

Approved on July 26, 2006

Texas Forest Service Employee Advisory Council
Minutes From
April 26, 2006

Website: [TFS Employee Advisory Council](#)

Members Attending:

Clay Bales	Eric Copeland	Kenneth Myrow
Sandy Santana	Paula Cadena	Brad Moore
Daniel Duncum	Richard Dottellis	
Linda Alford	Bobby Weaver, Jr.	
Sherri Noack	DeAndra Grizzle	

Members Absent with Notification: Nick Harrison, Carrie Chesbro, Mike Brock, Ronnie Hamm

Members Absent without Notification:

Ex-Officio Members Present: Tom Owen

Guests Present:

Richard Dottellis, EAC Chair, called the EAC meeting to order at 9:00am.

1. **Approval of minutes from the January 25, 2006 EAC Meeting:**

The minutes from the January 2006 EAC meeting were approved, by unanimous vote.

2. **Updates to Working Issues:**

The Council reviewed the following working issues:

- i. **Inability To Take Compensatory Time:** The EAC Chair sent a letter to the Executive Team suggesting the Agency consider the payment of holiday pay since some employees have accrued large balances of both annual leave and compensatory time. Sherri Noack discussed the possibility of Human Resources sending a report to supervisors showing leave balances in order to help supervisors and employees manage paid time off. The ultimate result desired by the Council is that no employees "lose" annual leave.
- ii. **Award For Those Making Recommendations To The EAC:** Tom Owen reported to the Council that the Director is

open to the possibility of a new Director's Award to recognize a person or persons who make a significant recommendation to the EAC. Carrie Chesbro will form a subcommittee to determine award criteria that can be presented to the Director for his approval.

- iii. **Official Logo for Agency Dozers:** Kenneth Myro and Brad Moore will form a subcommittee to recommend an appropriate logo for placement on Agency dozers.
- iv. **Direct Deposit of Travel Funds:** Emergency response personnel are now eligible for direct deposit of advance travel funds. The current program is only available to emergency response personnel but could be expanded to the rest of the Agency in the future, but there is no current timeline for allowing the entire Agency to participate.

3. **New Items:**

- a. **Cancellation of Text Messaging:** The Council discussed an issue from an employee regarding the Agency-wide cancellation of text messaging. Apparently there are several northeast Texas Districts without adequate pager coverage and having the pages roll over to cell phones is the only reliable way for dispatchers to contact employees after hours. The Council decided to have the Chair contact the Chief Regional Foresters and share the concern.
- b. **Communication of EAC Activities:** The Council decided to have the Chair routinely send emails to the entire Agency providing the link to the EAC website as well as announcing the next meeting date and asking employees to provide issues for EAC consideration. The Council also agreed, if possible, to encourage employees to talk to their supervisor regarding an issue before requesting EAC consideration.
- c. **Personnel/Budget Action Form 500's Completed By Human Resources:** The Council discussed an issue submitted by an employee recommending that all Personnel/Budget Action Form 500's be completed by Human Resources. The issue was tabled without action, but the Council generally felt that, because of changes in funding accounts between hiring request and final hiring, HR was probably not the right office to complete Form 500's.

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- d. **Allowance To Purchase Boots Other Than Offered by Lion Apparel If Employee Has Special Needs:** The Council discussed a recommendation from an employee that the Agency allow employees with special needs regarding footwear (size, ankle/arch support, etc) to purchase their own boots and be reimbursed from their uniform allowance. Tom Owen agreed to discuss this issue with John Murphy and others and report back to the Council.

4. **Next Meeting Date:** July 26, 2006—College Station 9am start time

5. **Future Meeting Dates:**

October 26, 2006: Lufkin

6. Richard Dottellis adjourned the Council meeting at approximately 11:45am.