

Lake Ouachita Citizen Focus Committee



**1424 Blakely Dam Road
Royal, Arkansas 71964**

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD: Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee Minutes

DATE: January 8, 2018

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m. by Jerry Shields, Chairman

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Derick Walker, Supervisory Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Jason Mothershed, Facility Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Amy Shultz, Natural Resource Specialist, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

George Dooley	Rick Stokes	Jerry Williams
Al Gathright	Jo West Taylor	
Jerry Shields	Dan Watson	

Opening Remarks: Jerry S. asked Rick S. what he believed was the reason the LOCFC was formed. Rick stated the main reason was to get citizens input /suggestions on how to improve the Lake projects. The Corps could reject the suggestions, but was expected to take some of the suggestions and work on a plan to implement them. Also, if the Corps has excess funds, they were to ask the committee for suggestions on how to spend the funds. It is the Corps final decision, but the purpose of the committee was to get public feedback. Jerry stated he receives a lot of questions about the function of the committee from the public, and his response is usually, “the committee provides citizens input in the lake management.” Rick stated one positive thing the committee can do is advocate for the lake through congressional representatives. Jerry stated that in the past this had worked, but the last letters sent to the representatives gained no response. Rick stated they needed to figure out the best time in the budget cycle to submit their package to the representatives, and re-send it. Jo West T. asked if they needed to lobby in Washington D.C. for money for the lake. Rick stated if they had a site specific project, it would have a better opportunity to get funded than just asking for money.

USACE Operation Review:

Tree clearing at Denby Bay bridge: Derick related the trees have been cleared at Denby Bay, the Corps still has some bobcat work to push the trees over to the side.

Tompkins Bend new parking area status: Derick related the Corps will be spreading approximately 20 loads of gravel and compacting it. Derick also stated Stephens Park was about to close for two months for upgrades of 50 amp electrical service, sewer hookups, water hookups, and two new night-watcher lights. The new price for camping in Stephens will be \$30/night. Derick further related the Joplin bridge test got funded and the engineers will come in and do weight calculations on the bridge. Derick will send out the date they will be doing the tests when he receives it. Derick also shared the wastewater treatment plant is almost completed at Brady.

FOLO Financial Update: Jerry shared Vivian's husband passed away, so no report this month. Jerry paid \$350 for taxes for non-profit, and this was only expenditure since last report.

Grab A Bag Program Update: Derick stated the Corps had received three texts in the off - season to refill the Grab a Bag containers. He also stated that several marinas have not installed the canisters: Echo Canyon, Hwy 27, and possibly Ouachita shores. Jerry stated they could check with these marinas and see why they were not installed.

LOViT: Jerry shared they had applied for a \$5,000 grant from Game and Fish commission for the funding for the remaining supplies needed to replace damaged boards on the elevated walkway. Grant proposal was submitted to Kirsten Bartlow, AGFC, and they are waiting to hear if it is funded. Jerry further shared they have received a \$1,000 grant from Montgomery County Health Advisory committee to build a bridge on the trail, which has already been constructed. Jerry stated the reconstruction of the elevated trail will begin tomorrow, and they currently have 8 volunteers. Jerry asked if the Corps could load the boards on a trailer to be hauled to the worksite. Rick offered his trailer to haul the boards. Jason M. stated he would ask the heavy equipment operator to assist them with loading the boards onto the trailer. Jerry stated one of the boards on the walkway over creek is broken through and is a safety issue, he suggested closing the trail until it could be repaired. Jason stated he would look at the damage tomorrow. Jerry also stated the workers would pile the debris from reconstruction up for Corps to remove. Jo West volunteered to assist with the reconstruction. Jerry also related the Trail dogs have installed directional arrows along the trail that were purchased from a Walmart grant, and have received a lot of positive feedback from the public on these.

Bike Repair Station: Jerry shared since they haven't met with Montgomery County yet, this will be tabled until the February meeting.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:40 P.M.