

**MINUTES OF THE 400th COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Texas Animal Health Commission**  
**April 17, 2018**

The TAHC Commissioners met in room E2.026 at the state Capitol in Austin on Tuesday, April 17, 2018. Chairman Coleman Locke began the meeting at 1:00PM.

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

Commissioners Michael Vickers, Jim Eggleston, Eric White, William Edmiston, Coleman Locke, Tommy Kezar, Joe Leathers, Ken Jordan, and Leo Vermedahl were present.

**Item 2 – Approval of the minutes of the 399<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

A motion to APPROVE the minutes of the 399<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting held on August 22, 2017, was made by Commissioner Jordan and seconded by Commissioner White. The motion carried.

**Item 3 – Report of the Executive Director, Field Animal Health Program Activities and Approval of Waiver Requests for the Period 8/22/2017 to 4/17/2018**

Dr. Schwartz presented the following:

- **Opening remarks**
  - Celebrating 125 years of service to Texas animal agriculture!
  
- **Agency Business**
  - Preparation for the 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, January-May, 2019:
    - External Customer Survey out now for two weeks
    - Base Budget Reconciliation due May 24, 2018
    - Five Year Strategic Plan due June 8, 2018
    - Legislative Appropriations Request – due date pending
  
  - Update on actions from the 85<sup>th</sup> Legislative session (2017)
    - Supplemental funding request for remainder of FY17
      - \$649,000 appropriated, fully utilized
    - Exceptional Item Requests for FY18-19 Biennium:
      - \$7.27M approved, with all but \$112,830 of this amount dedicated to Cattle Fever Tick response
      - TAHC Infrastructure – Rents and Leases for FY18-19
        - Requested \$251,635 for anticipated increase over the biennium
        - Appropriated \$100,000
        - To address this shortfall, management is striving to increase efficiency by reorganizing regions and locating offices to the most appropriate locations based on anticipated agency work activity. TAHC Regions 2 and 7 are being combined, and consideration is being given to combining Regions 3 and 6.
  
  - State hiring freeze January 31 – August 31, 2017

- As of August 31, 2017, the agency had 164.2 full time employees out of 184.2 authorized equivalents (21 vacancies)
- Strategic hiring continues to fill these vacancies, plus 36 Cattle Fever Tick positions authorized by the 85<sup>th</sup> Legislature (Total authorized FTEs = 220.2) Current FTEs = 194

○ **Emergency Management**

- Dr. Lansford will provide the agency update in his report

○ **Disease considerations**

- Fever Ticks
  - USAHA 2017 Resolutions
    - #24: Urges USDA APHIS and ARS to collaborate with Mexican Animal Health Officials to develop and implement a fever tick control program on the Mexico side of the Rio Grande to reduce the threat to the US.
    - #25: Urges that USDA and the National Assembly recognize the critical importance of developing new and innovative technologies and tools to assist in CFT eradication, and support funding efforts to achieve these objectives.
  - Panel will provide additional updates

- Trichomoniasis

A Trichomoniasis Working Group subcommittee was formed following the 2017 annual working group meeting and charged with developing recommendations concerning female cattle in affected herds. The subcommittee and subsequently the full Trichomoniasis Working Group recommended restricting movement of female cattle in affected herds while the bulls in the herd were under quarantine. This concept was shared with industry during the summer of 2017. Feedback was largely supportive of moving forward with development of requirements.

This topic was taken up during the March 20, 2018 Trichomoniasis Working Group meeting. After much discussion on the issue, the group's recommendation was to pursue an education effort on the role female cattle play in the maintenance and spread of Trich in cattle herds, in lieu of regulatory action. The LMA committed to promote this effort at member markets. The Trich Working Group received recommendations from TVMA on Best Herd Practices, and on Testing and Management of Bulls. These recommendations will be incorporated into TAHC certification and education efforts.

The Trich Working Group recommended modification of entry requirements as proposed today. Dr. Rollo will provide additional disease updates in her report

- **National Issues**

- Animal Disease Traceability (ADT)

USDA hosted nine public meetings in 2017 seeking input on ADT in the US. One of these meetings was held in Fort Worth in July, 2018.

