

**MINUTES OF THE 395th COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Texas Animal Health Commission**  
**May 24, 2016**

The TAHC Commissioners met in the agency's headquarters in Austin on Tuesday, May 24, 2016. Chairman Coleman Locke began the meeting at 8:30 a.m. and introduced the newly appointed commissioners.

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

Commissioners Jay Winter, Eric White, Tommy Kezar, and Tommy Oates were not present.

**Item 2 – Approval of the minutes of the 394<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

A motion to APPROVE the minutes of the 394<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting held on February 16, 2016, was made by Commissioner Jordan and seconded by Commissioner Selman. The motion carried.

**Item 3 – Report of the Executive Director, Field Animal Health Program Activities and Approval of Waiver Requests for the Period 2/16/2015 to 5/24/2016**

Dr. Schwartz presented the following:

- **Agency Business**
  - Preparation for 85<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session
    - Strategic Plan – instructions received, draft in development
    - Customer Service Survey – awaiting results for inclusion in Plan
    - Legislative Appropriations Request will be based on Plan
  - Survey of Employee Engagement
    - Results received December 2015
    - SEE Committee has been named - to address concerns
  - Central Office building lease negotiations
  - Disease challenges currently faced
    - Tuberculosis
      - Two concurrent investigations – significant progress made
    - Chronic Wasting Disease
      - Fourth affected premises found (one new prem. since last meeting)
      - Federal indemnity – requesting partial depopulation of highest risk
      - Implementation of antemortem testing plans
      - Containment and Surveillance Zones – seeking industry input, coordinating with TPWD
      - Legislative briefing given May 10, 2016
    - Fever Ticks
      - No further advancement northward since February meeting
      - Consultation with Ecological Services, US Fish and Wildlife Services
      - Fever Tick vaccine received May 17-19, 2016
    - Trichomoniasis Working Group meeting held April 26, 2016
    - Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza preparation continues
    - ILT in two backyard flocks and one commercial operation
    - Scrapie – first case discovered in Texas since 2008

- **USDA-APHIS-VS**
  - Proposed Tuberculosis and Brucellosis rule – comments submitted
  - Assistant Director for Texas has been named
- **Santa Theresa, NM port** – concerns over process when animal health issue is detected
- **Rule Proposal for consideration**
  - Chapter 47, Authorized Personnel, CWD Authorized Personnel
- **Rules for Passage Considerations**
  - Chapter 41, Fever Ticks, Fever Tick Vaccine
- **Waiver Report**
  - February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016
  - 8 waivers requested and 6 approved:
    - Brucellosis – **Approved** – allowed potbellied swine to enter temporarily for exhibition purposes. Swine would have no contact with breeding animals.
    - Brucellosis – **Approved** – allowed entry of Impala and Kudu to be tested upon arrival in appropriate handling facilities.
    - Pollorum Typhoid – **Approved** – allowed entry of Cassawary to be tested upon arrival in appropriate handling facilities.
    - Brucellosis – **Approved** – allowed entry of sheep that were just a few days over testing requirement limits and herd mates were tested negative.
    - Brucellosis – **Approved** – allowed entry of Ibex from Los Angeles Zoo that was over testing limit due to shipping delays.
    - Cervid – **Approved** – allowed entry of fallow deer from Florida that meet Texas certified herd requirements.
  - 2 Waivers not approved:
    - Fever ticks – **Not Approved** – Owner expressed concerns over USDA equipment used for follow up treatments. Premise is in permanent quarantine zone and newer TAHC equipment was offered for use.
    - Piroplasmosis – **Not Approved** – Owner wanted to move horses to Louisiana for racing purposes. TAHC has the policy of not allowing known quarantine animals to move to where they would have contact with non-infected animals. Further, the Louisiana animal health officials would not allow entry of horses.

A motion to APPROVE the actions of the Executive Director for the period from February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 through May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 was made by Commissioner Edmiston and seconded by Commissioner Leathers. The motion carried.

