

Spring Creek Coalition Board Meeting Minutes
May 10, 2018

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Spring Creek Coalition (“SCC”) was held on May 10, 2018, at the Schusterman Library in Tulsa. The following board members were present: Beth Rooney, Rick Brattin, David Martinez, and Jessica Spencer. Guest Martin Rooney also was present. The meeting was called to order at 6:15 pm.

1. Housekeeping
 - a. Approval of Board secretary: While David Martinez had been serving as acting secretary for the SCC Board, Beth wished to appoint him as regular secretary for the balance of the calendar year. A motion approving that appointment was moved/seconded (Brattin/Spencer) and passed. Note: there was not a quorum present, but George Kamp had previously voted by email on this item and approval of minutes.)
 - b. Approval of last month’s minutes: It was moved/seconded (Brattin/Spencer) to approve the minutes as distributed. Motion passed with unanimous support.
 - c. Treasurer’s report: Beth reported a balance of \$5,578 as of 05/06/18. Recent activity included income of dues (\$220) and a contribution (\$200), with expenses of the website fee (\$10/monthly).
 - d. Earth Day booth: Former SCC Board member Emily Hyde staffed an Earth Day booth on April 22 as she had offered to do. Beth gave an account of the event and projected several photo images she had taken. Because several organizations hosted booths at the event and it had been well advertised, many people attended despite unfavorable weather. Emily was charismatic and informative as spokesperson for the SCC. Beth felt the event had been successful in informing many people about the SCC, in obtaining multiple requests for the newsletter, in producing one new membership, and in building relationships with other participating organizations.
2. Goal #1: Continue to build a coalition
 - a. Pensacola Outing: Jessica led a discussion of the outing, which had been attended by 18 people. She helped display and narrate several photos from the outing, which also had been posted to Facebook.
 - b. June newsletter: Beth led a discussion of ideas for potential articles for the June newsletter. The ideas tentatively selected were for articles on the proposed poultry farm near Oaks, the Earth Day booth, the Pensacola Dam outing, and Spring Creek’s re-attainment of Category 1 status by the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality.
3. Goal #2: Increase the involvement of watershed resident landowners in the coalition: commercial poultry farm issue – status and how to go forward; ideas:
 - a. Beth reported on a meeting she and Jennifer had with Oaks’ community residents on May 8 at the Oaks mission. They verified that many local officials and residents were opposed to the proposal and were trying to identify grounds on which the permit might be disapproved. Jennifer stayed for the Oaks Town Hall meeting held the same evening. Emily Oakley of Three Springs Farm had been doing a fantastic job of investigating all aspects of the proposal and the State’s permitting process, distributing information to local residents and other interested parties (including the SCC Board), and organizing opposition to the proposed farm.

Discussion of the issue by those present led to a recommendation of recognizing two separate controversies, each of which should be approached with different strategies: (1) the specific farm proposal at Oaks [Tran Tran LLC], and (2) the broader proposal to establish hundreds of new chicken houses in northeast Oklahoma over the next few years. The former is more imminent and poses a clearer threat to Spring Creek because of its proximity. Pertinent facts also had been discovered that could help in opposing the Tran Tran farm, including that (a) 90% of the property falls within the Oaks' city limits, (b) the property abuts a historical springhouse from the end of The Trail of Tears, and (c) the property abuts a historical and active Cherokee cemetery. Strategies for opposing the Tran Tran farm, which appeared promising, included involving the Cherokee Nation and promoting relocation of the chicken farm to another property less threatening to Spring Creek. One action available to concerned parties is to register their opposition to permitting of the farm to the State agriculture department. Emily had asked the SCC to file a letter of opposition, and individual board members also were encouraged to do this. Rick mentioned that the proposed operation was to be discussed at the upcoming Cedar Crest meeting. Beth relayed a concern by Jennifer that simple letters lacking objective arguments would be dismissed by the State as irrelevant. After further discussion, those present identified the following as the primary actions to be taken by the SCC at this time: (1) support Emily Oakley in her efforts, (2) encourage the Cherokee Nation to oppose the farm based on its location, (3) submit an official objection to the permit on behalf of the SCC, (4) publish an article in the SCC newsletter including information on how members can file objections and sample talking points, (5) help put Oaks officials in touch with Charles Threadgill (the "E. coli guy" who Beth met at Earth Day) who is fighting to clean up Oklahoma waters (ClearUpOurCreeks.org), and (6) encourage news coverage of the issue by the Tulsa World [Kelly Bostian] and the Tahlequah Daily Press. By being involved in opposing the Tran Tran farm, we should gain experience that will be useful to opposing the larger proliferation of chicken farms in northeast Oklahoma.

- b. Those present decided to wait on having a future Board meeting in Oaks, in view of all of the activity going on.
4. Board Direction: Getting clarity, getting us all on the same page (add this as a goal)
 - a. Beth relayed that Jennifer Owen would like the SCC Board to hold a retreat, at which we would continue our exploration of the direction of the coalition. Recounting the discussion of this topic in April, David believed that most of the Board supported many of the established goals, meaning we should not suspend them, but further consider if there were priorities among the goals or commitments specific Board members wanted to make to specific goals. He was not opposed to further consideration of new goals but believed any dissatisfied members needed to better identify potential changes they wished to advocate in the coalition's structure or activities. Someone noted that we could continue to work on the known desire to recruit more resident landowners to serve on the Board. Rick stated that from his perspective, the existing goals seemed adequate. It was decided to defer further discussion to a time when more Board members could be present.
 - b. Articles of Incorporation: Beth had distributed these ahead of the meeting and had hard copies available as needed. Those present reviewed the document but had little comment, other than an appreciation for certain insights it gave to the origins of the SCC.
 - c. Other questions under this topic were deferred to a future meeting, as indicated in the agenda.

5. Goals update – Responsible parties (committees) for specific goals
Beth and Jessica restated their intent to work on the education goal. Rick (and Jim) would work on producing a database of watershed landowners. David would work on making the GIS available to Board members. It was felt other goals would likely be shared and relate to these goals, e.g., production of the database would likely support other actions.
6. Goal #6: Water extraction – protect the creek’s flows – lunch with GRDA
Beth wasn’t sure whether it was a good time to set up the proposed lunch with GRDA; she thought the fall might be a better time. She stated she would inform the other Board members if she got something set up.
7. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 13, 2018, 3:00-5:00 PM, Oaks Indian Mission