

**MINUTES OF THE 392<sup>nd</sup> COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Texas Animal Health Commission**  
**June 9, 2015**

The TAHC Commissioners met in the agency's headquarters in Austin on Tuesday, June 9, 2015. Chairman Ernie Morales began the meeting at 8:35 a.m.

**Item 1 – Welcome and Call to order by Chairman Morales**

Commissioners Brandon Bouma, William Edmiston, DVM, Thomas Oates, Beau White, and Jay Winter were not present.

**Item 2 – Approval of the minutes of the 391<sup>st</sup> Meeting**

A motion to APPROVE the minutes of the 391<sup>st</sup> Commission meeting held on January 27, 2015, was made by Commissioner Leathers and seconded by Commissioner Kezar. The motion carried.

**Item 3 – Report of the Executive Director, Field Animal Health Program Activities and Approval of Waiver Requests for the Period 1/28/2015 to 6/9/2015**

Dr. Ellis presented the agency overview:

- **Agency Business**
  - Legislative Session
    - Thanks to Commissioners, Stakeholders and key staff
    - 2 budget bills and EIA Lab bill not yet signed by Governor
    - Overall – agency messages on border security well received, Fever tick, feral swine and Dairy Tb problems generated support
    - As soon as budget is signed agency staff will begin transition strategies
    - Continue to rebuild from 2011 layoffs – add border region, trucks, equipment & people
    - Mary will have more info
- **Rules for Passage**
  - Authorized Personnel - CWD collection
  - Feral swine – change feral swine holding facility requirement from double fence to one good fence
  - Equine – Change interstate cvi validity from 45 to 30 days
- **Rules for Proposal**
  - Cattle Fever Tick – Commission approved ID in all quarantine zones
  - Entry Requirements
    - Trich virgin bull status up to 18 months from 12
    - Shortened cvi validity for animals from VS affected states to 14 days
  - Trichomoniasis
    - Require testing of fence line adjacent
    - Trich virgin status lowered from 24 to 18 for instate breeding bull change of ownership
- **Mexico-US Bi-National TB, Brucellosis, Fever Tick working group**
  - Met in February in San Antonio with NCBA – Dr. Ellis represented
  - Met in May in Vera Cruz with CNOG – Dr. Schwartz represented
  - Issues
    - Mexico state regionalization

- Continued violence in some states
- Dr. Miller going to Durango in July
- M-brand use for imports under evaluation
- Coahuila April review report pending
  - “Paper” review due to safety issues
  - USDA transparency on review dates and findings to be resolved
- Future of committee
  - Industry commitment and participation?
  - New facilitator/leadership
  - TAHC committed to continued involvement
- **Trichomoniasis**
  - Spring meeting held in April – following issues covered
    - Recommendations listed above as new rule proposals
    - Harmonization efforts – 60 day test, PCR accepted, 18 mo virgins
    - TAHC will support TAMU research initiatives – vaccine & collection studies – help pay feed costs?
    - TAHC lab will have capacity to run PCR tests soon for programmatic work – adjacents? Bulls with conflicting tests?
    - Decision to continue to exempt bison from all testing
    - Decision not to allow reactor bulls to go to feedlots
    - Decision not to address female cattle in program at this time
- **Equine Piroplasmiasis**
  - Brooks county test – basically complete – no reactors!
  - Next county – lower Jim Wells, Willacy or Cameron?
- **Vesicular Stomatitis**
  - New 2015 cases in Pecos and Reeves county released
  - New protocol as a result of national working group; shorter quarantine time (14days), shortened cvi for entry (rule proposal)
  - TAHC State-Federal lab has applied to run VS tests for program work
- **Cattle Fever Ticks**
  - Vaccine – Final field study to be submitted to USDA Center for Veterinary Biologics this week – vaccine available by this fall?
  - Cameron County Temporary Quarantine Zone
    - Outstanding issues;
      - Sustainability of efforts – expanded systematic vs. Temp zone ?
      - Wildlife Treatment
        - white tail deer and nilgai
        - continued dialogue with US Fish & Wildlife needed
      - USDA cooperative received for \$350,000
      - Willacy county expansion – continue to evaluate
      - Individual herd owner issues – public meeting in August
      - Research needed on nilgai
        - Partnership with USDA ARS/VS, East Foundation, & TAMU-Kingsville (powerpoint at end of presentation)
      - Traceouts/Updates – Dr. Schwartz will have more info
  - CFTEP program leadership
    - Ed Bowers retired after 45 years – Texas Director vacant

