the group that in 2004 \$820M of federal funding was secured and engineering survey, geo-tech boring, environmental and landowner assessments conducted. He estimated that \$1.2 million is needed to bring to construction phase and another \$10 -12 million for construction. The group discussed sustainability, pumpage, etc. Mr. Glen Austin asked how to receive 'critical' designation. He felt federal funding would be more accessible with the designation. Discussion of the political issues with the designation needed to be addressed.

3. Rick Hohlt gave a brief overview of the Sparta Foundation activities and expenses. (Report – *Attachment 5*) He also showed a short video of the Waterfest for Bienville Parish. Waterfest events were conducted in Lincoln, Bienville, and

Union Counties.

4. Ted McKinney reported that the State Commission has not met. The last communication indicated the “Final (Louisiana Water Resources) Plan” would be completed by the end of December 2011.
 5. Lindsay Gouedy reported on Waterfests as well as plans for 2012. She will be going to 5th grade class rooms in Ouachita Parish January – March of 2012. Waterfests in Webster and Union parishes are also being planned. Efforts are still under way to secure additional funding through various grants. (Report—*Attachment 6*)
 6. Ben McGee with USGS addressed the group. He said Sparta wells in northeast and north central Louisiana are generally rising – Claiborne, Union, Morehouse. There is stability and leveling of well water in Lincoln and Bienville. Wells in the southernmost part of the aquifer, Caldwell and Winn, are still experiencing decline. Ben attributes the improvements to what’s taking place in Union County Arkansas. He added that the drought has caused us to run pumps much longer.
- Ben told the group that the Wilcox, one of the oldest fresh water aquifers in Louisiana, does not give up its supply readily. It mostly supplied households but with the boom of users going up – housing development, oil and gas, Haynesville Shale, etc., now they are asking questions about Sparta. Water is a concern throughout Louisiana. He also informed the group of the ‘Brown Dense Formation’. Similar to the Haynesville Shale, it extends through Southern Arkansas and north Louisiana and if they move forward with production, ground water will be needed to ‘frac’ the wells. This formation is located in Sparta.
7. Rick Hohlt reported that the Union-Lincoln Initiative is petitioning USGA for funding to move forward on project.

Culpepper thanked Olevia McDonald for the years of service to the Sparta Commission.

Culpepper announced that the next meeting of the Sparta Commission will be in Arcadia, on January 19, 2012 at 2:00 p.m., with the usual pre-meeting informal gathering beginning at 1:00.

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

William ‘Todd’ Culpepper, Chairman

Alice Stewart, Secretary

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