A Strategy Forum on Livestock Traceability was held September 26-27, 2017, in Denver, CO. Summaries of issues raised during the public meetings were shared, as were the recommendations of a working group convened to consolidate outcome of the meetings. The 14 recommendations made by the working group are now available at: [https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal\\_health/adt-summary-program-review.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/adt-summary-program-review.pdf)

A Cattle Traceability Working Group was formed after this forum to develop a pathway forward for a US traceability program.

On April 10-11, 2018 NIAA hosted their annual conference in Denver focused on livestock traceability, followed by the Traceability & Real World Interactive Workshop on April 12, 2018. The Cattle Traceability Working Group gave progress reports. Commissioner Leathers presented a draft schematic and plan for a bookend traceability system for adult beef breeding cattle and all ages of dairy cattle.

- Brucellosis and Bovine Tuberculosis

A federal rule proposed in 2015 would combine Brucellosis and Bovine Tuberculosis regulations in the CFR. Comments on the proposal were predominantly against its adoption, and no regulatory action was taken after the comment period closed. USDA APHIS is now considering action, and The National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials provided a summary of its recommendations to Dr. Jack Shere on April 11, 2018.

- **Looking Forward**

- Assistant Executive Director for Animal Health Programs position filled

- **Waiver Report - August 22, 2017 to April 17, 2018**

- 13 waivers requested, 12 approved:
  - Brucellosis – **Approved** – allowed 5 day extension of brucellosis testing to allow entry of Angolan Roan Antelope into Texas from the San Diego Zoo Safari Park. Extension was requested due to a shipping delay.
  - Avian Influenza – **Approved** – allowed entry of 11 week old quail chicks without AI test. Chicks were isolated since hatching in an indoor facility, and were transported to El Paso Zoo via closed vehicle, and kept isolated until testing could be conducted by an accredited veterinarian.
  - Brucellosis – **Approved** – allowed 3 day extension of brucellosis testing to allow entry of warthogs into Texas from San Diego Zoo. Previous test was negative and animals will be moving from one zoo to another zoo environment.
  - Tuberculosis – **Approved** – allowed entry of 3 month old Muntjac to Texas without second negative TB test. Animal is bottle fed and will be kept isolated from other animals until second negative test results are received.
  - Tuberculosis and Brucellosis – **Approved** – allowed extension of TB and Brucellosis testing for Takin to enter Texas. Shipment was delayed due to weather and previous tests were negative. Re-testing poses a risk of injury to animals and handlers. Animals pose a low risk to Texas susceptible species.

- Trichomoniasis – **Approved** – allowed waiver of Trich test for virgin bulls entering Texas from a registered breeder sale. Bulls had been isolated from females from an early age for a gain test located in Texas and were isolated from females for the short period of time before sale in Oklahoma.
- Tuberculosis – **Approved** – allowed waiver of TB testing entry requirement for dairy herd to enter Texas. Animals were not changing ownership and Texas facilities were superior for testing. Animals were on hold order until negative tests were returned.
- Avian Influenza – **Approved** – allowed entry of Pheasants from an NPIP flock without an AI test. Animals were previously tested negative, to be tested upon arrival in Texas, and intended for terminal use.
- Fever Tick – **Approved** – allowed a bull to move before the 60 day withdrawal period after fever tick treatment. Bull did not changed ownership and was needed for breeding purposes. Animal posed little risk to fever tick eradication efforts and was officially identified and placed under hold order until the 60 day period expired.
- Tuberculosis and Brucellosis – **Approved** – allowed entry of wildebeest with expired TB and Brucellosis test. Animals were returning to premise of origin and were isolated from other susceptible species.
- Brucellosis – **Approved** – allowed entry of Lechwe with expired brucellosis test due to risk of handling animal. Animal originated from the San Diego Zoo and was sent to the Ft. Worth Zoo and posed little risk to Texas susceptible species.
- Brucellosis and PRV – **Approved** – allowed entry of Brucellosis and PRV positive swine that were part of a herd depopulating in Louisiana into Texas. Animals were individually identified, transported on a sealed trailer, and met by TAHC staff to verify arrival and slaughter.
- Fever Tick – **Approved** – allowed cull cattle from an adjacent herd to move directly to slaughter without a dip treatment. Cattle were scratched prior to movement, shipped under permit, and posed a low risk for spread of fever ticks.
- Chronic Wasting Disease – **NOT Approved** – denied waiver to allow twin moose calves to enter Texas from a non-CWD monitored herd. According to Texas Administrative Code Title 4, Part 2, Chapter 51.10 all CWD susceptible species must meet federal requirements for interstate movements. Additionally, observation of an animal does not provide sufficient evidence of disease freedom, especially when applied to CWD.