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

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

##### **I. CATTLE**

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##### **A. Tuberculosis:**

##### **1. Background on the Index Case and the Index Herds from Castro County, Texas:**

Herd #1: The first herd (~10,000 head) confirmed with *Mycobacterium bovis* (MB) was identified on a slaughter trace in October 2014. Following the confirmation, the dairy was tested 3 times in an effort to remove any infectious animals as per USDA rules (USDA, 2005). The disease prevalence was high enough that repeated testing was unlikely to eliminate the infection due to the insidious nature of this bacteria and based on stochastic modeling (USDA, Cattle health modeling unit). The Texas Animal

Health Commission has worked with the United States Department of Agriculture Animal Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Services (USDA APHIS VS) on indemnification of the entire herd and the depopulation process began in January and was completed on **April 15, 2016**. The dairy has completed the cleaning and disinfection process using USDA guidelines and restocking is in progress.

Herd #2 (approximately 12,000 head) is under the same ownership. An assurance test in December 2015 yielded no reactors. **The hold order was released on January 13, 2016**. This herd will be tested annually for five subsequent years.

**2. Background on Additional Tuberculosis Infected Herds in Parmer County and Lamb County, Texas:** The feed yard in Parmer County and the two organic dairies in Lamb County which are all under the same ownership remain under quarantine. The epidemiological investigation of this group is ongoing and the source of introduction has yet to be determined.

To date there have been 25 trace-out herds identified including 10 in other states which all have been notified. The additional dairies tested thus far, have not yielded any additional lesioned cattle. One trace out organic dairy in Texas will be tested within the next 2 months.

Both dairies and the feed yard have undergone an assessment test and 4 removal tests since last April (April, July, September, December, and March). There have been 53 confirmed MB compatible animals from this group including the original 6 steers that traced to this herd. Results of the March test yielded 168 CFT responders. Thirty-three high risk cattle were tested in April and 9 had histocompatible lesions (all 9 from the feed yard). The removal of the balance of the CFT responders is pending an agreement of the recent appraisal.

Currently, funds have not been currently allocated by USDA for a depopulation of this group and a recent model predicts that at least 13 whole herd tests must occur to be 95% sure that TB is no longer in the herds. Therefore, a test and removal plan is under development for implementation.

In summary, there have been ~144,000 TB tests conducted on Texas dairy cattle including the multiple tests on the index herds and associated trace-out herds.

### **3. Other TB cases in the 2016:**

Three Mexican-origin beef animal slaughtered have been confirmed with histo-compatible lesions for *M. bovis* and epidemiological investigations are ongoing.

#### **B. Trichomoniasis:**

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Through April CY 2016 there have been 222 positive bulls found in 16,904 tests (1.3% test positive). In CY 2015 the test positive percentage was approximately 1.6%.

#### **C. Cattle Fever Tick:**

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The Temporary Preventive Quarantine Area (initiated on 10/7/14) in Cameron and Willacy Counties continues to face challenges. Currently, there are 16 infested premises in Cameron and 8 in Willacy. Eight previously infested premises have been released in Cameron County. Approximately 10 premises have been identified since Oct 1, 2015 through hunter harvest surveillance (nilgai and white

tailed deer (WTD)). In regards to trace-in or trace-out herds associated with infested premises, 100% of the original traces have been completed in Cameron and Willacy Counties.

In region 5, 2 infestations remain under quarantine. These infestations were identified through trace-out investigations from the TPQA in Cameron.

In Cameron and Willacy counties, the infestation rate in WTD and Nilgai has increased since 2014 for both species. More infested nilgai were identified this winter in Willacy compared to the previous year, and this species appears to be an important contribution to the northern movement of the cattle fever tick.

	Infestation Rate Winter '15-'16		Infestation Rate Winter '14-'15	
	WTD % infested (sample size)	Nilgai % infested (sample size)	WTD % infested (sample size)	Nilgai % infested (sample size)
Cameron (outside refuge)	13% (n=68)	26% (n=61)		
Willacy	4% (n=53)	**13% (n=71)		
Laguna Atascosa Refuge	77% (n=66)	72% (n=51)	55% (n=67)	40% (n=15)

\*\*All the positives are south of Highway 186.

In summary, the total premises infested, exposed, adjacent, or check (from the USDA March Highlights Letter)

Type of Quarantine	Premises		Syst. Area	Free Area	Total
	Released	Added			
Infested	0	1	43	41	84
Native Exposed	0	0	12	13	25
Mexico Exposed	0	0	27	0	27
Adjacent/Check	173	8	275	1,305	1,580

## II. SWINE

**A. Brucellosis:** There have been no infected herds disclosed in CY 2016 to date.

**B. Pseudorabies (PRV):** Two infected herds have been disclosed in CY 2016.

## III. EQUINE

**A. Equine Piroplasmiasis (EP):** There have been 11 positive horses confirmed in Texas this year.

There is one horse that tested positive after receiving a blood transfusion during abdominal surgery; she is still awaiting a transfusion study to determine whether she is in fact infected with *B. Cabali*. There are also two race horses that were misidentified by a submitting veterinarian and an investigation is ongoing to locate the two horses that are associated with the positive lab results.

