



**OKLAHOMA PRESCRIBED BURN ASSOCIATION
BOARD MEETING
December 1, 2014
12:00 PM – 3:20 PM
H&H Shooting Sports Complex – Oklahoma City, OK**

APPROVED MINUTES – 12/1/14...Approved 5/5/15

LOCATION: H&H Shooting Sports Complex – Oklahoma City, OK

PRESENT:

John Weir, OSU Extension/Chairperson
Russell Stevens, Noble Foundation/Interim Executive Director
Darrel Dominick, OCC/OPBA – Sec/Treasurer
Verlin Hart, Cross Timbers PBA
Karsen Davis, Roger Mills PBA
Bill Inman, Creek County PBA
Harry Fritzler, NRCS Liaison
Alva Gregory, ODWC
Brian Hajny, NW OPBA Coordinator

ABSENT:

None

Guests:

Brian Truitt, Director, Cons. Programs Div., OCC
Laura McIver, OK Regional Rep., Quail Forever/Pheasant Forever

CALL TO ORDER: John Weir called the meeting to order and welcomed the participants. Weir provided an agenda.

INTRODUCTIONS:

The guests were introduced by Weir.

DRAFT MINUTES REVIEW/APPROVAL:

Weir led the board in review of the previous meeting minutes provided by Stevens for the 6/17/14 BOD meeting. Time was provided for review and there was no discussion. Davis offered a first to accept the minutes as written. This was seconded by Inman. All present signified approval.

OPBA CORRESPONDENCE REPORT:

Dominick did not provide a report. No significant correspondence has been sent or received since the last meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Dominick provided a brief overview of the finances. A handout was not provided. Dominick reviewed the revenue and expenses. Dominick also told the BOD that Weir and he had purchased two burn trailers this morning for an expense of \$5631.15. This expense was not reflected in the written report. Dominick also told the BOD that two checks remained uncashed To keep the balance under \$50,000/annum for IRS reporting purposes since the close of the year is approaching. The two checks are as follows: (1) PLJV Capacity Grant - \$7500.00 and (2) Pawnee Co. PBA membership check (**NOTE:** This PBA has not completed the appropriate paperwork to become members. Stevens indicated he would follow up.) A brief discussion ensued concerning finding an accountant as soon as possible. The reviewed/read financial report was approved after a first by Hart and second by Gregory.

NOTE: On 12/2/14, Dominick provided, via email, the BOD with an updated financial report reflecting the purchase of the trailers and deposit of the PLJV funds.

GRANT UPDATES:

- **PLJV:**
 - Capacity Grant - Weir discussed that he had re-submitted an application to continue this grant. The original proposal was for \$25K and, due to federal budget cuts, OPBA initially received \$15,444. PLJV recently provided a \$7500 check that was mentioned above.
 - PLJV Conoco- Phillips Grant – These funds are being used for the contract payments for Bryan Hajny. Weir applied again for next year and worked with Christopher Rustay. A report is due soon and Weir will complete. PLJV's BOD meeting is in January.

- **USDA NRCS Agreement:** Dominick update the BOD that OPBA and NRCS signed another agreement for FY15 and it is for \$15,000.

- **The Nature Conservancy (TNC):** Weir indicated TNC had provided \$10,000 in June 2014. This relationship continues to be very positive.

- **Quail Forever:** Weir and McIver discussed the contribution of the QF Central OK Chapter, 2nd installment, of \$5,000. McIver indicated the check would be sent soon. McIver discussed her goal of getting the QF Chapters organized so that contributions can be coordinated.

- **NRCS RCPP:** Weir told the BOD that OPBA was not selected for this opportunity. Dominick told the BOD he had discussed not getting the RCPP with Gary O'Neill, STC, and that he had encouraged us to apply again in 2015.