- Matt Messenger transferred within USDA – National Director vacant
- 9 of 60 mounted patrol officers vacant
- 3 county supervisors new/terms newly hired – training/supervision concerns
- USDA hiring mechanism extremely slow
- **Tuberculosis**
  - 2 infected dairies in Castro county
    - Highly infected dairy to be depopulated in July with USDA funds
    - 2nd dairy could be released in early 2016 if no more reactors found
    - Many traces pending
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> infected dairy not yet found – traces?
  - Indemnity issues for high quality cattle and organic cattle slow process
  - Average size of dairies continues to climb
- **Avian Influenza**
  - Texas not affected yet - upper Midwest hit hard
  - High mortality in turkeys and chickens
  - Wild bird and point source exposures both occurring
  - Migratory flyways in fall are of concern
  - Biosecurity and outreach key for now
  - Response plans discussed with industry in April in College Station
  - Interstate entry movement permits processed in high volume for birds and products
  - USDA staff continuously detailed for 3 week rotations affecting all Texas partnership programs
  - Dr. Schwartz will have more info
- **Summer Activities**
  - Many state stakeholder meetings – presentations and booths
  - Western and Southern Animal Health Association meetings
  - USDA–COPEG Screwworm International Strategy meeting in Panama
  - Panhandle dairy test next week
  - 2 Incident Commander rotations in Brownsville
- **Waiver Report**
  - 6 waivers requested and 6 approved;
    - Brucellosis - **Approved** - allowed import of bongo from Denver zoo with 60 day negative test due to shipping delay.
    - Trichomoniasis - **Approved** – allowed bulls to enter from Oklahoma with test done upon arrival, and held under hold until results finalized
    - Trichomoniasis - **Approved** – allowed bulls to enter from Florida with test done upon arrival, and held under hold until results finalized
    - Trichomoniasis - **Approved** – allowed bulls to enter from Kansas with test done upon arrival and held under hold until results finalized
    - Trichomoniasis – **Approved** – allowed bulls to enter with trich tests performed but tests still pending and to be held until results off
    - Avian Influenza – **Approved** – allowed birds to enter with 96 hour negative test instead of 72 due to lab and trucking issues. Was instructed the waiver would not be granted for future loads.

A motion to APPROVE the actions of the Executive Director for the period from January 27, 2015 through June 8, 2015 was made by Commissioner Locke and seconded by Commissioner Jordan. The motion carried.

#### **Item 4 – Presentation of Legislative Update**

Mary Luedeker gave an update on legislative issues.

#### **Item 5 – Presentation of Animal Health Program, Epidemiology, and Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) Activities**

Dr. Andy Schwartz, Assistant Executive Director/State Epidemiologist, presented the following report:

##### **Cattle**

- **Tuberculosis**

**2013:** 15 cases of Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) were disclosed in Texas through slaughter  
-13 cases involved Mexico origin feeder animals  
- 1 steer, origin undetermined due to lack of records and ID  
- 1 U.S. origin cow, extensive tracing and testing did not disclose the source herd

**2014-2015 to date:**

-1 Mexico origin feeder case, in consignment of 1300 hd.  
-1 Texas origin dairy cow at slaughter, disclosed 2 large affected dairies – same owner

Herd #1: Established in 2003 from California and Texas sources

- Nov. 2014: 10,316 tested, 520 CFT responders, TB confirmed in 160
- Feb. 2015: 9,045 tested, approx. 900 CFT responders, 150 confirmed
- USDA Risk Model, to achieve 95% confidence interval at <5% prevalence, calls for 18 removal tests at 60 day intervals
- Herd Plan – depopulate with indemnity

Herd #2: Established in 2009 from same herd in California, and from Herd #1

- Nov. 2014: 11,767 tested, 51 CFT responders, 1 confirmed with TB
- Feb. 2015: 11,000 tested, 76 CFT responders, none confirmed with TB
- Apr. 2015: 11,000 tested, 27 CFT responders, awaiting appraisal
- USDA Risk Model calls for 4 removal tests.
- Herd Plan: Complete 4 removal tests, an assurance test in 6 mo. for release, then 5 annual tests after release

-Possible Affected Herd #3 unrelated to Herds 1&2? Five dairy steers confirmed at slaughter, 4 lots from two feed yards over a 5 mo. period

- Ear tags, records indicate possible source as two organic dairies under same owner
- Genetic sequencing of all 5 isolates match, but differ from dairy strain
- Initial herd test Apr. 2015: 5500 cows in milking string tested, 56 CFT responders