- B. Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA):** In CY 2016, there have been ten positive equine disclosed out of the 78,040 animals tested in Texas (0.013% positive rate) and one pending confirmation.
- C. Equine Herpes Virus (EHV):** There have been 2 cases of EHV diagnosed this year in February. Both horses were race horses from the same barn in El Paso County and the quarantine was released in March.

#### **IV. POULTRY**

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- A. Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI):** The HPAI outbreak that devastated poultry producers during the winter and spring of 2015 was the worst animal disease in U.S. history. It affected more than 48.8 million birds in 21 states before the final detection on June 17. No cases of HPAI have been detected in Texas in 2016. The Texas Animal Health commission preparedness efforts are ongoing in preparation for any incursions that may directly affect Texas poultry. A successful HPAI exercise was completed in Region 2 and a second exercise is planned for June.
- B. Infectious Laryngeal Tracheitis (ILT):** Four flocks have been identified with positive ILT results. Two from backyard flocks, 1 from a commercial flock (on 2 premises), and 1 flock of ~80 birds in Region 8. Subsequent testing in the back yard flocks showed no local disease spread. The investigation in the commercial flock is ongoing.

#### **V. SHEEP AND GOATS**

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- A. Scrapie:** The first positive scrapie case in Texas since 2008 was identified in the Panhandle in April 2016. A clinical ewe was tested after an owner notified TAHC. Additional testing in the flock identified an additional suspect ewe. There was no official ID and an epidemiological investigation is ongoing.

#### **VI. CERVIDS**

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- **CWD Index herds**
  1. **First CWD Index Herd-Medina County:** The first CWD case in Texas in white-tailed deer was identified in June 2015 in Medina Co. Subsequent testing identified 3 additional positive bucks from the same pen. All bucks were born on the premise in 2013. The herd of 226 deer was completely depopulated with USDA indemnity funds in October. In February, 64 deer were removed and tested from the associated release site and all deer tested 'not detected'. To date, there are approximately 20 Elk on the associated release site that are to be harvested before October 2016.
  2. **Second CWD Index Herd (trace out from the first index herd)-Lavaca County:** In October 2015, a direct trace out buck from the first CWD index herd died and tested positive for CWD at a Lavaca County premise. The herd of 156 deer and associated fawns was completely depopulated with USDA indemnity funds in March and an additional 4 bucks tested positive. All 5 bucks were cohorts of the 4 positive bucks from the first CWD index herd.
  3. **Third CWD Index Herd-Medina/Uvalde County:** A hunter harvested buck was harvested in early January 2016. TAHC received the results on January 30, 2016 (due to lab backlog). The buck was born on the premise in 2012. In the fall of 2012, the buck was moved to a grow- out pen in a release site for 3 years. It was released for hunting in the fall of 2015. The buck was

most likely infected while in the grow- out pen. Ante-mortem testing was used to evaluate the breeding pens located approximately 4 miles from the grow- out pens. A total of 300 deer were ante-mortem tested by tonsil biopsy in March 2016. All deer tested ‘not detected’ except for one buck which was born in 2013. This buck spent about 2 years in the same grow out pens in the same release site. This buck was euthanized and was also positive on post-mortem testing. A herd plan is under development for this premise which consists of approximately 800 adults.

4. **Fourth CWD Index Herd-Medina County:** A fourth index herd of approximately 900 adults was identified in April 2016 when a 44 month old doe tested positive. To date, 65 deer in adjacent pens to the pen where the positive doe resided, have been tested using ante-mortem testing with tonsil biopsy; all results were ‘not detected’. TAHC has requested that USDA consider the possibility of using limited indemnity funds to conduct further diagnostic testing in this herd, including pen cohorts to the positive deer

• **CWD Surveillance and Testing :**

1. Samples taken on positive deer including rectal biopsies, tonsil biopsies, obex, and medial retropharyngeal lymph nodes and positive results listed by date.