A motion to APPROVE the actions of the Executive Director for the period from August 22, 2017 through April 17, 2018 was made by Commissioner Jordan and seconded by Commissioner Leathers. The motion carried.

**Item 4 - Presentation of Epidemiology, and Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) Activities**

Dr. Susan Rollo, State Epidemiologist, presented the following report:

**I. CATTLE**

**A. Tuberculosis:**

**1. Status of the infected Herds in Parmer County and Lamb County, Texas:** Both dairies and the feed yard (~11,000 head) have undergone an assessment test in April 2015 then 9 removal tests in (2015: July, September, December), (2016: March, October), (2017: Feb, April-June, Oct-Nov) and (2018: Jan-Feb and one currently ongoing in April). The last positive culture was disclosed in the Feb 2017 removal test. There have been 66 confirmed MB compatible animals from this group including the original 6 steers that traced to this herd. The dairy continues to pursue the “test out” option.

**2. Other TB cases in the FY2018:** To date, five slaughter trace investigations were initiated in FY2018. Two traces are Mexican origin. One US origin slaughter steer traced to a positive herd in South Dakota. The other 2 traces are still under investigation. One had a tag were DNA did not match the lesion and the other trace was for an animal with no official ID.

**B. Trichomoniasis:** From January to March 2018, there were 82 positive bulls disclosed in 12,384 bulls tested (0.7% test positive).

Year	TVMDL Grand Total		Total Test Prevalence
	Total Bulls	Total Positive Bulls	
2013	5,272	122	2.3%
2014	31,613	777	2.5%
2015	41,162	592	1.4%
2016	48,420	493	1.0%
2017	48,126	443	0.9%
2018	12,384	82	0.7%

**C. Cattle Fever Tick:** The Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program is a cooperative activity between TAHC and USDA-VS. The number of newly discovered infested premises in South Texas (in Permanent and Temporary Preventive Quarantine Areas) has increased from 86 in October 2016 to currently 193 total infestations disclosed.

Trace cattle are cattle that were either sold to or sold from the infested premise/producer in the year prior to the identification of the infestation. The number of traces by county since November 2016 are listed below:

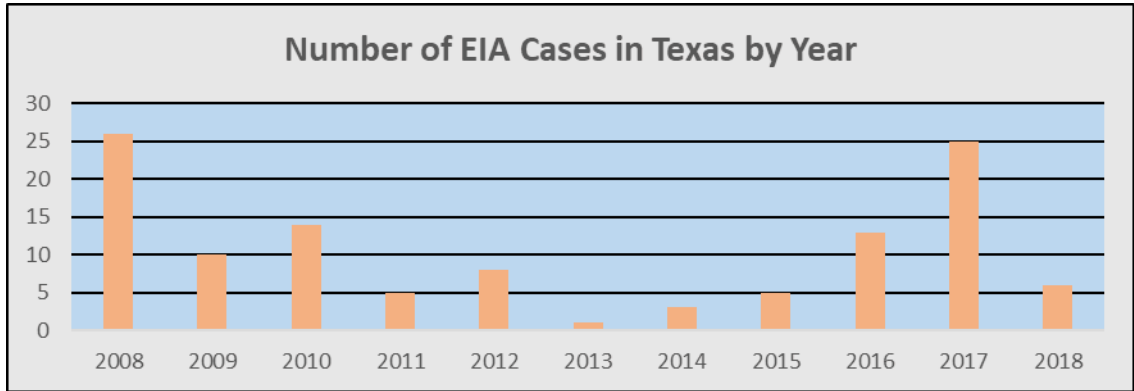
County	# of Traces	# Head	# Open (% complete)
Live Oak	488	1186	10 (98% complete)
Zapata	124	146	20 (84% complete)
Starr	164	164	4 (98% complete)
Webb	51	189	1 (98% complete)
Hidalgo	83	210	4 (95% complete)
<b>Total</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>1895</b>	<b>39 (96% complete)</b>