- Some heifers tested May 2015: 3322 tested, 28 CFT responders
  - More heifers on wheat pasture – testing delayed by rain
  - Further diagnostics pending appraisal and indemnity
  - 8 other potential source herds for the 5 steers have been or will be tested
- **Brucellosis**  
In Calendar Year 2015 a total of 24 investigations for brucellosis in cattle have been initiated. The bulk of these investigations have been initiated through slaughter surveillance (samples collected at two large Texas plants). While no *B. abortus* infected cattle herds have been detected in Texas since 2011, cases of *B. suis* in cattle (from feral swine exposure) are found with some regularity.
  - **Trichomoniasis:** In CY 2015 there have been 219 positive bulls found in 14,193 tests (1.5% test positive). In CY 2014 the test positive percentage was approximately 2.45%.
  - **Cattle Fever Tick:** The Temporary Preventive Quarantine Area, or “Blanket Quarantine”, covers approximately 220,000 acres in Cameron County. Currently 21 premises are under quarantine for fever ticks in Cameron (17) and Willacy (4) counties, outside the permanent quarantine zone. Six of these premises are wildlife only, with infested nilgai antelope or white-tailed deer, or both. The remaining 15 premises have or have had cattle, and were found infested through self-reporting or through surveillance efforts of the TAHC and USDA.

#### Swine

- **Brucellosis:** No infected herds have been disclosed in CY 2015 to date.
- **Pseudorabies (PRV):** Two infected herds have been disclosed in CY 2015 so far, including one under active investigation.
- **Swine Enteric Coronavirus Diseases (SECD):** Federal Order on reporting, herd monitoring, and management of Novel Swine Enteric Coronavirus Diseases was published in June 2014. In the first three months of 2015, a total of 55 positive SECD tests have been reported, and one new affected premises disclosed in Texas. TAHC personnel provide disease consultation and assure herd management plans are developed.

#### Equine

- **Equine Piroplasmiasis (EP):** There have been no new infected horses detected so far in CY 2015. Since 2009, a total of 118 positive horses have been found in Texas unrelated to the initial ranch investigation. High-risk testing of all horses in Brooks County essentially finished. In total 689 horses on 197 premises were tested, all with negative results.
- **Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA):** In CY 2015, there have been two positive equine disclosed in 70,091 animals tested in Texas.
- **2015 Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV) outbreak:** VSV was diagnosed in horses on two Texas premises in May 2015, in Pecos and Reeves counties. Modified procedures developed after the extensive 2014 outbreak in Colorado and Texas allow for the release of movement restrictions in 14 days if no new cases develop. Both premises in Texas

have been released. Other states reporting VSV this year are Utah (1 case), New Mexico (3 cases), and Arizona (13 cases).

### **Poultry**

- **Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI):** No cases of HPAI have been detected in Texas – commercial and backyard producers have been put on alert to step up biosecurity due the massive outbreak in the US. Texas entry requirements were made more stringent to guard against incursion from HPAI affected states.

The current US outbreak started in December 2014 in the northwest, and has since affected poultry operations in 20 states. Approximately 7% of the US turkey inventory and 10% of the US layer inventory has been depopulated in an attempt to control the outbreak. Current US policy – vaccine will not be used due to effect on international trade. No human illness has been associated with the current outbreak.

### **Cervids**

- Joint TAHC-TPWD CWD Taskforce meeting held in April 2015
- Concerns regarding official identification requirements in the Texas CWD Herd Certification Program

### **Animal Disease Traceability Activities**

#### **Projects**

- Procedure being developed for approval of new eCVI providers
- Purchasing yearly subscription to Statevet.com
- Posting Texas entry requirements on GlobalVetLINK web site
- Ultra-high Frequency (UHF) tagging project with feeder industry

#### **Approved Tagging Facilities:**

TAHC and USDA-APHIS-VS field continue meeting with livestock market, feed yard and slaughter plant owners to discuss ADT requirements and voluntarily becoming approved tagging facilities. To date 80 markets (one new since January 2015) and 13 feed yard or buying station facilities have signed agreements. Efforts to distribute free metal tags continue through agency staff and industry partners (AgriLife Extension Offices and veterinarians).

### **Item 6 – Presentation of USDA Veterinary Services Update**

Dr. Hallie Hasel presented the USDA, Veterinary Services report which included a summary of USDA, VS activities in response to the nationwide outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza.

### **Item 7 – Audit Subcommittee report**

Commissioner Ralph Simmons gave the report from the Audit Subcommittee meeting that was held earlier that morning:

1. The committee approved the Region 7 follow-up audit findings.
2. The committee reviewed the Program Records audit findings.

A motion to APPROVE the actions of the Audit Subcommittee Meeting was made by Commissioner Jordan and seconded by Commissioner Locke. The motion carried.