Case No.	CWD INDEX HERD NO.	Rectal Ante-mortem	Tonsil Ante-mortem	Tonsil Post-mortem	RPLN Ante-mortem	RPLN Post-mortem	Obex	Genotype
1	1					6/30/2015	6/30/2015	
2	1			8/11/2015		8/11/2015	8/11/2015	
3	1			ND		8/11/2015	ND	
4	1					8/14/2015	8/14/2015	
5	2					9/15/2015	9/15/2015	
6	2	11/13/2015	11/13/2015	4/13/2016	11/13/2015	4/13/2016	4/13/2016	GG
7	2	ND	11/13/2015	4/13/2016		4/13/2016	4/13/2016	GS
8	3					1/29/2016	1/29/2016	GG
9	3		3/28/2016			4/12/2016	4/12/2016	
10	4					3/28/2016	3/28/2016	
11	2			4/13/2016		4/13/2016	ND	
12	2			4/13/2016		4/13/2016	ND	

2. The status of all associated trace in and trace out herds for all 4 index herds

Category	Number
CLOSED FACILITY	45
MET REQUIREMENTS OF HOLD ORDER	167
HERD PLAN	42
HOLD ORDER, PLAN PENDING	84
<b>Total</b>	<b>338</b>

3. **Ante-mortem testing**

- a. **Ante-mortem testing as a risk assessment tool:** Risk can be assessed by testing a percentage of deer in herds where trace-forward or trace-in deer resided. A summary (to date) of the additional surveillance utilizing medial retropharyngeal lymph nodes (MRPLN), tonsil, and rectal biopsy is listed below.

Associated Index Herd	Tissue Sampled	
	Tonsil	MRPLN
1	198	0
2	0	0
3	237	133
4	57	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>139</b>

- b. **Ante-mortem testing to determine prevalence in the index herds.** Without available USDA indemnity funds, ante-mortem testing has been used on the index herds to assess the extent of infection in the herd. The objective is to mitigate risk at the same time as allowing the facility to remain in business.

Index Herd	Tissue Sampled	
	Tonsil	MRPLN
1	0	0
2	21	21
3	298	0
4	66	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>21</b>

4. In summary, the CWD positive animals associated with the first herd have all been bucks that were born on the index premise in 2013. There have been a total of 9 deer that tested positive on post-mortem tests out of a total of 63 bucks (14% infection rate).
5. Outreach and Coordination Efforts: TAHC continues to work closely with Texas Parks and Wildlife in supporting that agency with their surveillance efforts and rule development. In addition to the herd work and disease investigation itself, agency staff have participated in multiple CWD Taskforce meetings, CWD Working Group meetings, given testimony before the Culture, Recreation and Tourism Committee, issued joint press releases, and spoken at deer industry meetings. In addition, TAHC supported a CWD symposium in

January that gathered national experts on CWD in hopes to consider the latest scientific knowledge and to gain insight on the most effective testing options other than post-mortem testing.

## **ANIMAL DISEASE TRACEABILITY ACTIVITIES**

### **Current Project(s)**

- ADT is planning to update a third of the electronic data capture equipment, including the replacement of 25 handhelds and 25 RFID wands with cases. The purchase is currently out for bid.

### **Approved Tagging Facilities and tag distribution:**

Approved Tagging Sites: (no change) 80 livestock markets + 13 feeders = 93

Tag Distribution Partners: (no change) 204 AgriLife Extension Offices + 61 veterinarians + ICP-Cameron Co = 266

Total number of Official ID Tags distributed:

During the first quarter, January- March 2016 – 184,162

CY 2015 – 757,113

CY 2014 – 657,367

Scrapie tags ordered:

During the First Quarter, January- March 2016 – 65,382

CY 2015 – 270,202

CY 2014 – 225,597

Current # of Active Premises ID Numbers: 32,194

# of New PINs issued:

During the First Quarter, January- March 2016 – 78

CY 2015 – 311

CY 2014 – 223

Current Total # of LIDs: 24,614

# of New LIDs assigned:

During the First Quarter, January- March 2016 – 1,860

CY 2015 – 7,782

CY 2014 – 10,314

### **Item 5 – Discussion on Rules for Chronic Wasting Disease Restriction Zones**

Dr. Susan Rollo presented the Texas Parks and Wildlife proposed zones designed to control CWD in free ranging areas with the purpose of stopping the spread of CWD and enhancing surveillance for the disease.