**II. SWINE**

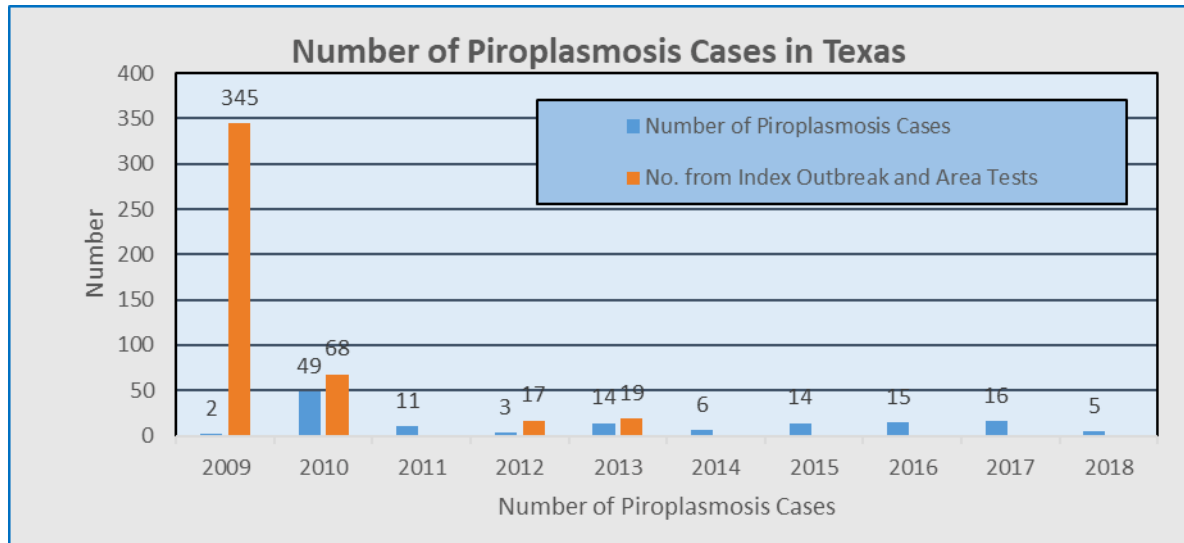
- A. Brucellosis:** Currently, no herds are under quarantine for swine brucellosis.
- B. Pseudorabies (PRV):** One swine herd is under quarantine in Rusk County for pseudorabies.

**III. EQUINE**

**A. Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA):**



**B. Equine Piroplasmiasis (EP):**



History of Piroplasmiasis in Texas: In October 2009, a quarter horse was diagnosed with Equine Piroplasmiasis (EP), *Theileria (Babesia) equi*. The horse originated on a large South Texas ranch. This case started a multi-state investigation. As a result of the lengthy investigation, 413 horses were located in Texas that were positive either in the index herd, adjacent herds, or trace outs from the index herd. In 2012, an area test was conducted in Kennedy County which yielded 17 positive equids. In 2013, an area test was conducted in Kleberg County which yielded 19 positives. In 2014-2015, an area test in Brooks County yielded no positives. Normally Piroplasmiasis is transmitted through several tick vectors including *Amblyomma cajennense*, *A. mixtum*, *Dermacenter nitens*, or *D. albipictus*. In addition to tick-borne transmission, iatrogenic spread can occur by the use of unsterilized or contaminated medical instruments, or through a blood transfusion. In Texas, the majority of recent EP and Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) cases have been in racing quarter horses and the number is on the

