

**TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
IRRIGATOR ADVISORY COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 19, 2003
MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

David Burrell	Harvey McLarty	Robert Thurmond	Dave Coleman
Alice Megna	Willie Gossett	Alex Garza	Gene Barnes

COUNCIL MEMBER ABSENT:

Edmund Archuleta

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

J. Carl Causey, Texas Turf and Irrigation Association (TTIA)
Scott Stewart, TTIA
Scott Long, TTIA
David Brannen, TTIA
John Schwartz, TTIA
John Morton, Lone Star Irrigation Association
Doug Goodwin, Contractor and Member of Houston Gulf Coast Irrigation Association

TCEQ STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Gene Reagan	Bettye Jean Urban	Sandra Gallegos
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AGENDA ITEM #1:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Harvey McLarty at 9:32 a.m. in Room 202, Building A, 12100 Park 35 Circle, Austin, Texas 78753.

AGENDA ITEM #2, ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Willie Gossett moved and Alice Megna seconded the motion to keep the same Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council. Passed with no opposition. Harvey McLarty was re-elected Chairman. Gene Barnes was re-elected Vice Chairman.

AGENDA ITEM #3, APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Alice Megna moved and the motion was seconded by Robert Thurmond that the minutes of the December 4, 2002 meeting be approved with one minor correction. Passed with no opposition.

AGENDA ITEM #4, RECOGNITION OF MEMBERS:

TCEQ staff member, Gene Reagan, recognized the outgoing Council members, Robert Thurmond, Jr., David Burrell and Alex Garza. Each was presented with a certificate of appreciation for their dedicated service to the agency and the industry while on the Council.

AGENDA ITEM #5, VACANT COUNCIL POSITIONS:

The process for selection was presented by Mr. Reagan to the Council. The list containing all the names of the possible candidates was redistributed to the members and guests per their request. Mr. Reagan presented the biographical data of each of the three persons who are being recommended to replace the outgoing Council members. The recommendations are Jerry Lewis and Don Weiss for the licensed irrigator positions and Ms. Carole Baker for the one public member position.

Discussion followed. Several Council members expressed their continued concern that one of the persons recommended is an approved, and active, basic training provider. Some of the guests in attendance also commented - some in opposition and some in favor of the nominations.

Alice Megna stated that if these nominations moved forward and are accepted, the Council should have a policy in writing regarding access to the examinations, committees, etc. Then, if anyone questioned the appointments, the Council would have their policy in writing.

Gene Reagan recommended that the Council draft something by May 21st meeting which sets the policy out in writing. Harvey McLarty will develop such a policy before the next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM #6A, TRAINING & EXAMINATION REVISIONS:

Mr. Reagan advised the Council that all of the Basic Training Course providers must resubmit their course materials for review by TCEQ due to the change in the curriculum. Thus the implementation date of the new examination will be June of 2003. The deadline for submission of their revised materials is May 1st if the provider wants to be on the revised approved list. So far four providers have submitted their manuals for review. Some of the providers may use another providers manuals which are approved by TCEQ rather than develop their own. Discussion followed about designs being done by students while in the training class.

AGENDA ITEM #6B, ENFORCEMENT REPORT:

The program's enforcement report was given by Bettye Urban. Mr. Reagan stated that if health issues are related to any complaint filed, a field investigation would be done, and the complaint would be handled with the highest priority.

AGENDA ITEM #6C, COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:

In order to fill positions on the Advisory Council's committees which are going to be left vacant, Mr. McLarty made some changes to the composition of the committees.

AGENDA ITEM #6D, LEGISLATIVE ISSUES:

Legislation of interest to the industry and Council was reviewed by Gene Reagan. The legislation discussed was H.B. 487, H.B. 632, and H.B. 645. There was much interest expressed in H.B. 487 and its proposed revisions.

Mr. Reagan was asked to advise the Council when the revised H.B. 487 has been filed.

Discussion followed regarding who has responded to any of the Council members letters regarding the expected Sunset Legislation which will address the move of the landscape irrigation program to TDLR. Several members received acknowledgments from Representatives and/or Senators on the Sunset Committee.

The TCEQ Commissioners have received 499 letters and e-mails from irrigators expressing their concern about the program being moved from the environmental agency, and their desire that the program not be moved.

Mr. Archuleta's letter to Mr. Mike Howe, Executive Director of the Texas Section of the American Water Works Association was distributed to the Council and guests. The letter requests that they consider combining resources with the Texas Turf and Irrigation Association to develop a video that can be used as a tool to advise the public about the necessity of water conservation, the selection of a reputable landscape irrigation contractor, and the need to pay close attention to design and installation specifications of a landscape irrigation system.

John Schwartz, President of TTIA, received a phone call during the meeting. He announced to the Council and guests that he had just been informed that the Sunset Legislation was in the process of being drafted at that very moment. The final legislation would be sponsored on the House side by Representative Burt Solomons and on the Senate side by Senator Mike Jackson.

AGENDA ITEM #7 - COUNCIL AND INDUSTRY CONCERNS:

Mr. McLarty addressed the Council regarding Mr. Archuleta's continuous absence from the Irrigator Council meetings. Everyone agreed that Mr. Archuleta is a valuable member and resource to the industry and the Council, but that they would like to have him present at more of the meetings.

It was suggested that the Chairman, Mr. McLarty, contact Mr. Archuleta by mail to find out his commitment to be an Irrigator Advisory Council member. Mr. McLarty agreed.

AGENDA ITEM #8 - ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Robert Thurmond and seconded by Alex Gaza to adjourn. Passed.