### **Item 8 – Authorized Personnel update**

Dr. Culp gave the Authorized Personnel Update:

- **Veterinary Authorized Personnel**
  - Continue to receive applications from TAHC Brucellosis Approved Personnel to transition them into the new TAHC Authorized Personnel Program. Veterinarians must sign and return the applications to be considered TAHC Authorized Personnel.
  - Continue to receive new applications from USDA Category II Accredited veterinarians not previously in the TAHC Brucellosis Approved Personnel. These are veterinarians new to the program.
  - Starting to receive new applications from May 2015 TAMU CVM Graduates who trained while in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the TAMU CVM curriculum.
  - TAHC Authorized Personnel Training (4 hour basic course) was offered in the Austin TAHC office on March 4, 2015 and again on April 28, 2015.
  - TAHC Authorized Personnel Training (4 hour basic course), CWD Training (1.5 hours) and Bovine Trichomoniasis Certification (1.5 hours) will be offered at Southwest Veterinary Symposium on September 26, 2015 in Fort Worth.
  - TAMU CVM vet student third year regulatory training is scheduled for August, September and November 2015 for the TAMU CVM Class of 2017. Each class is trained in three groups in both classroom and wet lab settings. This will allow students to be TAHC Authorized Personnel upon graduation.
- **Cervid Authorized Personnel**
  - Ms. Laura Guerra, TAHC Authorized Personnel Program Specialist offered two additional Certified CWD Sample Collector classes in February and April 2015.
  - To date we have offered 9 Certified CWD Sample Collector Training opportunities (**total of 215 attendees trained**):
    - July 10, 2014 – 7 trained at in TAHC Region 2
    - August 20, 2014 – 21 USDA/TAHC personnel trained
    - September 4, 2014 – 20 trained in TAHC Region 5
    - October 9, 2014 - 25 trained in TAHC Region 3
    - October 14, 2014 - 12 trained in TAHC Region 4
    - October 23, 2014 - 39 trained in TAHC Region 7
    - October 28, 2014 - 15 trained in TAHC Region 3
    - October 30, 2014 - 30 trained in TAHC Region 7
    - January 22, 2015 - 16 trained in TAHC Region 5
    - February 26, 2015 – 18 trained in TAHC Region 3
    - April 30, 2015 – 12 trained in TAHC Region 7
- **Additional Training Programs**
  - TAMU CVM 4VM
    - Bryan Agado in TAHC Region 5, June 22-July 3, 2015
    - Sarah Genzer for 4 week externship in February or March, 2016

- TAMU CVM
  - Laura Perez, TAMU CVM Class of 2017 – 4 week internship in July, 2015
- Texas A&M Kingsville – USDA STEP UP TO CAREERS Program
  - Rebeca Vela – 10 week internship in TAHC Region 5
  - Juan Casarez – 10 week internship in TAHC Region 5
- **Other Authorized Personnel Department Updates**
  - Development of all TAHC infrastructure (creation of new interactive database, web content, intranet content, and associated policies and procedures) to support the TAHC Authorized Personnel Program (TAPP). TAPP personnel worked closely with the TAHC Development Team in this process.
  - Development of all TAHC infrastructure (new data capture process, integration of data into the new TAPP software, veterinary notification process, and associated policies and procedures) to support the TAHC Disapproved CVI Program (Certificates of Veterinary Inspection issued on Texas animals by Texas licensed, Accredited Veterinarians on animals moving out of state). TAPP personnel worked closely with the TAHC Development Team in this process.
  - Development of all TAHC infrastructure (formal data capture process, integration of data into the new TAPP software, creation of formal meeting process, and associated policies and procedures) to support the new TAHC Authorized Personnel Compliance Review Committee. This committee is responsible for the enforcement of Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 47, Authorized Personnel.

### **Item 9 – Presentation of Communication Initiatives**

Callie McNulty and Thomas Swafford provide the Communications Report:

#### **News Releases**

- Array of news releases distributed since last commission meeting
- Included in Commission Book

#### **Exhibits**

- Past and upcoming events

#### **Media Interviews**

- Several media interviews (print, radio and TV)
  - Miscellaneous – see included list of media interviews

#### **Social Media Platforms**

- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube
- Examples of interaction included in Commission Book

#### **Videos:**

- Statistics
- Cameron County fever tick response effort video

### **Item 10 – Presentation of Laboratory Update**



Dr. Hughes-Garza Staff Veterinarian and Lab Director presented the following:

**Texas State-Federal Laboratory Update June 2015**

- We continue to experience high sample volume for bovine tuberculosis testing. We are working with several companies and USDA on possible future test methods, which may improve sensitivity and/or convenience. Our staff has processed TB samples on numerous weekends over the last 6 months to support the larger herd tests being conducted in the Panhandle. They also tested samples over Memorial Day weekend, to assist a producer needing to move cattle quickly due to flooding from the severe weather event. The ongoing level of professionalism and dedication shown by our lab staff in this regard is truly appreciated.
- Our lab is in the process of gaining approval from USDA to run Complement Fixation and PCR tests for equine vesicular stomatitis. This would allow our lab to be activated to assist with testing during an outbreak. All routine export testing for VS would still be performed at TVMDL in College Station.
- Welcome to our new Quality Assurance Manager, Ms. Beckie Beam. Beckie comes to TAHC with a degree in microbiology and experience in quality assurance in several manufacturing industries. We are excited to have her join our team!