### **Item 6 – 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**
  - Border Security
    - Region 8 Update



- Office
- Staff
- Engagement in animal health activities
- Cattle Fever Ticks – Region 5 and Region 8
  - Infestations continue in Webb, Zapata, Starr, Cameron, and Willacy counties
  - Wildlife and weather are factors
  - Kleberg county
    - No fever ticks found since June 2015; all premises under “check” quarantine
    - Surveillance for release of quarantines on-going
  - Jim Wells county
    - Infested premises restocked and undergoing systematic treatment
    - Wildlife treatment on-going
    - Surveillance on adjacent premises has not disclosed additional fever ticks to this point
  - Fever tick vaccine
    - Delivered May 17 and 18, 2016
    - Moving forward with CTEP/TAHC personnel training materials and sessions
    - Planning for producer meetings underway
- Tuberculosis – Region 1
  - Infected Complex 1 investigation
    - Depopulation of highly infected herd completed
    - Cleaning and disinfection completed; quarantine released May 15, 2016
    - Estimated restocking by the end of May
  - Infected Complex 2 investigation
    - Test and cull protocol continues
    - Indemnity payment issues continue to delay progress
  - Trace herd investigations continue
- Chronic Wasting Disease
  - Impacting all Regions
  - Continue to work with herd owners through complexities of each individual herd to develop specific herd plans
  - Continue to incorporate live animal testing into new and existing herd plans
  - Staff working cooperatively with TPWD and stakeholder groups on Stakeholder Working Group and associated smaller focus group
- Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT)
  - Four positive flocks in four Regions
    - 3 non-commercial flocks – R5, 7, and 8
    - 1 commercial flock – R4
  - Awaiting confirmation on virus origin
- Bovine Trichomoniasis

- Mandatory testing of adjacent premises underway
- Trich Working Group meeting held April 26

**Item 7 – Presentation of USDA Veterinary Services Update**

Dr. Hallie Hasel introduced the new Assistant Director for Texas, Dr. Mike Pruitt, and detailed additional new USDA staff in Texas, including the newly hired veterinary medical officers and the opening for the Area Emergency Coordinator. Dr. Hasel also explained funding approval for various Cattle Fever Tick activities.

**Item 8 – Audit Subcommittee Appointees**

Chairman Locke presented the new appointees to the Audit Subcommittee and the new committee Chair, Commissioner Joe Leathers.

A motion to APPROVE appointment of the Audit Subcommittee Chair and members was made by Commissioner Jordan and seconded by Commissioner Selman. The motion carried.

**Item 9 – Audit Subcommittee report**

Commissioner Joe Leathers gave the report from the Audit Subcommittee meeting that was held earlier that morning. The committee approved the Federal Funds Management Audit, noting that the audit found the agency to have an adequate system and controls in place for proper management of federal funds.

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

**Item 10 – Authorized Personnel update**

Dr. Culp gave the Authorized Personnel Update:

- **Veterinary Authorized Personnel**
  - Since the February 16, 2016 Commission Meeting – new TAHC Veterinary Authorized Personnel Applications have been received from the following:
    - 14 veterinarians transferred over from TAHC Brucellosis Approved Personnel.
    - 38 applications from veterinarians new to the program.
    - 12 applications from graduates from TAMU CVM.
  - TAHC Authorized Personnel Training (4 hour basic course) will be offered in the Austin TAHC office in June 2016 as part of TAHC New Employee Orientation and is required for all new TAHC personnel.
  - TAHC Authorized Personnel Training (4 hour basic course) and Bovine Trichomoniasis Certification (1 hours) were offered in the Austin TAHC office on Tuesday April 12, 2016 in conjunction with USDA Accreditation Orientation.
  - Working in partnership with Dr. John Davidson, Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc., TAHC began offering TACH Bovine Trichomoniasis Certification/Re-Certification continuing education classes to veterinary practitioners at local veterinary medical association meetings. The first meeting was in Amarillo with the High Plains Veterinary Medical Association on Thursday November 12, 2015. To date, this partnership has offered 8 Re-Certification meetings to 256 TAHC Authorized veterinarians and 33 TAMU

CVM 4VM students. Two upcoming meetings are confirmed in Sulphur Springs and Weslaco. Five additional meetings are being planned in Midland, San Saba, Brenham, San Marcos and Guthrie. The meetings are free and veterinarians receive two hours of veterinary continuing education credits for attending.

