

Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retired Employees

Minutes of Meeting

April 24, 2025

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

President Ed Stinchcomb called the meeting to order. He welcomed everyone to the meeting. Kevin Norton provided the blessing for the meal and everyone enjoyed the buffet meal.

Following the meal, President Stinchcomb again called the meeting to order. First time retirees attending the meeting were asked to introduce themselves: Mark Maples retired as the District Conservationist in Okemah in 2019. He started his career in Okemah as a soil conservationist and ended his career in Okemah 37+ years later. His dad, Robert Maples, also had a 38-year career with SCS/NRCS retiring in 1988 as District Conservationist at Chandler. Paul May & wife Janell were in attendance. Paul had been to a meeting previously about 10 years ago with Dale Bell. They live in Durant where he retired as District Conservationist with 30 years service. He started his career in Cheyenne. Others in attendance introduced themselves & spouse or guest and talked about their experiences working with the service. Many stories were shared to the delight of those in attendance. Nick Lambeth, Don Bartolina, Fred Fortney and Sandra Hough were mentioned more than once, all positive.

Secretary-Treasurer Sandra Hough read the list of those retiring since October 2024: Saska Koch, Area Administrative Coordinator, Clinton, retired 12/27/2024 with 20 yrs service; Shelley Oliphant, Assistant State Conservationist for Field Offices, West Zone, retired 12/28/2024 with 37 yrs service; Delfino (Dino) Rodriquez, Resource Conservationist, Boise City, retired 11/15/2024 with 14 yrs service; Larry Hood, Soil Conservationist, Purcell & El Reno Field Offices, retired April 2025 with 20+ yrs service; Steve Glasgow, State Resource Conservationist, Stillwater, retired April 2025 with 37 yrs service and Connie Fitzpatrick, Executive Assistant to the State Conservationist, Stillwater, retired April 2025.

Sandra also read the list of known retirees who have passed since October 2024: Darwin Hedges, 89, Range Conservationist in southern third of Oklahoma & served as State Range Conservationist in Arkansas, retired in 1986 with 31 yrs service, passed 7/13/2024; Preston Green, 86, Soil Conservation Technician, Wilburton, 35 yrs service, passed 9/30/2024; Jerry Pullen, 90, Civil Engineering Technician in Watersheds, Davis, passed 11/14/2024; Jimmy Hill, 85, Deputy State Conservationist, Stillwater, 30+ yrs service, passed 12/6/2024; Anthony Lawrence, 64, Checotah, Soil Conservationist, retired in 2011 with 23 yrs service, passed 1/19/2025; William Alvin Trissell, 90, retired DC, Vinita, retired 3/2002, passed 1/21/2025; Melvin Heath, longtime Grady County CD

Board Member, passed in February 2025; Carolyn Cail, wife of retiree Charlie Cail, passed 2/3/2025. A moment of silence was observed in their memory.

Sandra provided information from the minutes of the October 2024 meeting which are posted on the website. They were approved as posted. She also provided the treasurer's report. Beginning balance was \$795. The only expense for this meeting was \$50 for the 2025 membership to the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society. The balance is \$745.00. There were 63 notices mailed with four returned.

Randy Freeland asked the new retiree 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.) with at least one sentence. 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. Thank you Joe!

The \$10 annual dues were suspended in April 2024 by a unanimous vote by those in attendance until April 2025 when the issue was again to be visited. The expenses for the meetings have been greatly reduced since meeting notices are no longer mailed to all retirees as many have opted to receive the notice by email. Notices are still mailed to those who wish to receive a notice through the mail. 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. Those who may not be receiving a mailed notice and wish to, should email Sandra Hough tshough@sbcglobal.net or send a note to 1308 Littell Ave., Clinton, OK 73601.

Larry Caldwell invited everyone to attend "A Celebration of the 90th Anniversary of the Soil Conservation Service" on Monday, April 28, 2025, in El Reno at the Canadian County Expo Center from 1:00 am to 3:00 pm. RSVP's are very much appreciated. This special gathering will honor current employees of the Natural Resources Conservation (NRCS) as well as retirees from the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) and NRCS. This event will celebrate the agency's remarkable accomplishments over the past nine decades and highlight the continuing positive impact NRCS has on Oklahoma's landscape and communities. This is the last of three events. Two events have already taken place: Sunday, April 14th at the Harn Homestead in Oklahoma City celebrating "The 90th Anniversary of Black Sunday and Creation of the Soil Conservation Service" and Tuesday, April 22nd in Guymon "Remembering Black Sunday: 90 Years of Conservation in the Panhandle. These were very well attended. Larry serves as Secretary-Treasurer of the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society. The nine-member board of directors headed by Ben Pollard, President, along with the

Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts and many others inside and outside of this society planned three events in a two week period in April to celebrate Black Sunday (April 14, 1935) and the establishment of the Soil Conservation Service (April 27, 1935).

President Stinchcomb encouraged each retiree to contact one or more retirees before the next meeting and encourage them to attend our semi-annual meetings in April &/or 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.

Randy Freeland reported on retirees sharing information with him. Ben Pollard had hoped to meet with us but his high school class had a meeting he needed to attend. Roland Willis' property including home, mobile homes, equipment sheds, etc. were destroyed during the recent fires in Stillwater. Roland's wife June resides in Primrose Retirement Center in Stillwater but both daughters were living on the property in mobile homes which were destroyed. Odo & Diane Henson have moved to the Golden Oaks Retirement Center in Stillwater. Steve Alspaugh & wife Joy lost their home in the Stillwater fires. Sandra Hough had been asked about Baker Eeds with whom most of those present had worked. Baker is a neighbor to Sandra. Baker will be 89 in August and he and his wife have slowed down and do not get out much. Phil Perryman had checked on Earl Weisner. Phil offered to bring Earl to the meeting but Earl's wife didn't think he was up to it. However, Earl continues to improve.

President Stinchcomb announced it is again time to elect officers for the next two years. Nominations were solicited from the group. Sandra Hough agreed to serve another two years if no one wants to assume her position. No nominations were received. Ed Stinchcomb and Kirk Schreiner were asked if they would serve another two years. Both were in agreement. They were re-elected by acclamation.

The next meeting is scheduled for THURSDAY, October 23, 2025, at the Golden Corral on MacArthur Boulevard in Oklahoma City. 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.