

Irrigation Advisory Council (IAC) Minutes

Date: Thursday, February 7th, 2019
Time: 9:00 am
Location: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), 12100 Park 35 Circle, Building A, 2nd Floor, Conference Room 202, Austin, Texas 78753

Call to Order

Mr. Micah Reed, IAC Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00am. The present members of the council introduced themselves: Ms. Jennifer Walter, Mr. Robert Evans, Mr. Brooke Furrh, Mr. Micah Reed, Mr. Mark Warden, Ms. Valerie Miller, Mr. Philip Hathaway, Mr. Charles Swanson, and Mr. David Moulton.

TCEQ Staff present also introduced themselves: Mr. Randy Janssen, Mr. James Hemple, Ms. Alaina Teller, Ms. Linda Saladino, Ms. Sarita Nazareth, and Ms. Jaya Zyman.

The members of the public participating in the meeting also introduced themselves.

Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Micah Reed to approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on November 8, 2019. A second to the motion was made by Ms. Valerie Miller. The vote to adopt was unanimous.

TCEQ Occupational Licensing

Ms. Linda Saladino, Occupational Licensing Section, provided a brief update on the Landscape Irrigation Exam statistics. She provided a handout with the numbers from FY18 and the beginning of FY19. Overall, the numbers have recovered from previous year's lows. The exam locations, an overview of what the exam entails, and fees to proctor the exam were discussed.

Ms. Sarita Nazareth, Occupational Licensing Section, discussed challenges in getting training programs TCEQ approval for continuing education credits toward licenses. She advised that:

- The content/topic be directly relevant to the specific license;
- The use of sign in sheets;
- Verification of the qualification of the instructor for the specific license CEU;
- Programs wishing to provide CEUs for multiple license types must still provide a level of specificity (Irrigator, tester, inspector, etc.)
- The checklists in Regulatory Guidance document No. 373 (RG-373) be consulted when developing the programs and presentations to be used for CEU credit. RG-373 is available at: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/publications>

Ms. Jaya Zyman, P.E., Director, Office of Permitting and Registration, lead the discussion on criminal history background checks. TCEQ has been conducting criminal history background checks since 2012. New applicants can state they have no criminal record, or provide a list of potential offenses, or obtain a criminal history report from the Department of Public Safety (DPS). For those renewing their license, they just need to list any offenses since the last application or renewal. TCEQ uses the DPS database for application processing to identify crimes and significant offenses.

If a crime is identified, the application goes to the Executive Review Committee to determine eligibility. The outcomes are typically approval, need for additional information, denial, suspension, or revocation. If an applicant wishes to contest the determination of the Executive Review Committee, they have 30 days to request a hearing from the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH).

IAC Workgroups

Mr. James Hemple, Program Support Section, discussed the IAC workgroup assignments and objectives. In 2018 there was an IAC initiative to form workgroups to focus on topics critical to landscape irrigation in Texas. Four work groups were formed to focus on: Enforcement, Education, Water Conservation, and Public Relations. The following IAC members were assigned to the different workgroups:

- Enforcement – Robert “Bobby” Evans and David Moulton
- Education – Charles Swanson and Brooke Furrh
- Water Conservation – Jennifer Walker and Valerie Miller
- Public Relations – Philip Hathaway and Mark Warden

A motion to approve work groups was made by Charles Swanson and seconded by Robert “Bobby” Evans. The vote from the council was for approval of the workgroups. The workgroups will work to establish meeting dates and processes for disseminating the results of the meetings and actions to be taken.

Irrigator Emeritus Recognition

Mr. Micah Reed recognized Mr. Kurt Hall, LI0003191, for his years of experience and contributions to landscape irrigation in Texas. Mr. Jerry Lewis accepted the emeritus plaque on behalf of Mr. Hall.

Texas Irrigation Association

Mr. Doug Christensen, Central Texas Irrigation Association, discussed opportunities for better public outreach. During the discussion, it was recommended that TCEQ be more involved with Trade Shows, Fairs, training events, CEU classes, etc. Mr. Christensen will make available to the IAC a list of associations and trade organizations which would benefit from TCEQ outreach efforts. The Central Texas Irrigation Association and Texas Irrigation Association email list and organization newsletter could also serve to disseminate information.

Adjournment: 3:00 pm

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Micah Reed, seconded by Ms. Jennifer Walker. Meeting was adjourned.