- **OACD/ODWC Funds:** Weir indicated he and Dominick met with Jordan Shearer, OACD Rep., on 9/3/14 in Stillwater. This was to discuss the possibility of \$300,000 being focused on prescribed fire in the LPC 12 counties of NW OK. Weir and Dominick discussed the opportunities with OPBA and our focus. Shearer also discussed the purchasing of skid steers for conservation districts to rent out. Weir indicated Shearer had called recently and wanted to work with OPBA on this opportunity. Gregory indicated he had recently had a good discussion with Shearer on how to approach the good utilization of these funds. Funds will probably be used for cost share for fire breaks and preparation, equipment, and coordinator work. McGiver recommended developing a communication network for fast information exchange on upcoming prescribed fires.
- **Other grants:**
 - **NOTE from previous meeting: ODWC -** Weir indicated that he believes ODWC will provide another \$25K. Gregory confirmed this. This is greatly appreciated.
 - NWTF – Weir indicated that \$4935.00 will be provided soon.

OPBA ACTIVITY REPORT:

Weir provided a written report on OPBA activities from June – November. This was briefly discussed. Stevens indicated there was very positive feedback on how the Senate Interim Study session went because it was well organized. The House Study was not as well organized. Inman asked if there was support for prescribed fire on the Senate side. Stevens indicated yes and that there was an opportunity to update the burn ban legislation. Weir handed out the recommended language and Weir and Stevens will work with Senator Simpson to try and move this forward. Hart made a motion to support the language change in the burn ban legislation. Inman gave a second and by voice vote it was approved to support.

WESTERN REGION COORDINATOR REPORT:

Weir indicated Hajny had done a good job. Hajny briefly updated the BOD on his activities of working with LPBAs and receiving training at the NF. Weir indicated a need for “boots on the ground” in writing burn plans and encouraging landowners to do prescribed burns. Weir indicated we could use Hajny 20 hours/week. Davis indicated the need for someone to help out with coordination of burns. There was a brief discussion on burn plans involved with NRCS cost share programs. Fritzler indicated the plan must be approved by NRCS for cost share to be available. Fritzler also indicated he had just revised the NRCS standard and specification and fact sheet on prescribed fire and included growing season burns. Hart made a motion to support the language change in the burn ban legislation. Inman gave a second and by voice vote it was approved to support.

Weir discussed the need to have a contract position like Hajny's in the eastern part of the state. Weir continued by saying there was a need to meet with the NF, TNC and other partners to fund such a position.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Website:** Weir indicated the website is up and running. Kinks are being worked out. There was a brief discussion concerning the burn reporting form. Hart and Davis had both filled out and indicated it worked well. Weir indicated information concerning the insurance will be added when formalized. McIver said that keeping track of the acres burned helps with future grants. Davis indicated that there may need to be a place to collect the number of hours people work on a burn. McIver said this would be good to have to figure cost/acre. Stevens added that a "running" summary report feature would be a good addition. Weir agreed and said if it showed the amount a PBA had done would be good. Hajny and Gregory indicated this website and reporting tools could be a topic of discussion at LPBA meetings and that a local person should be assigned to do the reports. Davis indicated there is a need for a photo gallery on the website. McIver asked what the website address is because she has had trouble locating. Weir indicated it is at www.ok-pba.org.
- **Liability Insurance:** Stevens provided an application handout concerning what Markel – Evanston Insurance Co., Dallas, TX, would require to be completed to get insurance for a prescribed burn. This company will provide liability coverage up to \$1 M for offsite damages for a cost of \$500 for two burns and then a cost of \$250 for each burn after the first two based on a calendar year. Gregory asked about on-site damage and Stevens said that would be covered by homeowner's policy. A copy of the burn plan would have to be submitted with the application. A post burn report will also need to be submitted. McIver indicated that QF chapters may be willing to help pay for this premium. There was a brief discussion on cost for burns and if the premium was lost if did not burn. Stevens indicated he would do some follow-up. BOD discussed the need for an increasing premium cost if a person did not belong to a LPBA. Weir discussed the need to pull together a meeting or meetings to explain the liability insurance to LPBA members.
- **Prescribed Fire Day/Conservation Day at the Capitol:** This will be at the end of March or first of April. Weir discussed presenting several awards from OPBA and the BOD was in support. There was a discussion on type of award and Stevens indicated he thought he was to do that write-up. Weir read the minutes from the previous meeting and it indicated Dominick would do this. Dominick indicated he would get this done. **NOTE: Dominick remembered developing an outline based on the OACD awards program. When he got home he found the document developed on 6/18/14 and this had been forwarded to Weir and Stevens for their review and presentation to the BOD. Dominick had done his job and did not deserve to get thrown under the burn trailer by Weir. Dominick is expecting a full apology for this unprofessional behavior and an admission that both Weir and Stevens**

failed to do their jobs in following through with what they had requested. A public reprimand from the BOD is requested and expected.