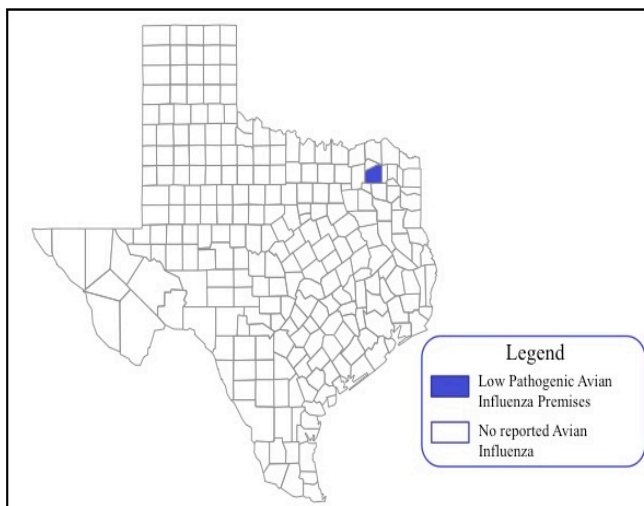
rise. By TAHC rule, equine entering a Texas racetrack facility must have a negative EP (*T. equi* only) test and negative EIA test within the past 12 months.

#### IV. POULTRY

##### Avian Influenza Incident:

**Laboratory detection and confirmation:** On 3/6/2108, TAHC was notified by TVMDL of 22/16 AI-ELISA/AGID positives from a commercial broiler breeder flock in Hopkins County Texas. The birds were tested for preslaughter movement and were destined to an out of state slaughter plant. TAHC Region 4 placed the premise on hold order on 3/6. TAHC immediately initiated area surveillance and verified that additional samples were expedited to the TVMDL Center Lab for confirmation. On 3/7, TVMDL detected influenza A H7 subtype by PCR and NVSL further confirmed the presence of Influenza A low-pathogenic H7N1. Whole genome sequencing was completed on 3/21/2018 and the virus is >99% similar across the entire genome to the H7N1 from the Missouri commercial turkey flock. Phylogenetic analysis indicates a high probability that the introductions arose from wild birds in the Central/Mississippi flyway (no single wild bird virus ancestor was identified). Results suggested an active infection with variable viral shedding and incomplete seroconversion.

**Response:** TAHC responded by creating a 3km Affected Zone (AZ) and a 10km Surveillance Zone (SZ) around the index premises and by surveying the area for all commercial and backyard chicken flocks. Backyard flock surveillance teams were deployed from an incident command post in Sulphur Springs on 3/8 and all surveillance and sampling was completed late on 3/9. Samples were sent to TVMDL in College Station and all results were negative. The commercial response consisted of



identifying other dangerous contact flocks which includes adjacent flocks. The other commercial premises in the 10km zone were a group of 4 pullet houses adjacent to the index and an empty broiler breeder house. The adjacent 4 pullet houses were tested weekly for 4 weeks and all tests were negative. In addition, a group of company owned houses that the service technician sampled after the index were tested and all were negative. The company depopulated both index houses and disposed the birds by burial on site on 3/8. The cleaning and disinfection process started shortly on 3/9. Virus elimination using heat was

completed on 3/23. TAHC and USDA APHIS conducted environmental sampling on 3/26. Virus isolation was negative. The company plans to repopulate the houses with the adjacent pullets. The pullets will be tested prior to repopulation and then 10-15 days after entering the index houses. As a part of the Texas response plan, the Department of State Health Services was notified of the incident. DSHS provided assistance to contractors and company employees on proper precautions to take for personal safety when potentially exposed to avian influenza. This low pathogenic influenza incident was an example of quickly stomping out active virus to prevent spread and potential of mutation to

high pathogenic strains. OIE was notified on 3/9 of the incident by USDA APHIS. Most LPAI restrictions are limited to the affected county or the 10 km area immediately surrounding the infected premises. Situation reports were provided to USDA poultry staff in a timely manner in order to fulfill OIE requirements and TAHC was notified on 4/12 that the case is closed domestically and CEAH filed a final report with OIE. Overall, TAHC worked very closely with TVMDL, USDA APHIS state and poultry health groups as well as the company to detect, control, and contain the disease by using the most recent science and risk based protocols in order to protect the whole Texas poultry industry.

