

Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retired Employees

Minutes of Meeting October 23, 2025

Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retired Employees met at the Golden Corral Buffet at 520 South MacArthur Blvd. in Oklahoma City. Twenty-five people were in attendance (21 retirees & 4 guests/spouses). Many attendees arrived early for visiting before the meeting was called to order.

Vice-President Ed Stinchcomb called the meeting to order. He welcomed everyone to the meeting. Fred Fortney provided the blessing for the meal and everyone enjoyed the buffet meal.

Following the meal, Vice-President Stinchcomb again called the meeting to order. First time retirees attending the meeting were asked to introduce themselves: Angela Williams, Larry Frey, Gary Soderstrom, & Joey Freeland. Each provided a brief introduction of themselves, many of which had been retired a number of years. Each was welcomed to the meeting. Others in attendance introduced themselves & spouse or guest and told the group how long they had been retired and how many years of service they had upon retirement.

Secretary-Treasurer Sandra Hough read the list of known retirees who have passed since April 2025: Ed Kephart, 76, Assistant State Conservationist (among other duties), Norman, 27 yrs. Federal Service, retired in 2006, worked for NRCS in Oklahoma 1979-1989 and 1995-2004, passed 5/16/25; George Moore, 73, Oklahoma Conservation Commission Watershed Technician, 33 yrs service, Clinton, "the video pipe inspection expert", passed 5/27/25; Berry "Ted" Kuntz, 84, Economist on Water Resources Staff, 40+ yrs service, retired in 2010, passed 6/1/25; Gayle Goforth, 91, Construction Inspector Perry WO, 38 yrs service, retired in 1993, passed 7/4/25; Carol Crouch, 74, State Tribal Liaison for past 18 years, 40 yrs service, passed 7/10/25; Elizabeth "Liz Greer" Konigmacher, 92, worked in State Office Stillwater, passed 7/26/25; Jimmy (Jim) Brewer, 86, Civil Engineering Technician on Duncan AO & Watershed Office Staff, 37 yrs service, passed 8/19/25; Duane Crider, 76, DC @ El Reno for 30 yrs, retired 2010, 38 yrs service, passed 9/9/25; Bobby Gene Bourlier, 93, Soil Scientist, Norman, retired in 1994 with 39 yrs service, worked in New Mexico, Pawhuska & Norman, passed 9/11/25; June Willis, 94, widow of Roland Willis, retired State Conservationist (1972-1987), passed 10/2/25; and Juanita Eeds, 83, wife of Baker Eeds, retired Resource Engineer, Clinton Area Office, passed 10/13/25. A moment of silence was observed in their memory. There were no known retirements since April 2025.

Sandra provided information from the minutes of the April 2025 meeting which are posted on the website. They were approved as posted. She also provided the treasurer's report. Beginning balance was \$745. The \$72 expense for this meeting included name tags, postage & card stock for meeting notices mailed. The balance is \$673.00. There were 60 notices mailed with none returned.

Randy Freeland 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.) 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. Joey Freeland, retired Construction Engineer, has been very gracious to keep the website updated after each meeting. We were able to thank Joey in person. THANK YOU Joey!!!

Randy mentioned to the group that if they are Civil Service retirees and have not checked with Social Security about drawing a retirement based on their spouse, they should do so as soon as possible. President Joe Biden signed a bill in January 2025 repealing the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision laws which had been in effect over 40 years. This provides for Civil Service retirees to be able to draw Social Security on their spouse's Social Security income. They may be surprised to learn how much they can draw per month as well as to receive 12 months or more back pay. It will at least pay for their Medicare premium. He also reported that the NAFFRE organization has been lobbying congress for years to repeal these provisions. He invited everyone to join this organization. He has applications if anyone is interested.

The \$10 annual dues were suspended in April 2024 by a unanimous vote by those in attendance. 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.

Jeanne Jasper, Oklahoma State Conservationist, was asked to introduce herself and provide information about her. Jeanne has 28 years of service with the last 2 years in Oklahoma. Montana is her home state. She was raised in rural Montana and has found a home in Carney, OK on a few acres. She is planning a trip to Alaska with her Dad in late spring.

She provided an insight into the Government shutdown. There are a handful of employees working primarily in watersheds as there are a number of active projects. Student interns were not hired. Active employee numbers are down from 280 to 206. Many employees applied for the deferred retirement program offered or left for other

employment opportunities. The staff is still passionate about their work objective as well as customers being patient with the staff available. The state was restructured by teams so there is an average of three offices per team instead of four offices. Twelve of the 26 team leaders are acting. Lots of staff has less than five years service. She encouraged employees to attend the 90th Anniversary Celebration of the Soil Conservation Service this past April. She thought it was beneficial for them to see how passionate retirees are and importance of what they bring to the State of Oklahoma in the activities they do day to day. Still waiting to see what happens with the Government shutdown. Budget doesn't appear to increase.

Several retirees voiced suggestions to Jeanne Jasper about how to get employees exposed to retirees who are willing to share their work experiences by inviting the retirees to meetings throughout the year. Zone meetings are typically held every two years; end of year meeting in Stillwater; OACD meetings with District Conservationists in attendance; and the Annual OACD Meeting to be held in March at OKANA.

Phil Perryman reported to the group that he had talked to Earl Weisner's wife to see if Earl was up to coming to the meeting. Earl previously suffered a stroke and has been doing rehab. She advised that he was not up to it at this time but would begin some additional rehab soon.

The next meeting is scheduled for THURSDAY, April 23, 2026, 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.