**Sample Volume, January - April 2015**

	<b>Samples Received</b>
<b>Brucellosis - Bovine</b>	
Slaughter blood	233,972
Market blood	18,748
Other blood samples	13,789
Milk testing	163
Culture	4
<b>Brucellosis - Swine</b>	2,361
<b>Pseudorabies</b>	2,357
<b>Equine Infectious Anemia</b>	37
<b>Tuberculosis - Bovine</b>	2,033
<b>Ectoparasite Identification</b>	426

**Item 11 - Presentation of Emergency Management Program Activities**

The Emergency Management Update was presented by Mr. Jeff Turner, Emergency Management Coordinator:

**Planning and Exercise Activities:**

- Formerly called the Foreign and Emerging Animal Disease Plan, or FEAD, Emergency Management staff is in the reviewing and making adjustments to the Animal Disease Response Plan. This revision consisted of up updating information such as response

methods and procedures as well as technical formatting to better follow state guidelines for written plans. It also required a coordinated effort with industry partners, TAHC subject matter experts, and state emergency management to accomplish.

- Following many years of support and participation in the Regional Resiliency Assessment Project (RRAP) conducted in the Panhandle to assess the impact of FMD in that region as well as response coordination within the state structure, TAHC assisted in the development of a table top exercise this past month. The Exercise, when conducted, will focus on the coordination of all levels of resources (federal, state, and local) in response to an FMD outbreak.
- In April, TAHC attended the Texas Broiler Symposium and participated in a table top exercise to test and review the Avian Influenza plans for the State of Texas and the Poultry Industry. This was a timely effort in light of the HPAI affecting many other states.

#### **Response Activities:**

- Since May, monitoring, responding to, and assisting local jurisdictions affected by the severe weather that affected much of the state has been a priority for Emergency Management and TAHC field staff. Personnel have conducted animal needs assessments from north Texas all the way to the coast to support Texas livestock producers and the industry. This included assisting local producers who had livestock caught in the flooding, helping jurisdictions locate resources needed to support displaced people and animals, and assessing local veterinarians to ensure they could stay running and operational in order to support their communities. TAHC personnel also staffed the State Operations Center and various Disaster District Committees across the state.

#### **Item 12 – Administration/Budget Status Report**

Mr. Steven Luna, Director of Finance, gave a report on the agency's budget status:

#### **Appropriations/Budget**

- Status of HB 1 (2016-17 Biennium) and HB 2 (Supplemental funding for FY 2015)
  - Status – House, Senate, & Governor approved; sent to Comptroller for validation
- General Revenue (GR) appropriations:
  - These totals are not contingent on revenue generated by fees approved by the Commission
  - State FY 2015
    - The TAHC is appropriated \$8.1M for State FY 2015
      - Approximately \$500K was moved forward from FY 2014 to FY 2015
      - This is per the General Appropriations Act, TAHC Rider 3 – Unexpended Balance Authority
  - State FY 2016
    - The TAHC is appropriated \$10.9M for State FY 2016
  - State FY 2017

- The TAHC is appropriated \$10.1M for State FY 2017
- Federal Funds and Grants (Federal Fiscal Year runs April 1 to March 31)
  - State FY 2015
    - Federal FY 2014 funds to be available to the TAHC total \$2.1M
  - State FY 2016
    - Estimated Federal FY 2015 funds to be available to the TAHC total \$2.1M
      - This includes a \$325K Cattle Fever Tick – Cameron County cooperative recently entered into
- Capital Budget Funding
  - State FY 2015
    - Out of the \$8.1M appropriated in GR for State FY 2015, \$300K is set aside for Capital Budget Purchases. The agency is restricted to the following Capital Budget Purchases:
      - \$150K towards Fleet Vehicles, will be completely allocated towards the acquisition of trucks
      - \$150K towards the Acquisition of Information Resource Technologies, will be completely allocated towards the acquisition of hardware/software and towards annual licensing renewals
  - State FY 2016
    - Out of the \$10.9M appropriated in GR for State FY 2016, \$411K is set aside for Capital Budget Purchases. The agency is restricted to the following Capital Budget Purchases:
      - \$261K towards Fleet Vehicles, will be completely allocated towards the acquisition of trucks
      - \$150K towards the Acquisition of Information Resource Technologies, will be completely allocated towards the acquisition of hardware/software and towards annual licensing renewals
        - \$86K Licensing Renewals
        - \$64K Computer/Laptop Replacements
  - State FY 2017
    - Out of the \$10.1M appropriated in GR for State FY 2017, \$411K is set aside for Capital Budget Purchases. The agency is restricted to the following Capital Budget Purchases:
      - \$261K towards Fleet Vehicles, will be completely allocated towards the acquisition of trucks
      - \$150K towards the Acquisition of Information Resource Technologies, will be completely allocated towards the acquisition of hardware/software and towards annual licensing renewals
        - \$86K Licensing Renewals
        - \$64K Computer/Laptop Replacements
- Supplemental GR Funding

