

# Lake Ouachita Citizen Focus Committee



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

**MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD:** Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee Minutes

**DATE:** March 5, 2018

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

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:**

Stacy Sigman, Resource Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office  
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:**

Tom Butler	Al Gathright	Dan Watson
Phillip Carr	Jerry Shields	Jerry Williams
Robert Cavanaugh	John Simpson	Howard Wright
George Dooley	Jo West Taylor	

**Review of Minutes:** Jerry asked about the sentence in the February minutes which reads “Bill stated if they could identify 10 additional spots that should be buoyed in normal pool, the committee could maintain them”. He didn’t remember Bill stating the committee would maintain, thought it was volunteers that would maintain them. Stacy shared this would not be a viable option either way. If buoys are placed in Ouachita, the Corps must maintain them and the Corps will not be adding additional buoys in Ouachita. Derick related the Rangers are conducting buoy surveys this week, and will begin installing and repositioning buoys that are missing, or have moved. Stacy shared they spent \$15k on buoys in the last several years. **Robert C. moved to approve minutes, Jo W. seconded, minutes approved.**

**USACE Operational Review:**

Stacy shared there is no update on the Joplin bridge evaluation.  
Stacy related Lake Ouachita had risen from 568 msl to 584 msl.....a 16-foot rise. This is the fastest rise ever for Ouachita. DeGray Lake is the highest level it has ever been only .02 from going over Spillway.

Lake Greeson went through the Spillway for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in history. Because Lake Ouachita was so low, the flooding did not have a huge impact on Ouachita.

Stacy shared the work on Stephens Park renovations was continuing, and there may be supplemental funding for the Tompkins Bend day-use bathroom. If the funding comes through, this will be a great asset to the Tompkins Bend area. Jason M. shared the bathroom costs close to \$75K. Stacy shared the Corps ordered the shower building for Little Fir and it is scheduled to arrive August 15<sup>th</sup>. The Corps is performing 100% buoy inventory, and will be adding geese eggs in the coming weeks. Derick shared after the Corps adds the eggs for three years, the AGFC will come out and band the geese and take a population count. They will allow people to hunt them if they see too many. If this still doesn't work, the following year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service can come in and shoot them. Geese are the #1 reason our beaches close due to Ecoli.

Stacy shared Jason M. will be deploying to Puerto Rico March 16<sup>th</sup>. Stacy further shared, the Corps installed a gate in the back loop of Crystal and this enabled a section of Crystal to remain open during the high water. Visitors can come and go through this gate when the main road is flooded. Stacy also shared there had been some talk about Ouachita getting some infrastructure funding. If Ouachita receives the funding, it would go towards water plants, wastewater plants, and paving roadways.

**FOLO Financial Update:** Jerry shared there had only been one expenditure of \$38 for tools for working on the LOViT since last meeting.

**Grab-A-Bag Program Update:** Tom B. referred to the January 8<sup>th</sup> minutes where it was said some concessions had not installed the receptacles. He asked which marinas had not installed them, and the location of the canisters that were given to these marinas. Derick shared that when the rangers went to stock bags, Echo Canyon, North Shores, Hwy 27, and Lake Ouachita Shores did not have their canisters out. Phillip C. stated he had contacted all but Echo Canyon and the rest were agreeable to putting theirs up. Derick stated Joe would deliver bags to these areas and check to see if they have put them up since the January meeting. Jerry asked if one had been installed at Twin Creek. Derick stated there was one at Twin Creek, and that people had been texting in when the canisters were out of bags, so program was working.

**LOViT Trail:** Al shared the Trail dogs had worked 14 days on the elevated walkway. Ten or Eleven volunteers donated 703 volunteer hours and had replaced 900 feet of the 1000 foot boardwalk. Jerry shared they had received a \$6540 grant from Arkansas Game and Fish commission. They are to spend the money on materials, and will be reimbursed by the grant. Jerry ordered 2 bundles of planking this week. Jerry doubts they will be able to use all \$6540, but they have until the end of July. The funding is strictly for materials for the boardwalk.

Jerry shared there has been no change on the bike repair station. Bonnie is looking for a second grant to fund this project. Al shared he along with Robert, Dan, and Mike Curran had done some recon. work on the trail to identify downed trees and erosion problems. They have found a few areas-one on Bear Mountain that need maintenance. Al shared the LOViT bike race went really well with 200 participants, and a lot of positive comments. This will be an annual event on the LOViT. The 100 K foot race was cancelled by the Forest Service due to weather a few hours before the event was scheduled to begin. Robert C. shared he had met with a couple who were very complimentary of the trail while he was cutting a tree on Hickory Nut Mtn.

**New Business:** Jerry shared he had spoken with Bruce E. about the Hickory Nut Mtn. road/vista paving project and Bruce was not in favor of it until the ATV problem on the Forest Service road 50 was addressed. Jerry suggested asking Bruce about this at the next meeting.

**West End of Project Boat Ramps:** Howard W. stated he had received complaints on the west end boat ramps, and that the public wanted them extended and made wider. Stacy S. shared the Corps had done a lot of work on the Little Fir boat ramp last fall and Jason M. went on to say, they leveled it with an excavator and filled in the holes with gravel. Stacy also shared the Corps had done some work on the Game and Fish ramp at Twin Creek, and that the Hwy. 27 boat ramp was in good condition.

Al shared he had received the request for dues from ORVA. It is a \$50 membership fee. Jerry shared ORVA primarily focuses on keeping the navigation system on rivers going. The LOCFC has been a member for approx...8 years, and the annual conference was held here last summer, but that he believes being a member doesn't benefit the LOCFC. It costs LOCFC \$200-\$400/year to send one or two members to the conference. Jo W. stated it was politically good for the LOCFC to have the opportunity to have a voice, but that she agreed it did not fit the mission of LOCFC. George D. believes it is beneficial to be able to talk with the representatives at the conference. Stacy shared the last few years, Rick Dwyer has presented an opening speech on recreation at the conference. After further discussion, **Tom B. moved to drop the membership to ORVA. Dan W. seconded, motion carried.** Jerry suggested re-visiting this each year.

Jerry shared Arnie H. tendered his resignation from the committee mostly due to health reasons. Jerry sent him a thank you for all his hard work, as he was a charter member of the committee and had donated many hours working on the LOCFC projects. Jerry stated they needed to replace Arnie's position on the LOCFC. Stacy stated he would send out the applicant list he has to Jerry, but that they may need to consider re-soliciting for members.

**Meeting adjourned @ 6:35 P.M.**