

Spring Creek Coalition Board Meeting Minutes
April 12, 2018

The meeting of the Board of Directors of Spring Creek Coalition (“SCC”) was held on April 12, 2018, at the Schusterman Library in Tulsa. The following board members were present: Beth Rooney, Rick Brattin, Donna and Charles Drury, George Kamp, David Martinez, Jennifer Owen, and Jessica Spencer. Guests Jim McCoy and Martin Rooney also were present. The meeting was called to order at 6:18 pm.

1. Goal #7: Board Sustainability. The group welcomed new guest Jim McCoy and noted happily George Kamp’s return to Oklahoma. Based on discussions prior to the meeting and especially in view of Jennifer’s role in leading the special session (Item #3), it was decided that David would serve as Secretary.
2. Housekeeping
 - a. Approval of last month’s minutes: Beth had looked into the issue of the Board size since the March meeting and determined that the SCC bylaws provide for a maximum of 11 members, not 12 (so as to avoid tie votes). This had been discussed in March as the last point under agenda item 8, and an erroneous allowance for up to 12 members included as a part of the minutes. The correct allowance of 11 or fewer was noted for everyone’s benefit, and it was moved (Spencer) and seconded (Brattin) to approve the March minutes. All were in favor.
 - b. Treasurer’s report: Beth reported a balance of \$5,183 as of 04/03/18. Recent activity included income of dues (\$414) and a contribution (\$30), with expenses of stamps (\$100) and newsletter printing (\$242).
 - c. Results of membership outreach: Beth received 9 responses to the special newsletter inserts. Three of these were from existing members who renewed with their response; 6 were from non-members who joined with their response; and 1 was from the outreach group of 25 new landowners we added in 2017. Based on the positive responses, there was support for repeating the insert periodically.
 - d. 2018 Goals: A list of goals had been drafted by Beth, discussed, and adopted at the March Board meeting. However, because some members had not been given much time to consider these, it had been decided to review the goals again at the April meeting. Beth had distributed a revised list in which increasing watershed landowner involvement had been inserted as the new Goal #2. Minor revisions had been made to 2 other goals. Aside from a special discussion of Goal #2 later on the agenda, there were no further comments on the goals.
 - e. Pensacola Dam outing: Conditions were on track to hold the outing as planned. At the time of the meeting, there were reservations for about 15 attendees.
 - f. New business: It was moved (C. Drury) and seconded (Kamp) to add Jim McCoy to the SCC Board, effective immediately. Jim presented some additional information about his background. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Goal #2: Increase the involvement of watershed resident landowners in the Coalition: Jennifer opened this topic by recalling the founding of the SCC 24 years ago and its early success as an organization. More recently, she had been having some misgivings about some of the SCC’s endeavors and was concerned about it slipping into mission creep. She had met with 4 other longtime members who also were watershed residents and reportedly they also had reservations about some SCC activities. For example, she saw a possible emphasis on

fundraising as potentially competing with an emphasis on increasing member involvement. Others countered that SCC fundraising did not seem excessive and often served membership or educational objectives (e.g., SCC merchandise). Jim and Rick stated that it would be helpful for the Board to provide briefings or materials to new Board members to give them a better understanding of the SCC's history, its current state, and the vision of its leadership. More information about Spring Creek landowners would be useful, and information on tools available for management.

Jennifer next asked individual Board members to express what had attracted them to become involved in the SCC. Individual responses varied, but included appreciating the creek's natural beauty, seeing Spring Creek as possessing unique characteristics (e.g. animals, plants, abundant springs) not found in other places, desires to restore and keep the creek as they remembered it in years past, appreciation of the creek's high water quality, desires to protect the quantity of water in the creek, and recognition that many landowners in the Spring Creek watershed valued its natural qualities and were good stewards of the land. All present contributed to the discussion. Jennifer saw these fundamental values as important and contributing to a collective purpose for the SCC. Some debate occurred over whether the SCC's attention should be on the watershed (as reflected in the mission statement) or the creek itself; Rick and others felt that while the entire watershed is undeniably important, our primary focus should be the creek. Martin and others supported additional testing of the creek's water quality. Charles said he would like to see more involvement in the SCC from a larger proportion of residents living in the watershed. Some brainstorming occurred about how to accomplish that, leading to an idea of using GIS to collect and evaluate landowner characteristics, using data from sources such as the Census Bureau, County assessor's offices, and business sources. Other previous recommendations such as holding more events in the creek area also were revisited.

Jennifer presented her ideas for moving the SCC back towards its original focus. These included:

- a. Establish a network of communication throughout the watershed. Have landowner representation from all regions of the watershed.
- b. Make use of science throughout the watershed. Perform our own studies and use data collected by agencies, academia, et cetera. As part of this, use data to identify "healthy" areas of the watershed and "unhealthy" areas, and evaluate trends over time.
- c. Promote use of better management practices for raising livestock on the land, raising crops, using ag chemicals, et cetera.
- d. Help identify low-impact, sustainable income alternatives for landowners, including incentive programs offered by agencies.
- e. Educate and engage the next generation. Prepare them to carry the torch.

Beth commended Jennifer on her recommendations but felt they easily could become overwhelming. Some Board members commented that small actions consistent with these ideas had been accomplished. Examples included recruiting young people to serve on the Board, our tree-planting projects, posting of info to the website, and development of the GIS. It was expressed that some landowners fear the SCC, i.e., that we can bring about regulation of their

land use. It was recommended that we address that fear. David said that any of the ideas or other things was possible, but with the SCC's reliance on volunteer effort, there were limits on the number or size of things that could be accomplished at a given time. He saw it as a matter of priorities, but that the SCC Board could realistically pick a small number of priorities for the year ahead, set up teams to work on those priorities, and accomplish meaningful progress. In addition, he thought that recent efforts by the Board had been directed toward some of these ideas, e.g., the program with schools in the Spring Creek watershed; ongoing efforts to make the GIS available; interest in revising the website. Multiple people present expressed willingness to work on priority teams.

Jennifer raised an additional idea of having an outside expert on NGO management come speak to the Board. It was unclear if we would move ahead on the established priorities until such a presentation had occurred. Time to conclude the topic ran out, so it was decided to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

There was a brief reminder of the SCC booth to be set up on Earth Day at Guthrie Green. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 10, 2018, 6:15-7:45 PM, Schusterman Library