

# Matagorda County Conservation & Reclamation District Number One

## 08-13-2025 Meeting Minutes

**Attending Commissioners:** Willie Younger, Gary Koeppen, Dwight Vavra

**Item #1:** Chairman Vavra opened the meeting at 10:00 AM.

**Item #2:** The following guests were recognized:

\*Jonathon Vavra \*James Kinard \* Mike Estlinbaum \*Allen Cumbie \*John Mercer

**Item #3:** Under a motion made by Gary Koeppen and seconded by Dwight Vavra, the minutes of the 07-08-2025 meeting were unanimously approved as read.

**Item #4:** Regarding progress on clearing vegetation from the river levees, the following was discussed:

- James Kinard shared cell phone photos of work completed.
- Kinard reported that a persistent array of showers had delayed work on John Ashcraft's property. But the work there was finalized.
- Kinard asked who owned the property adjacent to Ashcraft's.
- Dwight Vavra responded that the west side was Burkhart property, but it had never been touched. However, Hickl is presently working on the 'old' Burkhart place.
- Vavra indicated that some property owners along the river have inquired about periodic spraying after mechanical removal of vegetation.

**Item #5:** Regarding the status of Shuford Property's crossing application, the following was discussed:

- Allen Cumbie indicated that he has received no word on this application from the USACE and, therefore, assumed no permit has been granted to take wastewater from the RV park they developed through or over the Ring Levee to the treatment plant.
- The County officials have asked about the unauthorized piping over the levee running to the sewage treatment plant. But, no remedial action has been taken by them.

**Item #6:** Under a motion made by Willie Younger and seconded by Gary Koeppen, the recent Financial Report was unanimously approved as read.

**Item #7:** Regarding the replacement of Brenda Strotheide, who is retiring as the MCCRD's website administrator, the following was discussed:

- Allen Cumbie reported that he has contacted Joe Sliva as a potential candidate. Mr. Sliva is asking \$90/hr. for maintenance and updates on the website.
- Cumbie reminded the Board that whomever is contracted will need to add information required by the state. He also added that a decision on this selection must be made by or before December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year.
- Chairman Vavra suggested that Mr. Sliva be invited to attend the next CRD meeting.

**Item #8:** Regarding an update on the River Levees, Vavra reported that Dane Simons has a potentially troubling ravine on his homesite property running perpendicular to the river, Younger showed those attending pictures of said ravine which he had recently taken and suggested this was the result of removing a portion of the levee to enjoy a view of the river from his home.

**Item #9:** Under a motion made by Gary Koeppen and seconded by Dwight Vavra, the recent Investment Report was unanimously approved as read.

**Item #10:** Regarding the request to release part of the interior easement to allow construction of a home in Matagorda, the following was discussed:

- Allen Cumbie noted that the property owner has contacted him and is seeking a resolution to this issue.
- Although the CRD acknowledges that neighboring property owners were allowed to encroach on the broad easement and construct homes, no documentation can be found by Cumbie to verify this was through any official CRD action.
- Cumbie further noted that although Bay Harbor's developer, Jureski, filed development plans, no mention was made of the easements.
- Gary Koeppen suggested that Mr. Davis should have his lot surveyed 'before' he formally approaches the CRD to release the required portion of the easement to ensure his intentions are crystal clear.
- Willie Younger further suggested that such a survey should be paid for by Davis (not the CRD).

**Item #11:** Regarding a rental contract with Equipment Share, the following was discussed:

- Allen Cumbie indicated that a 'draft' of a rental contract has been prepared. With the Board's approval, he will promptly deliver it to ES's representative, Shaun Short.
- Younger reported that Mr. Short was invited to both the July and August CRD meetings.

- County Commissioner Mike Estlinbaum said he could store such pumps and refuel them as needed. But he noted that a third party would be required to set up and maintain these pumps.
- As a backup option, Vavra said he would ask the City of Bay City where they acquired their pumps.

**Item #12:** The CRD's lobbyist, Dan Delich delivered his routine Levee Safety Program Report via email for review by each commissioner and the Board's attorney. The high point of his report was that it appears a Levee Owners Advisory Board will be established in the near term.

**Item #13:** Under the Attorney's Report, Allen Cumbie reported the following:

- Texas Senate Bill #12 would prohibit local taxing districts from employing lobbyists.
- He informed the Board that he has recused himself from a legal engagement involving a dispute between Donald Biggs and his sister over separate properties in Matagorda due to a conflict of interest as the CRD's attorney.

**Item #14:** Under a motion made by Gary Koeppen and seconded by Dwight Vavra, all bills received were unanimously approved for payment.

**Item #15:** Regarding the development of the proposed budget, the following was discussed and/or acted upon:

- Vavra provided all in attendance with a printout of the previous budget and reported that certain water districts have hired consultants to assess "actual" costs of operations and maintenance. The goal of such action being to develop more accurate cost estimates.
- Vavra also reported that the TWDB has one billion dollars set aside for grants. However, these are very difficult to obtain. He further noted that the TWDB has low interest loans which are relatively easy to get.
- The Board agreed to adjust the RENTALS category by 10K in anticipation of renting pumps. This brought the proposed budget total to \$928, 400.
- The proposed budget was unanimously approved under a motion made by Willie Younger and seconded by Gary Koeppen.

**Item #16:** Under a motion made by Dwight Vavra and seconded by Gary Koeppen, the 'proposed' tax rate of 0.00693 was unanimously approved and will be published in the newspaper by Tax Assessor-Collector Becky Cook as required by state law.

**Item #17:** Comments from the CRD commissioners was tabled.

**Item #18:** The next CRD meeting was set for 09-10-2025.

**Item #19:** Under a motion made by Gary Koeppen and seconded by Willie Younger, the meeting was unanimously adjourned.