

Approved on May 2, 2007

Texas Forest Service Employee Advisory Council
Minutes From
January 24, 2007

Website: [TFS Employee Advisory Council](#)

Members Attending:

Eric Copeland	DeAndra Grizzle	Sherry Noack
Sandy Santana	Bobby Weaver, Jr.	Carrie Chesbro
Teresa Stefka	Susan Cornett	Russell Lykins
Mike Brock	Doris Long	Kenneth Myrow
Linda Alford	Philip Gates	

Members Absent with Notification: Clay Bales, Shane Brown

Members Absent without Notification: None

Ex-Officio Members Present: Tom Owen, Don Cumbie, Tom Boggus

Guests Present:

Carrie Chesbro, EAC Chair, called the EAC meeting to order at 9:00am.

1. **Approval of minutes from the October 25, 2006 EAC Meeting:**
The minutes from the October 25, 2006 EAC meeting were approved, by unanimous vote.

2. **Updates to Working Issues:**

The Council reviewed the following working issues:

- a. **Allowing FRP staff to wear Kevlar brush pants as standard issue:** The Council, after discussion, decided to pass this issue on to FRP Operations staff for action, if applicable.
- b. **Serious Injury/Line of Duty Death Information Form:** Tom Owen will follow up with the Council at the April 2007 meeting with more information on this form and its possible use within the Agency.
- c. **East Zone/West Zone differences:** The Council discussed this issue at some length. The 2006 Agency pay plan addresses pay disparities that may have existed in the past. The Council also discussed possible issues with regard to physical requirements in

the East versus West. The Council agreed this is an ongoing discussion with no specific recommendation other than bringing issues forward as they surface.

- d. **Uniform Items (rain gear):** The Council continued the discussion from a previous meeting regarding the addition of rain gear to the uniform allowance. Lion Apparel provided a sample of rain gear used by several of their other customers. The EAC had no issues with the rain gear and recommended the EAC Chair share the sample with the Director and get his thoughts.
- e. **Direct Deposit of Travel Advances:** Due to some concern from Council members regarding the direct deposit process for travel advances, Travis Zamzow agreed to email those employees requesting direct deposit travel advances letting them know the funds should be deposited into their bank account within several days.
- f. **EAC Communications:** Concern is still being raised among Council members regarding information sharing throughout the Agency regarding EAC activities. The Council felt that EAC members should participate in staff meetings and other forums, if possible, and share with their co-workers issues discussed at Council meetings. The Council also felt Agency employees should be made aware of the EAC website so they could review EAC meeting minutes if they desired.

3. **New Items:**

- a. **Election of Chair-Elect:** Philip Gates was nominated and unanimously elected as the EAC Chair-elect.
- b. **EAC December 2006 Election Review:** Tom Owen briefly discussed the most recent EAC election process and solicited any feedback from the Council on ways to make the process more efficient. Several Council members suggested an online voting process next year. Tom Owen will follow-up toward the end of the year with process improvements. The Council also discussed a disparity in the election process that excluded a FRP representative on the current Council. The Council decided to have the FRP candidate that received the most votes (Meredith Carrell) to serve on the Council for the remainder of 2007 then conduct an FRP election at the end of the year.

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- c. **Issues with Uniforms/Lion Apparel:** The Council discussed several uniform issues including improvements to the nametag (clasp type versus safety pin type and size of print on nametag) and overall quality issues with the uniforms. The Council decided to survey employees regarding likes and dislikes regarding the uniform and Lion Apparel and then ask a Lion Apparel representative to meet with the Council at a future meeting. Tom Owen will discuss the recommendation with John Murphy and Robby DeWitt and report back to the Council.
- d. **Performance Evaluation Review:** Tom Owen briefly summarized the current effort to review our current performance evaluation tools. He will provide an update at the next Council meeting.
- e. **Safety Awards:** Tom Owen shared with the Council the decision of the Safety Council to change the effective time frame for safety awards to fiscal year rather than calendar year. This change synchronizes safety awards with tenure awards.

4. **Next Meeting Date: April 18, 2007. 9am (Lufkin-Cudlipp Facility)**

5. **Future Meeting Dates:**

July 25, 2007 (CS)

October 24, 2007 (Lufkin)

6. Carrie Chesbro adjourned the Council meeting at approximately 12:00 (noon).