

Lake Ouachita Citizen Focus Committee



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

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD: Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee Minutes

DATE: September 11, 2017

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m. by Robert Cavanaugh, Vice Chairman

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Stacy Sigman, Resource Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Derick Walker, Supervisory Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Amy Shultz, Natural Resource Specialist, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

Bill Barnes	Al Gathright	Jo West Taylor
Robert Cavanaugh	Arnold Habig	Dan Watson
George Dooley	Rick Stokes	Howard Wright

Announcements: None.

Minutes: The minutes from the August 4, 2017 meeting were approved as written.

ORVA Conference Update:

- Arnie H. provided a summary report on the ORVA conference to the committee members. Arnie related Colonel Michael Derosier would like to visit the Citizens Focus Committee on his next trip to Ouachita. Stacy S. stated the Colonel might visit in early January for the Wounded Warrior squirrel hunt, but an exact date has not been set. Arnie suggested that Jerry S. visit with the executive officer of ORVA to discuss our recreation funding issues on Ouachita since ORVA travels to Washington D.C twice a year. Arnie asked about the status of the congressional letters Rick S. has been working on. Although Arnie stated he did not get a chance to visit with Tom Cotton, he believes sending a letter to Senator Cotton would help. Arnie congratulated Bill B. on his National Partnership Award that was presented during the ORVA conference. Bill related General Wehr is a proponent for tourism, and 70 % of campsites are managed by the Corps of Engineers. When General Wehr moves to Washington D.C., he will be promoted to Deputy Commander and possibly Commander in the future. He will be in a great position to be an advocate for the Corps and recreation on Ouachita.

-Stacy requested Arnie's conference notes be changed from 4.5 million dollars given to Lake Ouachita in FY 17 to \$2,769,000 as this is the correct number. Arnie requested this number be sent to him in an email and he will make the change to his report. Bill B. moved Arnie's report be approved with the amended change. Dan W. seconded, vote was taken and unanimously approved.

Jo West related the conference was very good and informative. Jo further related she met with Deidra Smith of Arkansas Waterway Commission and believes asking her to speak at one of the meetings would be beneficial.

-Rick S. stated that Jerry S. had suggested dividing the letter in to yearly segments only requesting what was needed per year. After some discussion, Bill B. moved to send the entire package with the letter to all Congressmen, Representatives, and Corps leaders at the district and division level. Rick suggested sending an original to Senators Tom Cotton and John Boozman and all Arkansas Representatives with carbon copies going to Johnny Kiser, James Ross, Colonel Derosier, General Wehr, and Assistant Secretary of the Army, Jo Ellen Darcy. Rick seconded Bill's motion, vote was taken and approved to send the letter and package to the above mentioned recipients.

USACE Operational Review: Stacy S. related it was the end of the fiscal year and not much money was left for funding. Stacy further related that with a significant number of employees probably deploying for disaster missions in Texas and Florida, Lake Ouachita will get some money from savings on their labor cost. The Brady Mountain Campground will close October 1st for wastewater treatment plant replacement. Additionally, the Corps is adding parking spaces at Tompkins Bend boat ramp. The Park Ranger staff will be all moving to the day shift on September 17th to work on Natural Resource Management projects through the off-season.

Al G. asked if Stacy had heard anything about the Denby Bay power lines. Stacy stated real estate personnel had talked to the phone company, but he hasn't heard the verdict.

-Al G. related the adhesive was not working on the trash bag dispenser signs at Twin Creek. Stacy stated the Corps would begin putting screws in the signs to attach them. The Corps cell phone to be texted when dispensers are out of bags is in and we are just waiting on the adhesive stickers with phone number to arrive.

FOLO Financial Update: Robert stated there was \$78,400 in the accounts last month, and not much has changed this month. The money from the Walton Foundation for the trail has not been spent yet.

Montgomery County Health has offered a \$1,000 reimbursement grant for replacing damaged walkway on ADA trail, but they are waiting to find out what Yellow Wood is planning to reimburse. Stacy stated he hasn't heard anything from Yellow Wood Lumber.

LOViT Trail: -Al related the Texas Conservation Corps trail group arrived today and is camped at Charlton Recreation Area. They will be working on the Womble, Ouachita, and LOViT trail all week. They will probably spend a day working on the LOViT Trail.

- (34) Arrow signs have been installed on the LOViT, (20) on the Womble, and (4) on the Ouachita trails.

-Al also shared two large shortleaf pine trees were identified on the LOViT near the Joplin Church and they have nominated them to be protected. The Arkansas Heritage Commission will come out and look at them when the Forest Service is available to meet them.

Way Forward Committee: Arnie stated his intent on the Wounded Warrior Project was to support the LOFO/Corps event, not the national Wounded Warrior organization. Arnie has garnered \$1000 donation from the Benton Gun Club for the Wounded Warrior hunt and will mail the check to Robert. Arnie suggested the committee members go to local restaurants and ask for meal donations. Stacy thanked Arnie for gaining this donation and stated Bill B. has been instrumental in helping with the Wounded Warrior hunts. Bill stated it was the hard work of all the volunteers from the Corps, Forest Service, AGFC, etc....that led to successful hunts.

Joplin Bridge Engineering Review: No report

Announcements: -Stacy related Rick Dwyer will be retiring at the end of December.
-Jo W. stated the articles in Ranger Update and Corps Foundation newsletter on the Grab a bag project were good articles on LOCFC.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.