## V. SHEEP AND GOATS

**A. Scrapie:** The first positive scrapie case in Texas since 2008 was identified in the Panhandle in April 2016 and the flock and premises remains under quarantine.

## VI. CERVIDS

**A. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in white-tailed deer (WTD):** There are 5 positive WTD breeding facilities in Texas. The total number of positive WTD and current status of each facility is listed below:

Facility	Current Status	Number Positive
1	Depopulated in 2015	4
2	Depopulated in early 2016	5
3	Quarantined January 2016, managed on herd plan	28, 12 suspects, 2 elk
4	Quarantined March 2016, recently depopulated ~100 does and managed on a herd plan,	25
5	Quarantined May 2017, depopulated herd October 2017	2

In late FY 2017, USDA informed TAHC that some end of year CWD indemnity funds were designated to Texas for the current positive herds. USDA required complete depopulation of the newest facility (Facility #5) based on the smaller size. The herd was depopulated in October and one additional positive doe was disclosed. The remaining available funds were allocated to use on facility 4 to remove deer in high risk pens. Of the 100 deer depopulated in facility #4, 9 were positive and all 9 were in pens in the same section as the index pen. In addition, a hunter harvested buck at facility #4 was positive that was harvested in November 2017.

In facility #3, since January 2016, there are a total of 28 positives and 12 suspects (tonsil biopsy confirmed positive only at this time) WTD. Of those, 31 are from the breeder pens or grower pens (17 bucks and 14 does). In addition, there were 9 positives disclosed from hunter harvested samples from 4 different pastures (6 bucks, 3 does). And there were 2 positive elk cows disclosed from 117 samples in 1 pasture. Both cows were natural additions to the elk herd.

The free ranging summary for the 2017-2018 hunting season include 2 positive mule deer from Hudspeth County, 2 mule deer from Hartley County, and 1 WTD from Hartley County. The WTD was on the Containment Zone border and a slight adjustment to that zone will be addressed before the next hunting season.



Statewide exotic CWD susceptible species surveillance monitoring is ongoing. General surveillance includes any facility that is testing CWD susceptible species for their annual premise requirement. Hunter harvest samples include samples collected at check stations in one of the 3 zones (the Panhandle, West Texas, or Medina area). Samples collected on positive premises include testing to meet requirements for a positive premise herd plan.

**CWD Susceptible Species Surveillance 2017-18**

Exotic Species	General Statewide Surveillance		Positive Premise-Containment Zone*		Hunter Harvest in Zones for '17-18	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Red Deer	0	70	0	14	0	8
Elk	0	30	2 (cows)	115	0	19
Sika		26	0	1	0	4
Total	0	126	2	130	0	31

**ANIMAL DISEASE TRACEABILITY ACTIVITIES**

TAHC continues to work with USDA and industry to achieve ADT cooperative program goals and objectives. One big improvement is in traceability from GVL CVIs to StateVet.com. This improvement eliminates manual data entry.

**Item 5 – Presentation of Animal Health Program Activities**

Dr. T.R. Lansford, Assistant Executive Director of Animal Health Programs, provided an update on field activities:

- **Report Items**
  - Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) Incident
    - Highly successful response
      - Effective and efficient stakeholder interactions and response
    - After action being scheduled
      - Continuous plan improvement
  - Emergency Management
    - Agriculture Response Management and Resources (ARMAR) Exercise
      - National foot-and-mouth disease exercise
      - Texas participating through a tabletop exercise – May 8
      - Focus will be on industry response and continuity of operations
    - Hurricane Season
      - Hurricane Harvey after-action
      - Hurricane Huddle held in April
        - Review of response plan and stakeholder roles
      - Season begins June 1
    - Response activities
      - Continue to support fever tick response through Incident Action Plan development and coordinating various conference calls
    - Planning activities
      - Continue to work with stakeholders on various plans

