

Texas Pecan Board

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Texas Pecan Board (TPB) Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 17, 2024 1:00 P.M. CST

Tarleton/AgriLife Center - 1225 N. US Highway 281, Stephenville, TX 76401

TPB Members Present: Jake Montz, Troy Swift, Dennis Hardman, Zachary Swick, Joseph Massey
Guests: Blair Krebs, Patrick Dudley, Jean Lonie, Kyle Slusher

Texas Pecan Board (TPB) President Jake Montz called the meeting to order at 1:01 P.M. CST. He called the board roll call, establishing a quorum, and asked guests to introduce themselves.

The board members reviewed the meeting minutes from the July 14, 2024 meeting in San Marcos. Joe Massey made the motion to approve the minutes. Troy Swift seconded the motion, all voted in favor, and the meeting minutes were approved.

Patrick Dudley from the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) then gave an update from the department about its work, including the audit procedure and compliance agreements. There were questions and discussion in regards to the penalty matrix for pecan weevil quarantine and the necessary clarification on the penalty quantities and process. The review has to be done for all the quarantines under TDA. This is a long-term project the industry has been waiting on after stricter penalties went into place several years ago. Troy Swift made the motion to request an update from TDA on where they are on the review of the penalty matrix three weeks from today, and in one-month intervals every month after that, until resolved. Zachary Swick seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. Motion passed. It was also asked that this topic stay as an agenda item each meeting until resolved.

Blair Krebs with the Texas Pecan Growers Association (TPGA) and contractor for TPB gave an update on the activities and finances for the organization. She informed the group about administrative, grant, and infrastructure work the team had been handling, including an update on the weevil monitoring program and research. The financials were presented to the board. Zachary Swick made the motion to approve the 2023-2024 financials with the fiscal year ending September 2024. Dennis Hardman seconded the motion, all voted in favor, and the motion to approve the year-end financials passed.

The board then reviewed the proposed budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Troy Swift made the motion to approve the budget as presented. Zachary Swick seconded the motion, all voted in favor. Patrick Dudley noted a supplemental budget for 2023-2024 fiscal year should be submitted, because of differences in the budget amounts and actuals. Zachary Swick made the motion to approve the supplemental budget paperwork for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Troy Swift seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

The meeting moved on to discussion about the Specialty Crop Block grant that will be submitted to TDA again this winter for a Texas Pecan branding project. The group also spoke about the practice audit process that Jake Montz and Patrick Dudley worked on. They reached out to the American Pecan Council to get a template for the audit. They will present their findings at the March meeting for a vote.

The next agenda item was for the TPB elections. Blair Krebs noted that nomination forms had been sent out and the calendar is set with TDA for the procedure. Rodney Myers, Jennifer Ivey, and Troy Swift's seats are up for election. Nominations are due September 30th and the ballots will be mailed out by October 15th and due November 15th.

The board then moved to the discussion on additional counties to monitor if pecan weevil is present, like the actions taken in Pecos County. After the last meeting Zachary Swick and Blair Krebs worked with the County Agent in Reeves County, Mickey Harris. She has been sent all the necessary tools, but the weevil monitoring season had passed, so she will get started next year and can work with Texas AgriLife Entomologist, Kyle Slusher, on the findings. There was also a little discussion on the \$60,000 in funding coming from the New Mexico Department of Agriculture into TPB, which will soon be sent to the ARS team researching pecan weevil.

Invited guest, Dr. Kyle Slusher, a Texas AgriLife entomologist based out of Stephenville, gave a presentation on his background, projects, and needs for future research and extension work. Much of the discussion focused on his work and possible research plots. The board asked that he keep us updated on the needs of his program.

There was a discussion continued from last meeting about ethylene use in pecans, which could possibly help to ripen pecans and reduce issues with sprouting. Zachary Swick noted there are current efforts to get the product approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for use on pecans, since it is already used on walnuts and macadamias. Zachary Swick made the motion to have the organization write support letters for the efforts of getting the label approved for pecans on this ethylene product. Troy Swift seconded the motion, all voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Some of the last topics for the meeting were to input for the Texas Pecan Innovation Center, which was established with a grant by the Texas Pecan Growers Association. Invited guest and Tarleton professor, Dr. Jean Lonie, and Blair Krebs updated the group on the activities. Krebs also asked for input on research priorities for the American Pecan Council and the American Pecan Promotion Board, particularly in regards to product development and nutrition studies. The groups had asked us for input to bring back to them at the next meeting of the industry's pecan groups.

The board then planned for the next board meeting, which will be held in March in College Station, Texas. New board members will be seated at that time.

With no further business, Troy Swift made the motion to adjourn the meeting, Zachary Swick seconded the motion, all voted in favor, and the meeting was adjourned about 3:53 P.M. CST.

Respectfully submitted,

Blair Krebs