

Texas Forest Service Employee Advisory Council
Minutes From
October 14, 2010
College Station, Texas
Website: [TFS Employee Advisory Council](#)

Members Attending:

West Zone:

Rob Grotty: Urban/Oak Wilt (Chair)
Andy Larson: At-Large
Jason Keiningham: At Large, West Zone

East Zone:

Dian Melton: North Region
John Rush: Central Region
Twanisha Bennett: Central Region
Preston Williams: South Region

College Station:

Michelle Gonzales: FRD/College Station
Casey Bryan: FIAD/Dir's Office
James Polasek: FIAD/Dir's Office
Curt Stripling FRP

Members Absent with Notification:

Mark Wobus: Regional Fire
Chris Rhoades: East Zone/North Region
Dawn Vollmer: East Zone/South Region
Jake Donellan: East Zone/At-Large
Ray Uballe: East Zone/At-Large

Members Absent without Notification: None

Ex-Officio Members Present: Stacy Overby

Guests Present: Stacy Morris, Chief of Staff, EAC Chair, TVMDL
Jordan Brod, Operations Manager, EAC Co-Chair, TVMDL

Rob Grotty, EAC Chair, called the EAC meeting to order at 10:00am.

1. Re-introduction of all EAC members.
2. **Review of minutes from the January 21, 2010 EAC Meeting:** Rob verified that all members had seen the previous minutes and asked for any comments. No comments were provided.
3. The council reviewed the notes from the semi-annual brief provided to the Executive Team on August 9, 2010.
4. **Updates to Working Issues:**

The Council reviewed the following working issues:

- a. **TFS Honor Guard:** EAC recommended that we ask Shane Brown to take the lead again for developing the TFS Honor Guard and presenting ideas to the Executive Team. It was recommended that Jake Donellan would act as a liaison between honor guard committee and EAC. Rob Grotty will contact Shane to see if he is willing to take this project. Mark Stanford offered up Bruce Woods for expertise if needed.
 - b. **Cell Phone Stipend:** EAC members were informed that a cell phone stipend procedure is being considered by the System and it is up to each agency and university to develop their own plan within the parameters of the System plan once it is approved.
5. **New Items:**
- a. **Cell Phones:** The issue was raised that in one of our TFS offices all 6 of the TFS phones do not function properly. The phones do not have the local area code and it is believed that this could be the cause for the dropped calls.
 - b. **K&L TFS Logo Shirts:** Request was made to use uniform account money to purchase the TFS logo shirt from K&L. It was also requested to see if the \$10 per shirt for mailing costs could be waived if the shirts were delivered to the College Station office and employees could pick up their shirts from there when either themselves or someone from their office came through for a meeting.
 - c. **K&L TFS Logo Shirts w/ Dept or Div:** Request was made to authorize employees to order the K&L TFS Logo Shirt with their Department or Division embroidered below the TFS logo.

- d. **Tobacco Free Environment:** Two requests were submitted to establish a tobacco free environment in all TFS facilities, events, and equipment. Examples were provided of employees sitting in meetings, offices, teaching classes, and operating vehicles while using smokeless tobacco. Employees that use smokeless tobacco leave spit cups/bottles sitting around for other employees and customers to look at. Employees displaying an unprofessional appearance in front of customers by using smokeless tobacco freely while speaking to them. It was also requested that at least two tobacco free signs per building are fabricated for the offices to post at the workplace.
 - e. **Employee Directory:** A request was made to create an employee directory that has every full-time employee in the agency listed within the directory. Each person would have their name, contact information, location, division, department, primary duties, and an individual photo. It was requested that the employee directory be placed on a site that customers would not have access to.
 - f. **Time in years to get to the next level:** Issue was submitted requesting a review of the current Employee Development Manual(EDM) for an Office Associate(OA). Concern that the Office Associate must wait five years to go from OA I to OA 2 when a Resource Specialist only has to wait two years to move from RS I to RS II. Recommendation was for TFS Human Resource review the issue.
6. **Other:** Rob Grotty opened the floor to any other issues.
- a. Concern was raised about the amount of time employees are spending on social media sites like Facebook in the workplace.
 - b. TFS cell phones that have intermittent coverage in the area and employees use their personal phones in lieu of the TFS phone to ensure coverage. One office reported having six TFS cell phones they leave in the office because they consistently drop calls in the field when they are used.
7. **Next Meeting Date:** January 13, 2011, 10:00am, College Station
6. **Future Meeting Dates:** April 14, 2010, 10:00am, College Station

Rob Grotty adjourned the Council meeting at approximately 11:50am.