- HB 2
  - Section 24 – Cattle TB
    - \$188,736 for FY 2015
    - For the purpose of combatting cattle tuberculosis
  - Section 25 – Cattle Fever Tick Quarantine
    - \$601,111 for FY 2015
    - For the purpose of instituting a quarantine zone for cattle fever ticks
  - Total Appropriated - \$789,847

### **Revenues**

- State FY 2015
  - Fee Revenue is estimated to be approximately \$697K.
  - TAHC Portion - \$431K
    - YTD - \$399K
  - State Portion - \$265K
    - YTD - \$164K
- State FY 2016 & 2017
  - Fee Revenue is estimated per year to be approximately \$512K.
    - TAHC Portion - \$424K
    - State Portion \$87K

### **Full Time Equivalent Employees (FTEs):**

- State FY 2015
  - The TAHC is appropriated 161 FTE's
  - The TAHC for FY 2014 started out with 123.5 filled FTEs and ended with 148 FTEs – 19.8% Increase
  - The TAHC currently has 153.5 FTE's
    - The TAHC is currently in the process of filling or has filled 2 additional FTEs as it strives to fill positions vacated due to mandated legislative reductions leading to reductions in force, attrition, two laboratory closures, and consolidation of two regional offices
- State FY 2016
  - The TAHC is appropriated 183.2 FTE's
- State FY 2017
  - The TAHC is appropriated 184.2 FTE's

### **Additional Appropriations:**

- State FY 2016 & FY 2017
  - CAPPs (Centralized Accounting & Payroll/Personnel Systems) deployment
  - The TAHC is appropriated 1 FTE
  - \$41K

### **Session Results**

- Legislative Requests Realized

- Submitted
  - Feral Swine – 4 FTE’s; approximately \$600K (Biennium)
  - Executive Director Salary Equity – increase cap to \$136.9K and \$6.6K GR (Biennium)
  - ProjectONE/CAPPS – 1 FTE; approximately \$82K (Biennium)
  - Fee Revenue –revenue from Health Certificates and Fowl Registration; estimate \$424K
  - Border Security Animal Health
    - One new region
    - 23 FTE’s
    - \$4M (Biennium)
      - FY 2016 \$2.4M
      - FY 2017 \$1.6M
- Capital Budget Authority
  - \$223K (Biennium)
  - On top of existing capital budget authority

A motion to APPROVE the Administration/Budget Status Report was made by Commissioner Vickers and seconded by Commissioner Kezar. The motion carried.

### **Item 13 – Consideration of and Possible Action on Agency Contracts and Purchases**

Larissa Schmidt presented contracts and purchases for the consideration of the commissioners.

- Introduction of the new Information Technology director, Louise Abbott.

A motion to APPROVE the contracts and purchases request was made by Commissioner Simmons and seconded by Commissioner Locke. The motion carried.

### **Item 14 – Presentation of Legal & Compliance Activities**

Gene Snelson, General Counsel, started with a presentation of Legal and Compliance activities:

#### **Compliance Action Requests**

- Received 74 from 1/1/15 to 5/31/15
- Sent 57 warning/demand letters for no dairy ID, no TB test/CVI/Trich test/ID on out of state cattle, no CVI on out of state swine, no EIA test, failure to stop at inspection station, violation of hold order, and incomplete CVI

#### **Investigations**

- Conducted 88 from 1/1/15 to 5/31/15

#### **Complaints**

- Filed 153 from 1/1/15 to 5/31/15 for cattle and equine entry violations/no CVI, TB test, EIA test, no EIA and Piro test at equine event, selling equine without EIA test, and failure to stop at inspection station; fines paid in the amount of \$38,212

**Administrative Penalty**

- None assessed since last Commission meeting

**Item 15 – Consideration of and Possible Action on REGULATION PROPOSALS**

Gene Snelson then discussed the following REGULATION PROPOSALS:

Each Regulation Proposal was reviewed and voted on individually.

- (a) Chapter 38, Trichomoniasis , Testing Exposed/Infected Bulls
  - (b) Chapter 41, Fever Ticks, ID Requirements in Quarantined Areas
  - (c) Chapter 51, Entry Requirements, Vesicular Stomatitis & Trichomoniasis
- (a) The Texas Animal Health Commission (commission) proposes amendments to §38.1, concerning Definitions, and §38.3, concerning Infected Herds in Chapter 38, which is entitled “Trichomoniasis.” The Purpose of the amendments is to make changes to the Trichomoniasis testing requirements.

