

Lake Ouachita Citizen Focus Committee



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

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD: Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee Minutes

DATE: May 1, 2017

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m. by Dan Watson, Chairman

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Stacy Sigman, Resource Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Amy Shultz, Natural Resource Specialist, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

Bill Barnes	Al Gathright	Janice Vaughn
Phillip Carr	Jerry Shields	Dan Watson
Robert Cavanaugh	Rick Stokes	Jerry Williams
George Dooley	Jo West Taylor	Howard Wright

Announcements: Dan W. welcomed JoWest Taylor to the committee, and committee members introduced themselves to Ms. Taylor.

Dan announced officer nominations would be held during the June meeting, and an election would be during the July meeting, and he asked everyone to consider running for the office of Chairperson, as he would be resigning from this position.

Dan related that in reference to noting the LOCFC partnership with USACE and USFS during the ORVA conference, he had spoken with Stacy, and although the Ouachita Project Office is hosting the ORVA conference, they have not been asked to participate during the conference. If they are asked, they will consider the suggestion of discussing the LOCFC/USACE partnership.

George D. asked if LOCFC's purpose was just a standing committee. Stacy S. related they are a Cooperating Association that can raise funds via fundraisers/grants through FOLO.

Review of Minutes: The minutes from the April 3rd meeting were approved as written.

-Robert C. moved to approve minutes, Jerry S. seconded.

Corps of Engineers Report-USACE

Stacy S. related due to the inclement weather, a significant road failure at Highway 27 occurred. He passed around the photo of the damage. The Corps maintenance staff along with contractors are working to repair the road. The Corps is still operating under a Continuing Resolution, so Lake Ouachita is short on funds. Additionally, the Corps is working on the road going into Buckville.

Stacy further related, three returning temporary rangers are starting work at Ouachita in the next few weeks, and the Corps is hiring two new temporary rangers, for a total of five temporary ranger positions filled. Lake Ouachita also has two pathway/interns starting work this summer, and one recent graduate permanent hire. With all the additional manpower, the Corps at Ouachita will be operating on a tight budget.

Stacy relayed the work at Brady Mountain is completed.

Stacy also related the Mount Ida water main broke at the Denby Bridge, and Joplin, Tompkins, and Denby were without water until the main was repaired.

Dan asked when the visitor comment cards would be distributed. Stacy shared the survey is usually conducted in June/July timeframe.

Every Kid in a Park: Amy related the EKIP field trip is set for May 11th at Tompkins Bend day use area/pavilion. Four round-robin style programs will be given (fisheries, snakes, water safety, nature hikes). Box lunches have been ordered from Subway, and a couple of volunteers are needed to pick up and deliver food, make pictures, and assist students maneuver from one station to the next.

Wounded Warrior events: Dan related the Corps was looking for assistance with events, the wounded warrior hunts are usually held in the fall, and they are looking into possible grants for give-aways during these events.

Stacy passed around a picture of the new gate at Twin Creek and stated the Corps plans to place one of these gates going into area 3 at Crystal, so it can be closed during high water events.

Adopt-A-Shoreline Program:

Jo West T. asked about Lake Cleanup programs. Dan related the Adopt-A-Shoreline/Island program information was available on the Lake Ouachita webpage. George D. related that participation at the large Lake Ouachita cleanups has been bad the last few times it was held, and LOCFC is trying to partner with the Lake Hamilton annual cleanup to gain more participation. George D. also noted that there are no Keep Arkansas Beautiful Foundation grants available. Jerry S. related they had tried to just concentrate on/clean one area during the last few cleanups, and this had worked pretty well.

Way Forward Committee Projects:

-Joplin Bridge Problem: George D. shared that he along with Jerry W. had discussed what it would take to bring the bridge to road capacity. Jerry W. works with an engineer named Phillip Lewis, and will ask him to look at the bridge and give an estimate of what it would take to get it to 80K capacity. Bill B. related he has been taking heavy equipment over the bridge for years with no issues. Stacy stated that the engineers put a tonnage limit on the bridge, and if he were to exceed the limit, and something happened, he would be liable. Bill asked if the bridge could be leased. Rick S. stated they had tried to transfer it to Montgomery County in the past, but they were not interested in taking it. Stacy stated the Corps would be open to the concept of transferring the road to the fee booth to the county if the Montgomery County Judge was interested in taking it over.

Dan asked if anyone would like to volunteer to fill Mike Drake's place on the way-forward committee. Dan relayed the purpose of the way-forward committee to Jo West T., and will send her a copy of the

project document. He also related the shorter version that Stacy had sent was located in drop box. Dan stated he would re-send the current version to the committee members.

LOCFC Project Reports:

-Trash Bag Dispensers: Jerry S. stated he and Tom B. had re-written the sign and re-named the dispenser to “Grab-a-Bag”. Tom had developed a sample of the one in the pail, but decided the ones located at the boat ramps should be put in the ground with concrete so they could not be rolled down the ramp. Phillip C. stated he had spoken to all resorts except for Brady and Echo Canyon, and Crystal Springs, Lake Ouachita Shores, and Little Fir would like banners instead of signs, and would like to hand out the bags themselves. Jerry S. stated he would get the cost estimate for the banners, and would plan to ask each site how they would like their sign, and how they would like to facilitate the program. Bill B. stated he would have to talk to Todd, but thought they would like their sign and dispensers put up on the patio. Stacy stated once this program is in place, it would be put on the Corps “Good Enough to Share” webpage on the gateway. Jerry S., Tom B., and Bill B. will follow up on this project with the marinas.

-Donation Boxes-Rick S. shared there was \$35 in the donation boxes, for a grand total of \$41. Robert C. stated seeing the LOCFC name on the trash bag dispensers might cause visitors to donate money to LOCFC. Stacy stated that usually donation boxes do well when they are located at visitor centers where the center gives buttons to the donors. Stacy will send them an example of the button maker from Raytown Lake.

-Campground maps: Dan shared that Arnie had sent an updated/revised letter regarding the campground maps along with a sample of map to the colonel, but has not received a reply. Stacy stated that although he was not aware Arnie had sent this letter, the letter would go to Office of Council instead of the Colonel, and Office of Council would be the ones responding.

FOLO Update: Al G. shared the FOLO board had met and voted to financially support the trash bag dispenser project.

-Courtesy Docks: Jerry S. stated they need to talk to the dock company to find a design that requires less labor. Stacy suggest looking into adding one more section of walkway. Bill B. stated the farther you put the dock out into the lake channel, the more unstable it becomes and the long gang planks are high maintenance. Bill believes the best approach would be to get an agreement from the concessions where docks are placed to take over and maintain the docks.

Rick S. passed around a Grants Standard Operating Procedure he had worked up and asked for comments/suggestions. Dan W. will send Rick the business plan he lost when his computer crashed. Rick asked the committee to change wording under “Item D” on solicitations to “20% or less”.

LOViT Update-Traildogs: Al G. shared that Mike Curran walked sections of the trail to assess storm damage. He found some trees down and a washed out area on top of Bear Mountain. A group of Master Naturalist will be going to the damaged areas to help with maintenance. Jerry S. stated he would walk the Shangri-La to Joplin section to assess damage. Jerry related Robert C. had put chicken wire down on two additional bridges to improve traction, and had enough material to cover two more bridges.

Comments: Janice V. related a camper in Tompkins had their window cracked by the mowing crew, and asked who they needed to contact. Stacy stated they need to file a report with a ranger and they will be contacted about filing a tort claim.

Adjournment: Al G. moved to adjourn, and Rick S. seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 7:15 P.M.