

Irrigation Advisory Council (IAC) Minutes

Date: Thursday, February 9, 2017

Time: 9:00 am

Location: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, 12100 Park 35 Circle, Building A, 2nd Floor, Conference Room 202, Austin, Texas 78753

Call to Order (John DeCell) at 9:00 am. Roll Call: John DeCell, Justin Lewis, Brooke Furrh, Philip Hathaway, Robert Evans, Micah Reed, Mark Warden and Valerie Miller were present. Paul Ward was absent.

Introductions of the IAC and audience were made.

Approve Previous Meeting Minutes. Ms. Melissa Keller, TCEQ, read the changes to the minutes received via email. Minutes were approved with these changes. Motion Brooke Furrh, seconded Philip Hathaway. All changes were live-edited and projected on a screen for the council.

IAC Sub-Committee Reports

1. Rules and IAC Administrative Enforcement and Legislative Committee (Brooke Furrh). Attachment in the rule packet on 334.50 Backflow.
2. Education, Training and Licensing Committee (Philip Hathaway). Plan and checklist need to go on website as an example. Melissa Keller to follow up with Linda Saladino, TCEQ, on the example plan.

Melissa Keller, TCEQ, made announcement about CSI exemption staying in place per confirmation email from Jaya Zyman, TCEQ, dated February 9, 2017.

Appoint New IAC Sub-Committee Members

1. Rules-Justin (Chair), Brooke, Micah (11 am)
2. Enforcement- Paul (Chair), Bobby, and Mark (10 am)
3. Education- Philip (Chair), Valerie M, John (9 am)

Melissa Keller to send out call information to participants through Outlook for every second Thursday. Agendas are due one week before the meeting from the chair to the subcommittees.

Goals for 2017

1. Scheduled a meeting of all TCEQ approved trainers. May 3 at LCRA Redbud facility. Mr. DeCell to email trainers directly.
2. Equipment Kit. Look into the use of hands on products in irrigator and tech courses.

3. Will discuss an option for an Apprentice Program or a possible tiered licensing format. Preliminary feedback and discussion held between audience and IAC.

Working Lunch Session – Continue Goals for 2017

Melissa Keller will include the link for lunch on the IAC agenda for May 4 meeting (agenda due from IAC to TCEQ by March 27, 2017).

1. Planning the CSI stakeholder meetings. No longer necessary.
2. Discussed city personnel versus a Licensed Irrigator concerning scheduling.
3. Complete the Rule Petition for the health hazard classification for irrigation.
4. Complete the Rule Petition for Chapter 344 changes.
5. IAC member attendance at local events. IAC members please get involved in the local areas and organizations.

Jaya Zyman stopped in introduce the new team leader, Deric Patton, two work leaders will be under him (water and wastewater licensing). Current processing times for new licenses, 45 days. Randall Merriott suggested it was taking much more than 45 days. Jaya described the reorganization of the section and the impacts it's had on efficiencies. Jaya suggested anything longer than 45 days be brought to either Derek or Linda Saladino's attention. Ben Fisher, audience member, requested that for all changes on licensing, that the training providers should be notified in advance.

IAC Discussion and Action on Rule Petitions

1. Requirement for a Licensed Irrigator to turn in a Test & Maintenance Report within 10 days. John wanted to change the requirement to the backflow tester to turn in the report vs the irrigator turning in the report. Leave as-is was the consensus.
2. Definitions:
 - a. Irrigation System. Alicia Ramirez, attorney. TCEQ, thinks the IAC may not have authority to define temporary. Permanently installed is the key term to define.
 - b. Proposed language "permanently installed=system of components, regardless of how connected, either above or below ground, no matter the duration, the system is installed (except for what is exempt by statute).
 - c. As-built Drawing. John read proposed definition. Bobby motion, Justin seconded.
 - d. Council attendance- Alicia Ramirez will look the topic.

Linda Saladino, TCEQ, should answer question on inspector pass rate for exam. Breakdown exam attempts (1-3) and application attempts. Why do irrigators only have to retake the failed sections? Add BPAT exams to the breakdown.

Individuals Wishing to Address the Council that have signed-up (5 Minutes Each)

Charles Swanson, Manager of Texas ET network. Friday February 17, 2017 stakeholder meeting. Commons Learning Center at JJ Pickle off Burnet and Braker Lane in Austin. Looking for permanent funding from TWDB and the legislature.

Randall Merriott, South Plains Irrigation Association. Spoke against the ban of double-check valves and making irrigation a health hazard. He explained that he believes that annual testing would be acceptable if the Panhandle was allowed to keep double-checks. He argued that double-checks are the only thing that works in their area and PVBs won't work.

Lance Roberson, Plants.org, irrigators need to know the plants they are designing systems to irrigate.

Meeting Recap

1. Review of Parking Lot Items-Permanently installed definition, freezing pipes in Lubbock and Amarillo.
2. Cross Connection Meeting March 3, 2017.
3. Suggested Items for the May 4, 2017 Agenda.

Adjournment (John DeCell)

Justin Lewis motioned to adjourn. Philip Hathaway seconded.