- **Cervid Authorized Personnel**
  - Prior to February 2016, TAHC offered 26 Certified CWD Sample Collector Training opportunities for a total of **770 trained collectors**
  - Since February 2016, TAHC has offered 2 Certified CWD Sample Collector Training classes training a total of **73 additional trained collectors**
  - Veterinary student classes offered at TAMU CVM account for an additional **56 collectors trained**.
- **Additional Training Programs**
  - TAMU CVM Intern Program
    - Class of 2019 veterinary student intern for 2 weeks in May 2016
  - Texas A&M Kingsville – USDA STEP UP TO CAREERS Program
    - Isaac Atkinson – 10 week internship in TAHC Region 5 starting May 31st
- **Other Authorized Personnel Department Updates**
  - Disapproved CVI notification process for Texas veterinarians – monthly notification of CVI's disapproved by receiving states. A year and a half into the new process, the numbers of disapproved CVI's coming back to Texas veterinarians is continuing to decrease.
  - The TAHC Authorized Personnel Compliance Review Committee was created in October 2014. This group meets monthly to review Authorized Personnel cases. This committee is responsible for the enforcement of the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 47 Authorized Personnel.
- **Veterinary Medical Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)**
  - A total of eight area nominations were submitted by TAHC to USDA NIFA in February 2016. All eight of the shortage area nominations were accepted. The request for veterinary applications for those shortage areas closed on May 20, 2016. Applications are now being reviewed and offers will be made to selected individual veterinarian applicants in September 2016.

### **Item 11 – Presentation of Communication Initiatives**

Mr. Thomas Swafford provided the Communications Report:

- Attached media interviews staff participated in, upcoming exhibits TAHC attend, as well as a list of all news releases and social media statistics.
- The department has steadily increased Facebook reach as well as Twitter impressions. Those are the agency's two major social media outlets that perform well on a daily basis. TAHC has had quite a bit of success with uploading agency videos straight to Facebook. The largest reach was the re-share of the horseback emergency response team video which was at about 11 thousand views. Analytics containing more details on growth are attached and explain more in-depth.

- As a public information department, the team continues to create new and engaging material everyday so that public is informed and served the best way possible.

**Item 12 – Presentation of Laboratory Update**

Dr. Roger Parker, Lab Director, presented the following:

**Texas State-Federal Laboratory Update May 2016**

- In April, the TAHC-LAB received its renewal certificate as a Level 3 Laboratory within the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN; coordinated by USDA). This relates to a renewed cooperative agreement between TAHC and USDA, effective May 2016, and includes a federal award of \$31,719 for expenditures to support NAHLN testing and reporting. The NAHLN is part of a nationwide strategy to coordinate the work of all organizations providing animal disease surveillance and testing services, which can prepare for and respond to a large-scale animal disease outbreak.
- In June, NAHLN representatives will conduct a periodic (scheduled every two years) on-site audit of the LAB’s procedures.
- In April, the LAB passed its on-site USDA inspections for:
  - Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) testing
  - Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) testing
- National proficiency test panels recently submitted (results pending):
  - 2016 Vesicular Stomatitis Virus Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)
  - 2016 Vesicular Stomatitis Virus Complement Fixation (CF)
  - 2016 Bovine Tuberculosis Gamma Interferon
  - 2016 Brucellosis Proficiency Test (Standard Plate Test, Standard Tube Test, Buffered Acidified Plate Antigen, Complement Fixation, Rivanol, Card Test, Rapid Automated Presumptive, Fluorescence Polarization Assay)

<b>Sample Volume, January – April 2016</b>	
<b>Sample Type</b>	<b>Sample Numbers</b>
Bovine Brucellosis Slaughter Blood:	249,215
Bovine Brucellosis Market Blood:	18,933
Other Brucellosis Blood:	11,982
Bovine Brucellosis Milk:	123
Brucellosis Culture:	17
Bovine Tuberculosis Blood:	663
Swine Brucellosis Blood:	2,393
Swine Pseudorabies Blood:	2,391
Equine Infectious Anemia Blood:	84
Ectoparasite Identification:	541

**Item 13 - Presentation of Emergency Management Program Activities**

Mr. Jeff Turner, Emergency Management Coordinator, presented:

### **Plans Update**

The Emergency Management department recently hired a new staffer who will be the lead in continuing work on our agency planning documents. Ms. Olivia Hemby comes to the agency with an extensive writing background and will be an asset to the EM department. Efforts continue in working with federal, state, local, and academic partners in developing and revising planning documents for responses to natural disasters and animal disease emergencies. These include an ongoing joint project with the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) to have animals included in all state EM planning documents, as relevant. Inclusion of animals, both agricultural and companion, in state documents will lead to the development of a similar inclusion at local planning levels. This project is anticipated to take three to five years to fully accomplish and should foster greater protection for agriculture, companion and service animals alike through preparedness, response and recovery planning. Additionally, planning remains in a heightened state regarding Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) for all susceptible species. EM staff remain diligent in reviewing and revising planning documents and procedures while coordinating with industry to assure preparedness levels remain heightened.

### **Emergency Management Responses**

TAHC Emergency Management staff have been active in numerous response activities. Ongoing rain events over the past few months have produced threats of flooding and flood-related incidents which could affect livestock and companion animals across the state. TAHC assisted in the coordination and response to these wide spread incidents. Related to the fever tick response, a significant change has occurred in the Cameron/Willacy Counties fever tick outbreak regarding the management structure. The response structure has transitioned from an incident management structure to a typical management style of response due to the long-term operational needs of the outbreak. This has allowed EM staff to focus on other pressing issues while maintaining a high level of response in Cameron and Willacy Counties.

### **Emergency Management and Industry Conferences**

EM staff have attended and presented at numerous conferences and workshops across Texas and the southwest. Presentations and speaking engagements related to livestock, poultry, and companion and service animals in the past few months aim to spread the need for animal-related emergency and disaster preparation, response and recovery activities.

### **Exercises**

EM staff continue planning efforts for the Palo Duro II FMD exercise slated for August 2016 in Amarillo, Texas. The exercise will engage federal, state, local governments as well as industry representatives in a simulated response to a FMD outbreak in the Texas Panhandle. Other exercise activities include agency HPAI training meant to hone staff skills for efficient response to a potential high-consequence outbreak. TAHC also participated in the Texas Association of Dairymen's FMD disaster drill and the TDEM Hurricane Tabletop, both meant to sharpen operational awareness and preparedness efforts.

### **Item 14 – Administration/Budget Status Report**

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

**Biennium FY 2016 & FY 2017**

<i>Fiscal Year 2016</i>	<i>Projected Budget</i>	<i>Budget YTD</i>	<i>Description</i>
	<b>11,592,437</b>	<b>11,566,891</b>	<b>Total General Revenue</b>
	<b>2,550,974</b>	<b>2,516,690</b>	<b>Total Federal Funds</b>
	<b>(13,825,243)</b>	<b>(13,825,243)</b>	<b>Total Expenditures</b>
	<b>318,168</b>	<b>258,338</b>	<b>FY 2016 Budget</b>

**Appropriations/Budget**

- General Revenue (GR) appropriations:
  - These totals are not contingent on revenue generated by fees approved by the Commission
  - State FY 2016
    - The TAHC was appropriated \$11.3M for State FY 2016
    - Additional appropriations include \$175K for across the board 2.5% salary increase
  - State FY 2017
    - The TAHC is appropriated \$10.5M for State FY 2017
- Federal Funds and Grants (Federal Fiscal Year runs April 1 to March 31)
  - State FY 2016
    - Federal FY 2015 funds to be available to the TAHC total \$2.44M
    - Received \$2.41M – Year-To-Date (YTD)
  - State FY 2017
    - Federal FY 2016 in approximately \$1.94M
- Capital Budget Funding
  - \$261.5K towards Fleet Vehicles, has been completely allocated towards the acquisition of trucks
  - \$150K towards the Acquisition of Information Resource Technologies, has been or will be completely allocated towards the acquisition of hardware/software and towards annual licensing renewals
    - \$86K Tech Refresh
    - \$64K Equipment Replacement

**Revenues**

- State FY 2016 & 2017
  - Fee Revenue is estimated per year to be approximately \$512K.
    - TAHC Portion - \$424K
      - Received \$397K – Year-To-Date (YTD)
    - State Portion \$87K

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

- State FY 2016
  - The TAHC is appropriated 183.2 FTE's
  - Currently there are 175.5 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, which does not affect our FTE cap
  - \$41K
- State FY 2016 – 2.5% Salary Increase (Statewide)
  - \$175K

**Budgetary Transfers:**

- The TAHC has Unexpended Balance (UB) authority within the Biennium
- Estimated by Strategies:
  - EM \$-35K
    - IT \$12K
    - Staff Services \$23K
  - Field \$-205K
    - Central Admin \$170K
    - Lab/Epi \$20K
    - Compliance \$15K

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

**Item 15 – Consideration of and Possible Action on Agency Contracts and Purchases**

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

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

**Item 16 – Presentation of Legal & Compliance Activities**

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

**Compliance Action Requests**

- Received 52 from 2/1/16 to 4/30/16

- Sent 33 warning/demand letters for no scrapie tags, 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, TPQA ID requirements, and dealer recordkeeping.

