

# Lake Ouachita Citizen Focus Committee



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

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

**DATE:** July 10, 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  
Derick Walker, Supervisory Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office  
Jason Mothershed, Facility Manager  
Amy Shultz, Natural Resource Specialist, Lake Ouachita Field Office

**Members Present:**

Tom Butler	Al Gathright	Howard Wright
Robert Cavanaugh	Arnie Habig	Jerry Williams
George Dooley	Jo West Taylor	
Bruce Engstrom	Dan Watson	

**Announcements:** Dan W. stated Jerry Shields had been elected Chairman of the committee, and Robert Cavanaugh was elected Vice Chairman. He further related Jerry is traveling to his son's house in Virginia.

**Minutes:** Arnie moved to approve the minutes with correction made to Janice Vaughn's name, Robert seconded. Minutes approved with correction made.

**Corps of Engineers Report (USACE):** Stacy S. related the campgrounds were full over the Fourth of July holiday with 12 campers in the overflow area at Crystal Springs. Stacy further related there were only a few minor disturbances with nothing significant happening over the holiday weekend. The Corps conducted 79 vessel checks, and made 922 direct water/boating safety contacts. A wind storm came through highway 27 campground and blew a camper over (no injuries), and some marijuana plants were found on Corps property in a wilderness area. A couple of roosters were dropped off in the Tompkins Bend campground, but were captured by Park Rangers and relocated. Overall, it was a good holiday with no major accidents. Derick stated the threat of rain kept the day use traffic down.

Bruce E. asked the dates for the Corps of Engineers budget year. Stacy shared it was from 1 October-30 September. Stacy further shared, the Corps is still purchasing like they are under a continuing resolution authority (CR), so the budget is tight.

-Visitor/comment card distribution: Dan shared they had missed surveying three areas. He asked for volunteers for the remaining dates. Dan shared the FOLO vests could be used while conducting the survey and they were in the Joplin and Brady Mountain fee booths.

-Al asked about the status of clearing trees beneath the power lines that block the lake view at the Denby creek crossing. Stacy said he would follow up to see if this was an active easement.

-Al asked about any plans to control the wild goose populations at the campgrounds. Stacy related the Fish and Wildlife Service controls the geese since they are a migratory bird. Derick related while working at Millwood, they had a goose problem and contacted AGFC. Fish and Wildlife came out and surveyed the geese and tagged them to see if they were resident geese. They were then able to addle the eggs from March-May, and they allowed them to extend the hunting season on geese in that area. Bruce asked about using a dog to chase the geese. Stacy said using dogs or bang sticks were not allowed in the recreation areas. They sprayed approx... 200 eggs (20 nests) on Ouachita last year, and will continue utilizing this method of control.

Al asked if the hydrilla was being monitored. Stacy said he would find out from Biologist, Dustin Thomason, if it is being tracked, but it is not topping out yet on Ouachita.

**Joplin Campground Bridge:** Jerry W. met with the engineers Friday and they looked at the Bridge and took measurements. The engineers will do the calculations and get back with him in the next couple of weeks. George D. asked about the weight limit: it has a 10-ton limit. Stacy related he is trying to get a load test from the Corps engineers. Bruce related the highway department in Fort Smith is giving away a historical bridge and they might want to look into it.

Stacy suggested they hold off on asking Montgomery County to take over the road to the Joplin fee booth until they see what the engineers advise.

**Way Forward Committee:** Dan sent out a list of potential projects and asked if anyone had reviewed the list.

Stacy will be drafting Arnie a letter (stating his roles in the LOCFC) to use when asking for donations for the wounded warrior hunt. Jo West asked how the Wounded Warriors for the hunt were chosen. Derick explained that Wounded Warriors is a national group that takes applications for the hunt, and then draws names from applicants out of a hat, and winners of the drawing get to participate in the hunt. Derick related the Corps has placed 15-20 buoys before the holiday weekend. The new barge is great for buoy work. Dan encouraged all the members to look at the project list and see if there is something they would volunteer to work on. Dan also requested a meeting of the way forward committee, and asked if anyone is interested in joining the committee, to let him know.

**Trash Bag Dispensers:** Tom asked which marinas and ramps the dispensers were installed. Stacy related, they were installed at the following locations: Spillway boat ramp and marina, Brady mountain Corps ramp, Game and Fish Ramp, and marina, Crystal Springs ramp and marina, Joplin boat ramp and marina, Twin Creek, Denby boat ramp and marina, Tompkins Bend boat ramp and marina, Little Fir

boat ramp and marina, and Hwy 27 gas dock. Joe Bailey installed all the dispensers, and still had one left over. Stacy suggested procuring additional bags. Tom B. Stated Sigma Supply Company donated the first 10 cases of bags, so they would order the next 10 cases from them. Tom asked where to deliver the bags. Stacy stated they can deliver them to the Corps office and the Corps will distribute to the marinas and RBS to replenish as needed. Tom estimated the total cost of the project was \$765. Each dispenser cost \$45 not including sign graphics.

**Campground Maps:** Arnie asked to table the campground map discussion since he did not hear anything from his request to Vicksburg.

**Lake Hamilton Trash Bash:** Tom stated he sent out an email with the date of the upcoming Lake Hamilton Trash Bash planning meeting which is open to the public. George stated the problem with the previous large trash bash events on Ouachita was low turnout and not getting the large groups to participate. Tom suggested working on the trash bag dispenser project this year, and in the future, reinstating a larger trash bash event since it takes a lot of time and effort to plan the large events. Bruce asked if there was a way to identify and report trash problems. Tom stated they used to try and identify places for groups to clean prior to trash bash event. Tom suggested holding a FOLO or LOCFC meeting on the lake and doing a cleanup during meeting time.

**FOLO Update:** No report

**LOViT Update:** Al shared the grant submitted to the Walton Foundation was awarded, and the LOViT received \$4,066 for signage. Weather permitting, the volunteers will begin installing the signs. Robert C. stated they have been doing maintenance on the LOViT each time people report trees down. Robert shared that Ron Mayfield broke his collar bone while riding his mountain bike with Robert up Bear Mtn. to perform maintenance on the trail. Robert thanked the Corps for providing the barge to pick them up at Little Bear Creek to get Ron to the hospital. They also appreciated Mike W. making the emergency evacuation maps.

**General Discussion:** Arnie related he received a letter from ORVA with Conference agenda and Senator Tom Cotton, General Michael Weir, and Representative Bruce Westerman will be speaking. He further related Rick Dwyer will be giving a presentation on the first day of the conference, and the Fish and Wildlife Service will be presenting on the second day. He believes someone else from the committee should also attend, as this will be a good opportunity to talk to the representatives about funding for Ouachita. Dan asked if FOLO would cover registration cost if someone else from the committee would like to attend. Robert stated that FOLO covers the cost of registration. Robert will contact Rick and Jerry to see if one of them would like to attend the conference.

Arnie asked if the draft of the financial business plan Rick S. sent out had been finalized. Dan stated he would put Rick on the agenda for next month to discuss this topic. Arnie also asked about drafting a letter to the Congressman asking for additional money for Ouachita. Suggested letter be sent out before ORVA conference.

**Adjournment:** Tom moved to adjourn, and Al seconded. Meeting adjourned @ 7:10 P.M.