The amendments revise the current rule to add testing requirements for bulls located in adjacent pastures to property where Trichomoniasis (Trich) infected male or female cattle are or were located. This proposed amendment to §38.3 originated with Trichomoniasis Working Group recommendations. Under the proposal, where any positive cattle are located on property that is fence line adjacent to bulls, those bulls on the adjacent property must be officially tested for Trich. The testing is required if the Trich infected cattle were located in fence line adjacent pastures within 30 days of the initial positive test. The commission will provide written notification to the owner or caretaker of the bulls specifying the timeframe for testing. The commission may waive this testing requirement if the commission’s epidemiological investigation shows that testing is not required.

Commissioner Vickers moved and Commissioner Locke seconded a motion to PROPOSE the amendments to Chapter 38, Trichomoniasis, located in Title 4 of the Texas Administrative Code. The motion to approve the proposed amendment and to publish it in the Texas Register with a 30 day comment period passed.

- (b) The Texas Animal Health Commission (commission) proposes amendments to §41.6, concerning Restrictions on Movement of Livestock, and §41.9, concerning Vacation and Inspection of a Premise, in Chapter 41, which is entitled “Fever Ticks”. The purpose of the amendments is add a requirement that all livestock on or moved from a control purpose quarantine area, temporary preventative quarantine area or tick eradication quarantine area, as defined by §41.4, be identified with permanent official identification.

The purpose of the Texas Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program is to eradicate the Fever Tick through the management of a permanent quarantine zone, as well as temporary

quarantine areas created to address the presence of ticks outside the permanent zone. To be more effective in the efforts to eradicate Fever Ticks, the commission adopted requirements that went into effect on June 12, 2013, which require permanent and official identification of all livestock maintained in the permanent quarantine zone.

Commissioner Locke moved and Commissioner Kezar seconded a motion to PROPOSE the amendments to Chapter 41, Fever Ticks, located in Title 4 of the Texas Administrative Code. The motion to approve the proposed amendment and to publish it in the Texas Register with a 30 day comment period passed.

- (c) The Texas Animal Health Commission (commission) proposes amendments to §51.7, concerning All Livestock - Special Requirements, and §51.8, concerning Cattle, in Chapter 51, which is entitled "Entry Requirements". The purpose of the amendments is to change the timeframe that Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) are valid for specific animals from states that have been affected with Vesicular Stomatitis (VS). Also, the commission is changing the age for breeding bulls that need a Bovine Trichomoniasis (Trich) test to enter the state.

The commission is proposing to reduce the validity of the timeframe from 30 days to 14 days for CVIs issued for any equine, bovine, porcine, caprine, ovine, or cervidae that originate from a state affected with VS. This is to provide greater protection for Texas animals. With the recent spread of VS in Texas and other states, this ensures that a Veterinarian has seen the animals within 14 days of issuance of the CVI and provides the commission with greater confidence that the animals do not show signs of VS. This requirement will remain in effect until the affected state has released the last quarantine or restrictions on premises and animals affected with VS.

Bovine Trich is a venereal disease of cattle. The commission has a Trich disease control program which currently requires that all breeding bulls entering Texas have a Trich test if they are older than 12 months of age and older and do not qualify for an exception. The commission is adding a Trich testing exception for bulls that are 18 months of age or younger if the bull is accompanied by a state issued breeder's certificate of virgin status, and a certificate of veterinary inspection, which certify the bull's virgin status. The purpose of this exception is to harmonize standards with a majority of the states that have Trich test requirements for entry into their respective states, making it less confusing for producers to move cattle interstate.

Commissioner Vickers moved and Commissioner E. White seconded a motion to PROPOSE the amendments to Chapter 51, Entry Requirements, located in Title 4 of the Texas Administrative Code. The motion to approve the proposed amendment and to publish it in the Texas Register with a 30 day comment period passed.

#### **Item 16 – Consideration of and Possible Action on REGULATION ADOPTIONS**

Gene Snelson then discussed the following REGULATION ADOPTIONS:

Each Regulation Adoption was reviewed and voted on individually.

- (a) Chapter 47, Authorized Personnel, CWD
- (b) Chapter 51, Entry Requirements, Equine Health Certificates
- (c) Chapter 55, Feral Swine, Holding Facility Requirements

- (a) The Texas Animal Health Commission (commission) adopted a new §47.21, concerning Definitions, §47.22, concerning General Requirements and Application Procedures, and §47.23, concerning Duration and Additional Training Requirements, in Chapter 47, which is entitled “Authorized Personnel.” The purpose of the new rules is to create requirements for persons authorized to perform certain activities related to Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). The commission published the proposal for comment in the February 20, 2015, issue of the Texas Register (Vol. 40, No. 8, pages 753-866). The commission received one comment on the proposal.

