

Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retired Employees

Minutes of Meeting

April 26, 2024

Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retired Employees and guest met at the Golden Corral Buffet at 520 South MacArthur Blvd. in Oklahoma City. Twenty-three people were in attendance (19 retirees & 4 guests/spouse). Many attendees arrived early for visiting before the meeting was called to order.

President Kirk Schreiner called the meeting to order. President Schreiner welcomed everyone to the meeting. Fred Fortney provided the blessing for the meal and everyone enjoyed the buffet meal.

Following the meal, President Schreiner again called the meeting to order. First time attendees were: Steve Kelley, retired after a long tenure as the District Conservationist at Clinton. Others in attendance introduced themselves and their spouse/guest.

In the absence of long time Secretary/Treasurer Sandra Hough (absent due to family needs), Kirk read the list of those retiring since October 2023: Charlie Colvin, Resource Engineer, Clinton TSO, 11/30/2023; D'Ann Peterson, Resource Conservationist, Guthrie, 12/30/2023; Clay Horton, Ada, 4/19/24.

Kirk also read the list of known retirees who have passed since October 2023: Clifford Williams, 90, Agronomist, never worked in Oklahoma but was born in Berlin, OK, Roger Mills County, graduated from Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State University) worked in several states & retired to Sayre, OK. Attended some retiree meetings, passed 8/10/2023; Joan Leaverton, 91, widow of Erwin Leaverton, Watershed Planning Staff, Chickasha, 12/12/2023; Janice Haggard, 76, wife of retiree David Haggard, passed on 12/13/2023; J. C. Spitzer, 91, worked in Guymon, Chandler, Holdenville, Ada, Tahlequah, & Talihina, left Oklahoma in 1976 to serve as the State Agronomist in Pennsylvania, retired to Sayre, OK, passed 1/18/24; Bob Reed, 94, retired Soil Conservation Technician, Alva, 32 years service, passed 2/20/24; John Pewthers, 87, retired DC, Waurika, 34 years service, passed 3/1/24; Tony Boeckman, 78, retired DC, Medford, 34 years service, passed 1/27/24; Brad Elder, 74, former DC, Hinton, retired as Soil Conservationist in Anadarko, 40+ years service, retired in 2011, passed 2/5/24; Winston Hook, 65, retired Soil Conservation Technician, Madill, medically retired in 2014 after 17 years with NRCS, passed 3/9/24.

David Hungerford led a prayer in memory of our departed former employees and comrades.

Several other retirees were mentioned that were dealing with health issues and not able to attend our meeting. Those were: Helen Cole (wife of Everett Cole), Earl Weisner, Ed Kephart, Duane Crider, Jimmy and JoAnn Hill, and Robert Maples.

Randy Freeland presented the minutes of the October 2023 meeting and provided the treasurer's report. Beginning balance was \$817.26 plus the \$130 in dues paid last October and less the \$68 expenses for this meeting (postage). The balance today is \$879.26. There were 68 notices mailed and two returned for incorrect address. Both remailed and not returned.

Randy asked the new retirees in attendance to complete an information sheet and other retirees to provide their retirement activities (i.e. volunteer work, travel, part-time work, activities, etc.). The short form is for retirees previously in attendance and the long form to obtain more basic information on retirees who have not been in attendance. The forms could be left on their table or given to Randy at the end of the meeting. This information is used for the Oklahoma Retired SCS/NRCS Employees Association newsletter along with the minutes of the meeting. Many retirees have expressed their appreciation for the information presented on the website www.joepad.com. When they are not able to attend the meetings, the website provides pictures, list of attendees, etc. Joe Freeland, retired Construction Engineer, has been very gracious to keep the website updated after each meeting.

With Sandra being absent and our finances in good order, Nick Lambeth made a motion, seconded by Ed Stinchcomb, that we suspend dues for 2024 and no dues would be collected for April or October 2024. The dues are used to cover expenses of the meetings including cost of printing meeting notices, postage and name tags. After a short discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

Retirees should email Randy Freeland randy.freeland@suddenlink.net to request an email meeting notice in lieu of a mailed meeting notice and to report a change in mailing address or email address. He currently has 166 on his email group which cuts our postage expenses by quite a bit. Let him know if you want to be on that list for email only.

Stan Rice and Larry Caldwell provided handouts and shared quite a bit of information about the activities of the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society (OCHS) in its seventh year of operation. Fifty conservation oral histories have been completed and are available on the OSU Library's website. They noted that several who participated in an oral history interview have since passed, pressing the point of how important this activity is. Work is nearing completion with the Oklahoma Historical Society on a conservation photo collection available to the public on the OHS Gateway to Oklahoma History website. There will be 12 to 15 thousand photos in the collection when completed. Oral histories which were gathered can be accessed at: <https://library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/our-collections/digital/>. The photos may be accessed at: <http://gateway.okhistory.org/explore/collections/OKCHS>. And the website can be accessed at: <https://www.oklahomacervationhistory.org>. A comment made by one member attending was, "Be sure you have plenty of time before you click on one of the links for the oral history interviews or to look at pictures, because you can spend hours on these websites".

President Schreiner challenged each retiree to contact one or more retirees before the next meeting and encourage them to attend our semi-annual meeting in October. There may be retirees who would like to attend but are not able to bring themselves. Offering to provide them transportation, might further encourage their attendance.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Friday, **October 25, 2024**, at the Golden Corral on MacArthur Boulevard in Oklahoma City. Be sure and put that date on your calendar. The Golden Corral opens at 10:30 AM so there is extra time for visiting before the meeting starts at 11:30 AM.

There was no other business to bring before the group and the meeting was adjourned.