

Weather Modification Advisory Committee

Meeting of November 19, 2010
E.O. Thompson Building – 7th Floor Public Meeting Room
920 Colorado Street, Austin, Texas

Summary of Minutes

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly called the meeting to order at 9:13 a.m.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item B., Roll Call and Certification of Quorum. Committee members Frank Reilly, Don Parrish, Everett Deschner, and James Nance were present. Committee member Gary Foster was absent. A quorum was present.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item C., Approval of Minutes – Meeting of August 20, 2010. Committee member, Everett Deschner requested that the statement he made on the record at the August 20, 2010 meeting be added to the minutes before approval. The Committee passed the minutes to the next meeting.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item D., Public Comment. There was no public comment.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item E.1., Staff Reports, Executive Office. Brian Francis, Deputy Executive Director provided a legislative update and information on the Department's status on social media and strategic planning.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item E.2., Staff Reports, General Counsel. Brad Bowman, General Counsel reported on the rule review underway for the Weather Modification program – public comment closes December 13, 2010.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item E.3., Staff Reports, Compliance Division. George Bomar, Program Specialist provided updates on a new policy statement on planned weather modification by the American Meteorological Society (AMS); reports of cloud-seeding results in the international news; and prospects for resumption of cloud-seeding research in Texas.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item F., Field meteorologists report on status of rain-enhancement activities and project meteorologists' handbook. Stephanie Beall was unable to make the meeting. George Bomar reported that the project will continue and Archie Ruiz' statistical data should be available at the next meeting.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda items G. and H., Reports from committee working groups on weather modification rules including repeal or deleting any rules as part of the Department's rule simplification project; Consideration and possible recommendation on changes to weather modification rules regarding definitions, advisory committee, application requirements, record keeping requirements, hail suppression, issuance of permits, and elections. George Bomar, Program Specialist reported that the work group met and reviewed the previous changes to the rules. The work group did not propose any changes.

Committee member, Everett Deschner made a motion seconded by Pat Nance to recommend the Commission adopt the proposed rules. The motion passed with a unanimous vote in favor.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item I., Consideration and possible recommendation on application for renewal of weather modification permit: Belding Farms of Fort Stockton. George Bomar, Program Specialist reported that the permit was appropriately filed and the notice of intention will run in a local newspaper in Fort Stockton. Mr. Bomar answered questions from the Committee about noise complaints. Committee member Pat Nance made a motion seconded by Don Parrish to recommend approval of the permit. Committee member, Everett Deschner commented on the permit's deficiencies. Motion passed by a vote of 3-1 with Deschner opposed.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item J., Consideration and possible recommendation on a request for exemption status for a proposed rain-enhancement demonstration project in the Trans-Pecos region. George Bomar introduced David Kutchinski, who has a proposal to produce more water for the reservoir operated by the Red Bluff Water Control District based in Pecos. Mr. Kutchinski presented a power point of the concepts for increasing the water supply and a research project to enhance rain. This project would be conducted in association with SOAR and Red Bluff Water Control District. The project would be administered under the Texas State Water Plan and has been offered in other countries with reported success. Mr. Bomar outlined the process for obtaining a permit and getting approval from the Committee and Commission. The Committee recommended staff and General Counsel work with Mr. Kutchinski on the permitting process.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item K., Recommendations for agenda items for the next meeting. The Committee placed the following items on the agenda: review of the permit for rain enhancement in the Trans Pecos Weather Modification Permit and rules review comments.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item L., Discussion of date, time, and location of the next Committee meeting. The Committee decided to meet on January 28, 2011 10:00 a.m. in Austin, Texas.

Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly moved to agenda item M., Adjournment. Presiding Officer, Frank Reilly adjourned the meeting at 11:58 a.m.

Frank Reilly, Presiding Officer
Weather Modification Advisory Committee