Section 161.047 of the Texas Agriculture Code requires a person, including a veterinarian, to be authorized by the commission in order to engage in an activity that is part of a state or federal disease control or eradication program for animals. In addition to the brucellosis program, existing disease control or eradication programs include, but are not limited to, tuberculosis, Trichomoniasis, Piroplasmosis, equine infectious anemia, chronic wasting disease, pseudorabies, and scrapie.

The new Subchapter C, which is entitled “Chronic Wasting Disease” includes standards and requirements for persons authorized by the commission to perform work as a Certified CWD Sample Collector. The provisions also establish application, training and recordkeeping requirements. A Certified CWD Sample Collector is an individual who has completed commission provided or approved training on the collection and preservation of samples for CWD testing and on proper recordkeeping, and who has been authorized to perform these activities by the commission.

A motion to ADOPT the amendment to Chapter 47, Authorized Personnel, located in Title 4 of the Texas Administrative Code was made by Commissioner Locke and seconded by Commissioner Leathers. The motion carried.

- (b) The Texas Animal Health Commission (commission) adopted amendments to §51.1, concerning Definitions, and §51.2, concerning General Requirements, in Chapter 51, which is entitled “Entry Requirements”. The purpose of the amendments was to shorten the length of time that Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) are valid from 45 days to 30 days maximum for equine entering the state and to correct language regarding exceptions to entry permits and CVI requirements. The commission published the proposal for comment in March 6, 2015, issue of the Texas Register (Vol. 40, No. 10, pages 983-1152). The commission received one comment on the proposal.

The change will bring commission rules into compliance with Title 9, Code of Federal Regulations §161.4(b), which states in part that “certificates, forms, records, and reports shall be valid for 30 days following the date of inspection of the animal identified on the document,...”.



A shorter validity timeframe for CVIs issued on equine entering Texas will better protect the Texas equine population from the introduction of the above mentioned diseases as well as other traditional and emerging diseases, bring Texas into compliance with the federal regulations regarding the validity of certificates issued by accredited veterinarians, and also make the Texas CVI entry requirements consistent with all other state CVI timeframes.

A motion to ADOPT the amendment to Chapter 51, Entry Requirements, located in Title 4 of the Texas Administrative Code was made by Commissioner Leathers and seconded by Commissioner Kezar. The motion carried.

- (c) The Texas Animal Health Commission (commission) adopted amendments to §55.9, concerning Feral Swine, in Chapter 55, which is entitled “Swine”. The purpose of the amendments was to change the fence and movement requirements for feral swine authorized holding facilities. The commission published the proposal for comment in the February 20, 2015, issue of the Texas Register (Vol. 40, No. 8, pages 753-866). The commission received one comment on the proposal and a change was made in response to the comment.

An authorized feral swine holding facility has historically required two fences with four feet of separation. The primary purpose was to prevent contact with other livestock and wildlife species. With the overall prevalence of feral swine and limited contact opportunities for domestic swine in this situation, the requirement is no longer pragmatic. A proper holding facility for feral swine capable of preventing any feral swine from escaping can be constructed using one fence. This standard allows for facilities to be authorized with the purpose of trying to control the feral swine population in the state. Also, the commission is adding an additional authorized movement of feral swine as being from an approved holding facility to another approved holding facility. This is to recognize movements that may commonly take place between authorized holding facilities before feral swine are shipped to slaughter.

A motion to ADOPT the amendment to Chapter 55, Swine, located in Title 4 of the Texas Administrative Code was made by Commissioner Vickers and seconded by Commissioner Jordan. The motion carried.

### **Item 17 – Public Comment**

There was no additional public comment heard at this time.

Recognition of Awards for years of service was conducted at this time. There were three TAHC employees honored at this commission meeting.

- Bruce Chandler, Region 7 Inspector, 30 years of service
- Dr. Andy Schwartz, State Epidemiologist, 25 years of service
- Dr. Dee Ellis, State Veterinarian, 30 years of service

**Item 18 – Closed executive session to discuss the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of specific commission employees as permitted by section 551.074 of the Texas Government Code.**

The closed session was not required at this meeting of the Commissioners.

**Item 19 – Consideration of any Action Needed Following Closed Executive Session**

The motion was made to APPROVE a salary increase for the Executive Director made by Commissioner Locke and seconded by Commissioner Vickers. The motion carried.

**Item 20 – Set Date for 393rd Meeting**

The date for the 393<sup>rd</sup> Commission Meeting was not set at the time of the meeting, but is tentatively scheduled for late September or October. Notice will be posted on the agency's website when the next Commission meeting date has been set.

**Item 21 – Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 p.m.