- Working with TVMDL and Poultry Federation to make updates to the Notifiable Avian Influenza Response Plan
- Equine Infectious Anemia
- Bovine Trichomoniasis
- Fever tick response
  - Purchasing process continues
  - Posting and hiring process for positions continues
  - Outreach efforts ongoing
- Field Staff
  - Changes and Additions
  - Continue to meet the challenges and rise to the occasion
  - Welcome Dr. Angela Daniels as the Assistant Executive Director

### **Item 6 – Presentation of USDA Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program Update**

Dr. Schwartz, Dr. Lansford, and Dr. Hallie Hasel presented a panel update on the fever tick eradication efforts. Full audio of the presentation is at <http://www.tahc.texas.gov/agency/meetings.html>.

### **Item 7 – Audit Sub-committee Report**

Commissioner Leathers provided an overview of the last audit sub-committee meeting. The actions of the committee were approved.

A motion to APPROVE the Audit Sub-committee report was made by Commissioner Vickers and seconded by Commissioner Kezar. The motion carried.

### **Item 8 – Administration/Budget Status Report**

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

- Budgetary Lapses –
  - Strategies - \$8,406
  - Hiring Freeze - \$336,089
- Federal Funds – moved from FY 2017 to FY 2018
  - \$49,500
    - Drawn down prior to passage of supplemental funding to meet CFT expenses
    - Un-anticipated funds received
- Encumbered Funds – Various purchases still outstanding
  - \$25,610 remaining
- Budgetary Transfers (Totals for FY 2017)
  - Field - (\$45,455)
  - Lab/Epi - \$45,000
  - EM - (\$15,000)
  - Cent Admin - \$30,000
  - IT - \$ 5,455
  - Supp Serv - (\$20,000)

**FY 2018**

***Methods of Financing (MOF's):***

Projected available funds by fiscal year end are \$17.1M.

Year to Date funds available are \$16.5M

***Objects of Expense (OOE's):***

Anticipated Known Expenditures - \$15.7M

Total anticipated/projected Funding less the total anticipated/projected known Expenditures:

• Total Funding	\$17,141,553
• Total Expenditures	<u>\$15,727,332</u>
• Total Difference	<u>\$ 1,414,221</u>

***Federal Funds***

Federal Funds \$2.06M Spendable

Federal Funds Received Year to Date \$1.65M

***Fee Revenue***

Fee Revenue is used solely on Field vehicle expenses:

- Fuel, Maintenance/Repairs, Parts, Insurance, Lease

Projected Fee Revenues - \$520K

Fees Received Year to Date - \$341K

***FTEs(Full Time Equivalents – the State's way of saying employees)***

FY 2018 FTE cap – 220.2

As of March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 –

- 191.2 FTEs filled
- 29 FTEs vacant
- The TAHC has Unexpended Balance (UB) Authority to move unspent appropriations from FY 2018 to FY 2019. Any appropriations unspent will be moved to continue to assist with the Cattle Fever Tick effort.
- The TAHC anticipates that there will be budgetary transfers across budget groups for FY 2018. However, at this time they are unknown and will be brought before the commission for approval at the next commission meeting.

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

**Item 9 – Consideration of and Possible Action on Agency Contracts and Purchases**

Mrs. Larissa Schmidt presented contracts and purchases for the consideration of the commissioners for FY 2018.

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

**Item 10 – Consideration of and Possible Action on Rule Review Proposals Regarding:**

Gene Snelson then discussed the following REGULATION PROPOSALS:

Each Regulation Proposal was reviewed and voted on individually.

- (a) Chapter 51, Cattle Trichomoniasis
- (b) Chapter 59, Educational Training and Assistance
- (a) The Texas Animal Health Commission (Commission) proposes amendments to Chapter 51, entitled "Entry Requirements." The purpose of these amendments to Chapter 51 is to modify Bovine Trichomoniasis requirements to enter the state.

