

Texas Prescribed Burning Board Minutes

Texas Forestry Association - Lufkin

Lufkin, Texas

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Pursuant to a notice posted on February 13, 2020, the Prescribed Burning Board (Board) meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. by Chairman Justin Penick. The roll was answered as follows:

Present: Rich Gray, Keith Sheedy, Dr. Nathan Gill, Justin Penick, Wayne Pflugger, Dr. William Rogers, Dr. Morgan Treadwell, Charles Tatton, Chris Schenck, Dale Smith

Absent: James “Rooter” Brite, Rusty Ray, Dale Scott

With ten members in attendance and three members absent, a quorum was present.

Guests: Patrick Dudley (TDA), Stephen Dillon (TDA), William Andy McCrady (TFS), Heath Starns (TAMU AgriLife), Jenny Sanders (Texas Longleaf Implementation Team), Steve Jack (Boggy Slough Conservation Area), Jamie Hooker (National Wild Turkey Federation), Mark Cochran (Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board), Jamie Sowell (U.S. Forest Service), Jason Raines (Acorn Forestry).

The Chair opened with welcoming everyone to the meeting and thanked Rob Hughes with the Texas Forestry Association for hosting the meeting in Lufkin. The Chair then had the attendees introduce themselves. The Chair called on Patrick Dudley to swear in newly appointed Board member Charles Tatton, representing landowners. Tatton was sworn in and welcomed to the Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Chair laid out the minutes from the previous Board meeting (September 13, 2019) for review. Dale Smith made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Dr. Morgan Treadwell seconded the motion; the motion prevailed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF APPLICANTS

The Chair recognized Patrick Dudley to present the Board with any new Certified and Insured Prescribed Burn Manager (CIPBM) and/or Lead Burn Instructor applications being considered. Following review of the applicant seeking a CIPBM license from the Board, the applicants Jonathon Grabber, Lee Knox, and Doug Crawford were approved contingent upon insurance confirmation. Following review of the applicant for Lead Burn Instructor, Chris Schenck made a motion to approve the applicant the motion was seconded by Wayne Pfluger. The motion passed unanimously.

TDA UPDATE

The Chair recognized Patrick Dudley to present the Board with the TDA update. Dudley presented the Board with the attendance report; everyone on the Board was currently in good standing. Dudley then reviewed the absence policy with the Board for the benefit of the oncoming Board member and review for the Board.

Dudley updated the Board on the three Lead Burn Instructors that were removed from the list from the September 13, 2019 meeting and reported that Sandra Rideout-Hanzak was reinstated prior to the meeting.

Dudley gave an update regarding Rule revision and gave the Board a reminder of the Ethics Commission Filing Deadline, which is April 30, 2020. Dudley updated the Board regarding the Sunset Advisory Commission's Review process. An exit interview will be held May 13, 2020.

TCEQ UPDATE

The Chair recognized Keith Sheedy with TCEQ to present the Board with an update regarding possible rule changes to reduce allowable wind speed. TCEQ is going to meet with stakeholders concerning the windspeed before proposing any rule revision. There will be an outdoor burning rule package going out for April 22, 2020 agenda. Sheedy will keep the Board informed on the timeline as the project progresses.

TFS UPDATE

The Chair recognized Andy McCrady with the Texas Forest Service to give an update on the Prescribed Fire Use Survey in Texas. McCrady gave a detailed report on the Prescribed Fire Use Survey. This survey will begin to be done on an annual basis instead of every two or three years. A total of 402,017 acres were treated with prescribed fire on forests and rangelands in Texas in 2018.

TEXAS PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL UPDATE

The Chair recognized Chris Schenk to give an update on the official Texas Prescribed Fire Council (TPFC). The first meeting occurred on August 8, 2019. By-Laws have been created for the TPFC and Board members have been elected representing the private landowner, different areas government, education, and Non-Government Organizations. Officers were elected and committees were created.

MEETING DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

The Chair laid out possible changes to the forms pertaining to Lead Burn Instructors, PBB-600. The Board discussed the revisions of the PBB-600. A motion was made by Wayne Pfluger to accept the revisions to the PBB-600 as discussed by the Board. Dale Smith seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

The Chair recognized Patrick Dudley to lay out recommended revisions to the Insurance Verification Form. The Board discussed the revisions and a motion was made by Chris Schenk to revise the Insurance Verification Form with the approval from the Chair and Vice-Chair. Wayne Pfluger seconded the motion; the motion was passed unanimously.

The Board reviewed the current category definition of the Government Certified and Insured Prescribed Burn Manager category. After thoroughly discussing the category, the consensus of the Board was to leave the definition as written at this time. A motion was made by Wayne Pfluger to take no action regarding the definition of the Government Certified and Insured Burn Manager category at this time. Dr. Nathan Gill seconded the motion; the motion passed 8 for, 1 against, and 2 present but not voting.

The Chair recognized Dr. Morgan Treadwell to present the Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension Certified and Insured Prescribed Burn Manager online course developed. The course is an online course developed by AgriLife to allow participants to fulfill the CIPBM requirements at their own pace and costs \$200 field day registration is \$100. At the time of the meeting Dr. Treadwell informed the Board that there have been 12 registrants. The Board discussed the benefits of the online course and applauded Dr. Treadwell for her efforts in creating the online course.

The Board recessed for lunch at 12:48 pm and reconvened at 1:15 pm. with quorum present.

The Chair recognized Patrick Dudley to bring before the Board, inquiries from the Sunset Advisory Commission. The inquiries pertained to escaped fires, non-jurisdictional complaints, and background checks on CIPBM applicants. These were questions asked by the Sunset Advisory Commission and brought to the Boards attention so the Board would be prepared for what will be put in the Commissions report.

PBB ADVISORY BOARD

Dr. Heath Starnes was recommended as a PBB Advisory Board Member to take Mort Kothman's position on the Advisory Board. A motion was made by Wayne Pfluger and seconded by Charles Tatton to approve Dr. Heath Starnes as a new Advisory Board Member. The motion passed 8 for; 2 present not voting.

The Board discussed other business raised during the meeting to be placed on the next agenda. Patrick Dudley will contact members of the Board prior to the next meeting to determine additional agenda items. The consensus of the Board was to hold the next meeting August 27, 2020 in Kingsville, Texas unless otherwise determined. (enter 2020!)

The Chair then opened the floor for public comment. No public comment.

AJOURNMENT

With no additional business, Chairman Penick entertained a motion to adjourn until the next meeting. A motion was made by Wayne Pfluger and seconded by Dr. Morgan Treadwell; receiving no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 1:38 p.m.