

Irrigation Advisory Council (IAC Minutes)

Date: Thursday, May 10, 2018

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, Robert Evans, Paul Ward, Mark Warden and Valerie Miller, Micah Reed. Philip Hathaway was absent.

Introductions of the IAC, TCEQ Staff and audience were made.

1. IAC / TCEQ Discussion on Roles and Responsibilities

1. Expectations between TCEQ and the IAC

- a. Linda Saladino would like the IAC to provide feedback on what is going on in the field, issues they see, give feedback from conferences that they attend.
- b. IAC has outreach to the regulated community and should be subject matter experts for TCEQ.
- c. During exam corrections, the IAC should be available to review exam questions.
- d. John DeCell mentioned that that the purpose of the IAC is to advise TCEQ, but the IAC needs to know what the TCEQ needs.
- e. Mark Warden stated that he was concerned with the turnover in the Landscape Irrigation Program.
 - i. Justin Lewis offered irrigation training for TCEQ staff.
 - ii. Kristi Mills-Jurach stated that the program will possibly grow.

2. Investigation and Enforcement of Complaints

- a. Brooke Furrh feels that TCEQ puts the burden of enforcement on municipalities, but they are not interested in taking on that work. Brooke also states that the IAC has voted to train TCEQ Regional Offices to investigate complaints.
- b. Mark Warden says that enforcement of the rules is not getting done and the job of enforcement should be on the water providers. There also needs to be a major overhaul of state / municipal relationship.
- c. Paul Ward says there needs to be a better working relationship between TCEQ and municipalities.

- i. Working with municipalities was a focus of the IAC when he started.
 - ii. Several years ago there was a meeting with the municipalities and complaints used to be referred to them.
- d. Kristi Mills-Jurach would like feedback on what a working relationship with municipalities should look like.

3. Alignment in Rules

- a. Mark Warden mentioned that it would be best to work with the TWDB and better leverage municipalities.
- b. Valerie Miller stated that the TWDB are currently updating irrigation standards.
- c. 30 TAC 344.24 - The statute used the word “shall” but the rule says, “Should”
- d. Valerie Miller stated that TWDB writes goals and TCEQ implements rules. There should be a clear document that shows alignment and municipalities should be at the table for the creation of this document.
- e. Valarie mentioned that the IAC and TCEQ should bridge the gap with the TWDB’s Water Conservation Advisory Council.

4. General Discussion

- a. Paul Ward requested training on ethics, legal and proper procedures (Robert’s Rules).
- b. There needs to be an orientation for new council members to include how meetings are run.
- c. Can the IAC make a public webpage?
- d. Can IAC have Skype calls rather than regular calls so that we can live feed to the public / supply houses.
- e. Can we coordinate with Drinking Water Advisory Workgroup (DWAAG) and get briefed on other councils or groups?
- f. An email address for questions directed to the IAC should be created and added to the TCEQ website.
- g. There was a mention of possibly having a conservation subcommittee.

5. Rule Petitions

- a. Melissa Keller - Public comments regarding the rule petitions are on the TCEQ website without submitter’s name.
- b. Survey was sent to our “city” listserv.

- i. 17 responses received at this time
 - ii. Responses are due by end of May
- c. It was suggested that TCEQ reach out to AWWA
- d. Agenda date is set for October

6. Subcommittees

- a. Education
 - i. Request to approve “Tips for Contractor Selection.”
 - 1. Motion accepted with editorial change (Bobby and Brooke).
 - 2. Linda Saladino and Brooke asked for some revisions to the sample plan from the irrigation test.
 - 3. Linda Saladino will send new vocabulary list to all training providers.
- b. Enforcement
 - i. Concern was mentioned again about turnover in the landscape irrigation program at TCEQ.
- c. Rules
 - i. No new comments

7. Public Comments

- a. There is a concern over keeping designers accountable for the systems they design. Who is responsible for a bad design when the designers stamp is on the design? Is there a way to get bad designs to TCEQ without risking your job or contract?
- b. The meeting format today was informative. Asked if the word conservation in our rules applies to water window.
- c. Trainers need to touch on conservation and show homeowners how to operate systems. Associations are only allowed to touch on some subjects. Can TCEQ make conservation an approved topic? Mud districts have no requirements for backflow and need more education

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes. February 8, 2018 minutes were approved with no changes. Motion to approve was made by Paul Ward, motion seconded by Justin Lewis.

Adjournment. Justin Lewis moved to adjourn, Paul Ward seconded the motion. The next IAC meeting is Thursday August 09, 2018 at TCEQ Central Office.