Bovine Trichomoniasis (Trich) is a venereal disease of cattle. The Trich organism causes abortion and extended calving seasons. Bulls will remain persistently infected and spread infection from cow to cow.

The Commission works with a stakeholder group called the Bovine Trichomoniasis Working Group (TWG), which meets annually to discuss programmatic changes and identify rule actions. The TWG held their annual review meeting on March 20, 2018, to evaluate the effectiveness of current rules. The TWG discussed the program overview to date, the management of infected herds, entry requirements, and the need for possible revisions to the program.

The TWG recommended that the commission change its existing rules to provide an exception to the certificate of veterinary inspection and permit requirements for bulls entering the state directly from a premises where the bull was maintained to approved livestock market. This proposal is consistent with the federal interstate movement requirements, which, under certain circumstances, allow cattle to move from federally approved livestock facilities without official identification.

The motion to PROPOSE amendments to Chapter 51, Entry Requirements, was made by Commissioner Jordan and seconded by Commissioner Kezar. The motion carried. The notice of this proposed amendment is to be published in the Texas Register with a 30 day comment period.

Comments regarding the proposals may be submitted to Amanda Bernhard, Texas Animal Health Commission, 2105 Kramer Lane, Austin, Texas 78758, by fax at (512) 719-0719 or by email at "comments@tahc.state.tx.us".

- (b) The Texas Animal Health Commission (commission) proposes new §59.14, concerning Educational and Training Assistance, in Chapter 59, which is entitled "General Practices and Procedures." The new rule implements procedures for employee education and training assistance.

The new rule is proposed pursuant to the Texas Government Code §656.048, which requires a state agency to adopt rules relating to the eligibility, obligations and reimbursement of the agency's administrators and employees for training and education supported by the agency.

The commission puts a high priority on training and educating its staff to ensure continuity and growth in agency knowledge, skills, and abilities. The proposed rule will provide sound guidelines for employees and administrators to follow for training and educational reimbursement requests and ensures the commission maintains fiscal accountability and transparency.

The motion to PROPOSE amendments to Chapter 59, Educational and Training Experience, was made by Commissioner Edmiston and seconded by Commissioner Leathers. The motion carried. The notice of this proposed amendment is to be published in the Texas Register with a 30 day comment period.

Comments regarding the proposals may be submitted to Amanda Bernhard, Texas Animal Health Commission, 2105 Kramer Lane, Austin, Texas 78758, by fax at (512) 719-0719 or by email at "comments@tahc.state.tx.us".

### **Item 11 – Consideration of and Possible Action on REGULATION ADOPTIONS**

Gene Snelson then discussed the following REGULATION ADOPTION:

Because the items adopt the review of existing rules, and are not amendments or new rules, the items were discussed and then voted on as a group.

- (a) Chapter 31, Anthrax
- (b) Chapter 34, Veterinary Biologics
- (c) Chapter 35, Brucellosis
- (d) Chapter 37, Screwworms
- (e) Chapter 39, Scabies
- (f) Chapter 49, Equine
- (g) Chapter 58, Emergency Response and Management

The motion to ADOPT the rule reviews of Chapters 31, 34, 35, 37, 39, 49, and 58 was made by Commissioner Jordan and seconded by Commissioner White. The motion carried.

### **Item 12 – Public Comment/Recognition**

Recognition of three retiring TAHC employees was given by Dr. Schwartz and Dr. Mark Michalke. A full audio of the comments and the complete discussion that followed is available on the Texas Animal Health Commission website. <http://www.tahc.texas.gov/agency/meetings.html>

### **Item 13 – Set Date for 400<sup>th</sup> Commission Meeting**

The date for the 401<sup>st</sup> Commission Meeting was not set at the time of the meeting, but is tentatively scheduled for July 2018. Notice will be posted on the agency's website when the next Commission meeting date has been set.

### **Item 14 – Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3PM.