### **Investigations**

- Conducted 70 from 2/1/16 to 4/30/16.

### **Complaints**

- Filed 19 from 2/1/16 to 4/30/16 for cattle, equine, and poultry entry violations/no CVI, no TB test/EIA test/AI or PT test; and no EIA and Piro test at equine event. Fines paid in the amount of \$7,073.

### **Administrative Penalty**

- None since last Commission meeting.

## **Item 17 – 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 47, Authorized Personnel, Chronic Wasting Disease

- (a) The Texas Animal Health Commission (commission) proposes amendments to §47.21, concerning Definitions, §47.22, concerning General Requirements and Application Procedures, §47.23, concerning Duration and Additional Training Requirements, §47.24, concerning Grounds for Suspension or Revocation, in Chapter 47, which is entitled “Authorized Personnel”. The purpose of the amendments is to establish and clarify requirements for persons authorized to perform certain activities that related to Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

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, which includes Chronic Wasting Disease.

Chapter 47, 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. At the time the existing Subchapter C regulations were adopted, the commission only recognized test results from postmortem CWD sample collection. Since this sampling was not performed on live animals, the commission established standards and authorized non-veterinarians to collect postmortem samples.

Commissioner Vickers moved and Commissioner Edmiston seconded a motion to PROPOSE the amendments to Chapter 47, Authorized Personnel, located in Title 4 of the Texas Administrative Code. The motion to approve the proposed amendments and to publish it in the Texas Register with a 30 day comment period passed.



**Item 18 – 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 41, Fever Ticks, Fever Tick Vaccine

(a) The Texas Animal Health Commission (commission) proposes amendments to §41.1, concerning Definition of Terms, and proposes a new §41.8, concerning Dipping, Treatment, and Vaccination of Animals, in Chapter 41, which is entitled “Fever Ticks.”

The commission contemporaneously proposes the repeal of the existing §41.8, concerning Dipping and Treatment of Livestock.

The purpose of the amendments to §41.1 is to add a fever tick vaccine definition. The purpose of a new §41.8 is to add a fever tick vaccine requirement for beef cattle located in a control purpose quarantine area, temporary preventative quarantine area or tick eradication quarantine area, and other beef cattle or premises epidemiologically determined by the commission to be at an increased risk for fever ticks. A new §41.8 will also clarify and better organize the different requirements for dipping, treatment, and vaccination. The title of §41.8 is being changed to accurately capture that the requirements apply to animals capable of hosting or transporting ticks capable of carrying Babesia and includes vaccination requirements.

A motion to ADOPT the amendment to Chapter 41, Fever Ticks, located in Title 4 of the Texas Administrative Code was made by Commissioner Jordan and seconded by Commissioner Vickers.

**Item 19 – Public Comment**

Public comment items were heard at the time of the Emergency Management Report and during the presentation of the Regulation Adoption. 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 20 – A closed executive session to receive legal advice, discuss pending or contemplated litigations, and settlement offers as permitted by section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code, was held at 11:20AM.**

**Item 21 – A closed executive session to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a specific commission employee as permitted by section 551.074 of the Texas Government Code was held following the first closed session.**

**Item 23 – Consideration of any action following the closed executive sessions.**

There was no consideration of action following the closed session concerning pending or contemplated litigation.

A motion to APPROVE the appointment of Dr. Andy Schwartz as Executive Director was made by Commissioner Jordan and seconded by Commissioner Eggleston. The motion carried.

**Item 24– Date of the 396<sup>th</sup> Commission Meeting and Adjournment**

The date for the 396<sup>th</sup> Commission Meeting was not set at the time of the meeting, but is tentatively scheduled for late August 2016. Notice will be posted on the agency’s website when the next Commission meeting date has been set.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.