

Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee



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

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD: Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee Minutes

DATE: April 6, 2015

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m. by Rick Stokes, Chairman

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Stacy Sigman, Resource Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Bill Jackson, Supervisory Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Jason Mothershed, Facility Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Amy Shultz, Park Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

Bill Barnes	Mike Drake	Rick Stokes	Howard Wright
Tom Butler	Al Gathright	Janice Vaughn	
Robert Cavanaugh	Arnold Habig	Dan Watson	
George Dooley	Jerry Shields	Jerry Williams	

Minutes: The minutes for the March 2, 2015 meeting were reviewed and approved as written.

Friends of Lake Ouachita (FOLO): Rick S. related the FOLO audit case had been turned over to the Department of Justice and he is cautiously optimistic about the potential outcome. He further shared that any case over \$100,000 must be turned over to Department of Justice. Rick shared copies of the chronology of joint management program between FOLO and the Corps of Engineers with the committee members. Bill B. inquired if a non-satisfactory decision from the Department of Justice can be appealed. Rick said he believes so. Rick further shared two cases had been turned over to the Department of Justice, Our Lands and Water and FOLO.

Project Progress Reports:

Avery Pond and Pier: Amy S. shared photos of the work that has been done on the Avery Pond, and related the materials for the fishing pier have been purchased, but the weather has not cooperated for the piers to be installed. Bill J. shared he has facilitated a partnership with the Lake Hamilton Jr. and Sr. High fishing teams, and they will volunteer to assist in decking construction. Amy shared the Corps

will still need volunteers from FOLO to help with construction of the pier to satisfy the handshake partnership agreement. Jerry S. inquired if the pier was going to be square. Bill stated it would be square. Al G. asked when construction would begin. Jason M. shared the Corps would begin installing piers on Monday, and after they were installed, the decking construction could begin. Amy shared construction must be completed by the end of September.

LOVIT: Jerry S. shared the Trail Dogs had installed chicken wire on the deck of a few foot bridges with an edge on the wire to prevent slipping, and create traction for bikers. If this works, they will install it on the rest of the bridges. Jerry further shared they had cleaned the ADA trail of leaves and debris. Rick S. inquired if the Corps was working on the erosion problem on the lower creek end of ADA trail. Stacy S. stated the Corps looked at it, and are researching the best option for erosion control. Jerry stated Al G. and Dan W. cut three downed trees off the second leg of the trail. Jerry also shared they started selling advertisements for the bottom of the LOViT trail maps, and used this money for printing. They are going to have 10,000 maps printed this week to be distributed in Mount Ida and Hot Springs visitor's center, Corps of Engineers, and Forrest Service Offices and marinas. Jerry shared the Forrest Service donated a steel machine that has sickle, hedge trimmer, weed eater, and blower attachments. Tom B. offered to purchase one of these for the Trail Dogs. They will use this machine on the portions of trail on Big Bear Mountain where devils walking stick and other weeds are a problem. Tom inquired if the Corps could donate any equipment to the Trail Dogs. Rick S. related it would be hard for the Corps to legally donate equipment and property. Arnie inquired if the Trail Dog volunteer hours are submitted to the Corps and Forrest Service. Jerry stated they were turned in each year.

Recreation-Return User Fees Back To Non-Profits: Arnie H. inquired about the status on legislation regarding the return of user fees to the recreation areas. Rick S. related the proposed legislation does not include the Corps of Engineers, so the Corps will not be included in user fee retention. After some discussion, Arnie made a motion to form a sub-committee on congressional legislation to get user fees back to non-profit organizations to be utilized at recreation areas. Robert C. seconded motion, vote was taken and motion passed. Al G. suggested first contacting Senator Boozman's office to find out how far the legislation regarding user fees has progressed.

Way-Forward Projects: Dan W. stated he did not have any additional information on way forward projects. Arnie suggested cutting the 25 page project document down to one page of priority projects. Bill J. stated he had taken photos of the fishing tournament site and pavilion at Lake Dardanelle State Park. He would like the committee to visit Nimrod, Dardanelle, and Blue Mountain Lake to look at their fishing tournament facilities.

Maintenance Improvements by Corps: Bill J. related 85% of the sites at Brady Mountain now have power. There are a few sites behind the second comfort station that still lack power, but this installation will be completed by May 1st. Bill further shared the March 1 opening was one of the easiest the Corps has had with only a few lift station issues. Island markers 1-10 have been ordered and will be installed. Little Fir and Crystal Springs were the only recreation areas affected by high water, with only a few sites having to be closed. New carsonite site posts have been installed in the recreation areas. New signs on the Buckskin and Woodpecker Hollow nature trails are in and are being installed. The electric in Joplin will be replaced in the fall, and this is the last area to be updated with all new electric. The proposed future plans are for all tent sites to have electric service.

Lake Cleanup Efforts: Bill J. stated the campground cleanup/beautification day will be held in September around National Public Lands Day.

Adopt-A-Shoreline: Bill J. related we currently have 8 groups or individuals that have adopted a shoreline or island. In 2014 all the adoptees were active and participating. Committee recommended passing out flyers promoting program at the boat ramps. Bill stated Ouachita will be the only lake with scheduled boat patrol during the summer and boat patrol will monitor the islands. Bill further related the Corps boats are now equipped with a marine band radio.

AED's for Lake Staff Use: Rick stated he has submitted 3 grant requests for AED's but has not heard anything from them. Jerry stated he would ask about grant programs at the Health Advisory Board Meeting.

ORVA: Rick related the conference is August 27-28 and will be held in Hot Springs. Al made a motion that Rick S. represents the LOCFC at this conference. Vote was taken and unanimously approved. FOLO will cover his registration fee.

Comments: Bill J. related all fee contracts except Brady Mountain and Tompkins Bend have been renewed. Solicitation has gone out for Brady Mountain fee contract. Patsy Sapp has agreed to modify her contract to cover 5 days at Tompkins Bend and the rangers will cover the other two days. Bill also related visitation from pavilion and group use areas must now go into the NRRS system and be reserved through NRRS.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 7:33 P.M.