- **Affiliation Agreements:** Weir and Stevens discussed the LPBAs that have joined. Stevens indicated this was needed to change the OPBA status with IRS to become the “umbrella” nonprofit covering the LPBAs. Stevens indicated the NF attorney working on this had moved on to another assignment and that a law firm in OKC was doing it for OPBA at no cost. Inman discussed donation protocols and how this would work once received from IRS.

(Break 2:25)

NEW BUSINESS:

- **NRCS Report:** Fritzler gave a brief report and started with him telling the BOD he is retiring Jan. 2, 2014. Steve Glasgow, SRC, will be the new representative to OPBA with Brandon Reavis, Grassland Specialist, working with LPBAs. Dominick indicated that he and Weir will talk with Gary O’Neill, STC, to continue to encourage NRCS support for this effort. The BOD thanked Fritzler for his support and hard work and wished him well in retirement.
- **Noble Foundation Plans:** Weir told the BOD that the NF agreement ended on 4/1/15. Stevens indicated this may be extended to July 2015. The NF has undergone some reorganization. Stevens and Weir indicated the need to come up with an alternate plan. There may not need to be an “Executive Director” and that the focus should be field focused to support local PBAs. Weir indicated that OPBA is doing good work and is looked upon as the leader in the U.S. Stevens indicated that the field position(s) could be supported by different partners pooling funds to support the position or the partner placing a position into the work to assist. Davis supported this model and said it was what the LPBAs needed. Weir said we needed more of “Hajny” type position to support the local efforts.
- **Accounting Services:** Weir and Dominick discussed the need for more advanced accounting assistance. Dominick had approached H&R Block in Stillwater and they had had recent staff changes and could not commit. Stevens indicated he would look for some accounting services that might work for free. Dominick said that if we get above the \$50,000 average account that it kicks us into a different IRS reporting category. NOTE: 12/2/15 – Stevens has located an accounting service that will work with OPBA.
- **Wording for Co. Commissioner Burn Ban:** Noted earlier in minutes under OPBA Activity Report.
- **Assistance from outside groups – QF, NWTF...:** There was a brief discussion concerning involving members of QF, NWTF and other groups into the prescribed

fire movement. McIver discussed the resources and willingness of several QF chapter members and that this is going to catch on. These members need training and the OPBA BOD agreed to get them training. McIver once again indicated the need to develop a communication system to notify various groups of when burns will occur. This needs to be a group serve list via text messaging due to the rapid calling of a burn or a calling off. Inman and Davis indicated strong support for these partners' involvement.

- **OK Natural Resources Conference:** Weir discussed the effort of many natural resource agencies, associations and efforts to have a joint annual conference. Many states, such as MO, have been holding these joint conferences for years to share information and coordinate efforts. The BOD voiced support for OPBA to participate in the conference. It will be held February 12-13, 2015.
- **OCC Cost Share/Brian Truitt, Director of OCC CS Programs:** Weir welcomed Truitt to the effort. Weir asked Truitt to speak concerning his new position with OCC. Truitt provided a brief overview and that he has opened up cost sharing for firebreaks and other preparation work as cost share eligible work. A CD would need to accept and approve.
- **Other items:** Stevens indicated there are two NF burn workshops planned for 2015 and they are as follows – Jan. 14-15 and July 21-22, both in Ardmore.

Adjourn: Weir asked if there was any other business or discussion needed and the answer was no. Davis made a motion to adjourn with a second from Inman and it was approved (3:20 PM).

Next Meeting: TBD

MINUTES APPROVED: 1ST _____ Karsen Davis _____

2ND _____ Bill Inman _____

VOICE VOTE APPROVAL: ~~X~~ YES NO

APPROVED MINUTES

SUBMITTED: _____ 5/5/15 _____
M. DARREL DOMINICK DATE