

## Stakeholder Advisory Board Meeting

January 16, 2020

Those in attendance were:

Ben Ruzowicz                      Landon Boyd, Chairman

Cory Rayburn                      Michael Berry

Kenny Johnson                      Frank Gipson

Mark Masters

Those who attended via conference call were:

Mike Worley                      Brandt Lane

Marc Mastronardi

Mitch Attaway

Mr. Ruzowicz welcomed the attendees and introductions were made.

Chairman Landon Boyd opened the meeting.

Mr. Kenny Johnson, Rockdale County SWCD Supervisor, made a previous request to address the Board at this meeting. Mr. Johnson stated that would like to complain about the trainer class he recently attended. Mr. Johnson stated that when he took the test it was over the Level 1A & 1B materials. Mr. Johnson stated that he thought the test was supposed to be about how to be a trainer. Mr. Johnson stated that he didn't understand the class content and that the subject matter was not relatable. He said participants were not informed ahead of time. Mr. Johnson is of the opinion that more focus needs to be on District Supervisors and how they can become trainers in order to teach awareness to those that cause problems in the E&S community. Mr. Johnson felt that the class did not train him to be a trainer – he feels that testing of the subject matter isn't needed. Mr. Johnson stated that changes need to be made and that this has been a problem for a long time. He also questioned an audit that the commission has going on in his county. Cory Rayburn asked Ben Ruzowicz for a summary of the content covered in the trainer class. Mr. Ruzowicz explained that participants must score an 85 to pass the exam. Applicants must send in a resume showing education plus 5 yrs experience or 10 yrs if they hold no degree. After the resume is submitted and sufficient experience is provided before the applicant may take the test. Upon passing the exam, the applicant goes before the SAB for approval. Course Notebooks for Level 1A & 1B are provided and the exam is open notebook. Trainers are already expected to know the 1A & 1B information. The majority of the instruction in the trainer course is regarding the trainer responsibilities which explains how to operate procedurally when scheduling, holding, and submitting a course.

Mr. Rayburn stated that he took both classes and that when he signed up it was emphasized to him and made very clear that it would not cover the 1A & 1B material. Mr. Rayburn stated that the point of the

class isn't to teach the 1A & 1B material but to make sure that participants already know the information. Mr. Rayburn asked Mr. Johnson if this was made clear. Mr. Johnson said it was not made clear to him and that it needs to be updated. Mr. Rayburn asked if Mr. Johnson looked at any study material that was available online? Mr. Johnson stated that he did not. Frank Gipson asked how long Mr. Johnson has been active in erosion control. Mr. Johnson stated he had been involved for a long time. Mr. Gipson stated that he personally had over 20 years experience and that he had actually had to take the trainer test twice before passing it. Mr. Rayburn asked if the description of the class on the website states what the students are expected to know. He suggested taking a look at the website and all descriptions to ensure that it is very clear so that we don't have a future issue like this. Mr. Gipson asked specifically what Mr. Johnson thinks needs to be updated and asked if he would provide a list of suggestions. Mr. Boyd agreed with Mr. Gipson's request. Mr. Johnson stated he is very busy but he will send in his recommendation. Mr. Johnson feels changes need to be made in how the course material is delivered/presented. Mr. Johnson stated that the section regarding trainer procedures was also terribly presented. Mr. Ruzowicz explained that he took even longer on the course that Mr. Johnson attended in order to answer all questions. Mr. Ruzowicz invited all board members to attend any future course he holds. Mr. Boyd asked if a survey is currently, or could be, given at the end of each course. Mr. Ruzowicz stated that a survey is not currently done, but the process could be implemented. Mr. Ruzowicz stated that retest are free of charge. Mr. Boyd asked if Mr. Ruzowicz frequently gets complaints. Mr. Ruzowicz stated that he receives feedback from trainers regarding course material and they work together to update material and make it more relatable but the certification department does not normally get complaints about the course material. Mr. Rayburn suggested providing certification to all district supervisors at the next meeting. Mr. Ruzowicz suggested setting up a course for supervisors for those that are interested. Mr. Johnson stated that it needs to be Level 1B or above for supervisors. Mr. Boyd agreed that the process will be looked at and districts will be reached out to. He also asked Mr. Johnson to send in his suggestions for things he feels need to be changed. Marc Mastronardi stated that in the SAB role we don't want to get to the point of teaching to the test. Mr. Mastronardi stated that the role of the board is to make sure the right people are certified. Mr. Johnson disagreed and again stated more instruction is needed on the 1A and 1B information. Mr. Johnson complained that \$200 was too expensive for this course. Mr. Mastronardi stated that he has taken the course and the course is intended to instruct participants on the way the Soil & Water Commission requires you to teach the course - not for content of Level 1A & 1B. Mitch Attaway stated that the Soil & Water Commission will look at the website and make sure that it is very clear that the trainer course does not teach the E&S content. He stated that the instructors are expected to already know the content due to their experience. Mark Masters discussed a deadline to get this done. Mr. Johnson stated that he will have his suggestions by Monday of next week and that he will send them to Mitch Attaway. Mr. Boyd suggested this be discussed at the next conference call. Dr. Masters suggested the next meeting be held at the GACD annual meeting in April at Callaway Gardens. The board agreed to meet in April. Mr. Ruzowicz suggested that he could give a course at the University of Georgia for any District Supervisors who wished to become certified.

Mr. Ruzowicz gave the certification update. 94,400 certifications have been issued to date. His full report is attached to these minutes. The next Trainer Recertification Course will be March 19 on Erosion Day at UGA.

Mr. Ruzowicz submitted the following trainers for approval: Trainer I: Paula Days, Carmen Agudelo, Alma Jacobs, Jefferson Kirkland, Fred Heitman. Trainer II Aaron Harris & Jamie Lewis. Mike Worley made

a motion to approve the trainers presented. Frank Gipson seconded the motion and all members voted to approve all trainers.

Brandt Keller asked that the board be made aware of the potential change to the definition of LIA.

General Discussion:

Regarding Mr. Johnson- Mr. Rayburn asked if the application was complete. Mr. Ruzowicz stated that initially no E&S experience was listed. When asked, he did not provide the actual company, only the statement "5 years in erosion control" - he did not elaborate on his actual duties.

Mr. Rayburn suggested that an effort needs to be made to get supervisors trained in at least Level 1A. Mr. Ruzowicz suggested Awareness Courses for all supervisors since a test isn't given –this will at least expose them to the information.

Mr. Rayburn asked for an update on trainer Roy McHaney. Mr. Ruzowicz reported that he is no longer holding classes. Mr Boyd stated that he thinks Mr. McHaney is still advertising as one of his coworkers recently received an email solicitation from him. Mr. Boyd will follow up with his coworker and take a closer look at the email.

Mark Masters motioned to adjourn the meeting and Cory Rayburn seconded the motion.

Submitted January 16, 2020 by J. Standridge