

Quarterly Newsletter

Third Quarter 2024



"POCID"

Director Review

Who can serve as a director on the Board of Directors? Per Section 54.102 of the Texas Water Code, anyone is qualified to serve as a director if they are at least 18 years old, a resident of the State of Texas, and either own land subject to taxation in the District's boundaries or be a qualified voter within the District. Over the years the District has been fortunate to have many amazing individuals that stepped up to serve the community as a member of the Board of Directors. Each brought his or her own personality, gifts, and backgrounds to the table and helped shape the District as it is today. As the District continues this 40-year celebration, it seems like a good time to reflect on those that served the District.

There were earlier directors that formed the district, held those early elections and got the process started like: Kenneth Clark, Allen Berger, John E. Taylor, William W. Loden, C. Joe Bright, Johnny Hawes, Paul Hawes, Mike Overton, Bob Allen, Henry Anderson, and Thomas E. Lambright.

However, it was not until the group of electors that served in the late 1990s and early 2000s were on board that the District really gained momentum. Calvin Ragusin, Edward Lambright, Teddy Hawes, and Red Childers were all present in those early meetings in the fire station where it seemed like a consensus would never be reached. Red Childers says: "One of our greatest challenges was getting started. Period. Getting old timers to change their thought processes and get the sewer put in was not easy." It took a lot of time and dedication to get things rolling. Per Red, "Finally getting the federal grant and loan (52% of costs—which was unheard of) helped get the system operational." If you were in the audience at those old fire station meetings, you wondered how the District was going to truly succeed with so much opposition.

The people left with that daunting task were: Edward Lambright, Calvin Ragusin, Teddy Hawes, Don Ragin, Wanda Redding, Doyle Adams, Red Childers, and Tom Eckstrom. These directors were persistent even through setbacks—engineering snafus, lack of funding, operator bankruptcies, grant requirements, and the like; the deck seemed to continually be stacked against success.

Here are some reflections on these Directors taken from fellow Board Members, consultants, and others that were present during these times:

Edward Lambright—Edward was a steady presence on the Board, always lending his support to other Board Members and the measures that were proposed.

Calvin Ragusin—Calvin was a passionate Board Member, determined to launch the new system. Calvin devoted his time and resources by visiting different systems in place in other towns and communities and provided input on deciding what system should be utilized in Port O'Connor. Calvin's greatest contribution was his role in this important decision and planning. Per Teddy Hawes: "Calvin's role in all the visits, evaluations, and discussions was extremely valuable."

Teddy Hawes—Teddy was President for many years and was the "vision" Director because he understood what was necessary to handle the growth that was coming to Port O'Connor and was always looking towards the future. He brought a very pragmatic approach to the position. He recognized limitations the District had with funding, had a vision for what could work and sacrificed a lot of his personal time and resources to the District. His decision making was always based on the question he consistently posed at meetings— "What is in the best interest of the people of Port O'Connor?" Teddy knew the water and wastewater systems better than anyone other than the operators and frequently drove to Indiana to keep up to date on the sewer collection system. Teddy advocated for the expansion of the sewer system and the additional force mains to assist in vacuum station operations long before anyone else. Teddy's total contributions to the District may never be truly understood or appreciated enough by the customers and citizens. There was a lot of work to do in those early years, and no one prior to Teddy Hawes fully embraced the challenge and had the perseverance to dedicate years to the cause. As one prior board member stated: "Teddy Hawes was the force that got it done." Teddy says: "Serving on the POCID Board was one of the biggest challenges and, at the same time, most satisfying things I have ever done. People said it could not be done; we did it. Getting the District operational was a proud moment, and a huge sigh of relief." From a consultant: "Teddy's commitment to the District was truly admirable."

Don Ragin—Don was the "grant man." He was constantly searching for and writing grant applications. He was pretty successful at it too. A lot of short line extensions were financed through grants Don obtained. There was hardly ever a meeting it seemed where he, in that slow drawl of his, would say—"Teddy, I found another grant and with the Board's permission I would like to write for it." You had to repeat things a few times for him to

Important Dates:

**POC Water Board
Meetings are held on the
third Thursday of each
month @ 1pm**

*November 21st * December 19th
January 16th * February 20th*

**Roll off Trash Bin
First Saturday of each
month behind the POCID
Office from 8am -2pm or
UNTIL FULL**

*December 7th * January 4th *
February 1st*

Billing

***Bills are mailed by the 1st
of each month and are due
on 20th of every month
and a late fee will be assessed
on the 21st unless that falls
on a weekend and then it
will be due the following
Monday.***

Payment Methods:

*Credit Card*Mail*Automatic
Bank Draft*Automatic Credit Card
Draft*In Person*Payment Drop
Box* Bill Pay through your
Financial Institute*

Contact Us

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Vision Statement

POCID is a proactive organization making a positive impact on the community while implementing best management practices to promote sustainable success.

Mission Statement

To proactively and efficiently manage the affairs of the District for the benefit of its customers, protect the health of the community, produce safe drinking water in adequate quantities, offer competitive rates, assure financial stability, and practice excellence in customer service.

hear, but Don always contributed to the conversation. His comments would always start with "In my experience" Directors that served with Don state that he could always be counted on to volunteer for any project, cause, or undertaking. Unfortunately, Don was killed in a car accident during his term of office.

Wanda Redding—Wanda was the "accountability" Board Member. Wanda would review every invoice prior to signing checks and would question charges she felt were unnecessary, incorrect, or were for work that had not yet been approved or completed. Her no nonsense approach and her directness when dealing with employees, contractors, or suppliers on billing issues made for a tight ship. It was not unusual at all to see her hold up a check and an invoice and while staring directly at the requesting party ask—"what is this for?" Wanda was a fierce protector of District funds and assets and was always looking out for the taxpayer's money. Wanda served as Secretary of meetings, and bookkeeper, prior to becoming a board member. Directors that served with Wanda credit her intellect and input in the early decision-making days. Tom Ekstrom states: "Wanda was one of the smartest ladies; it was a pleasure to serve with her." Per Wanda, her greatest challenge and her greatest accomplishment was "working with the board and the public."

Doyle Adams—Doyle was the "finance" Board Member. He served as the district's financial officer while he was on the Board and made sure all the District's funds were secured by collateral as required by statute, and he made all the investment decisions. Doyle was also the calm and deliberate Board Member that rarely raised his voice or got irritated with anyone or the process. Directors that served with Doyle claim they can count on one hand (and have a few fingers left over) of the times Doyle raised his voice in a meeting. He was always weighing the cost versus the benefit of any action and always made decisions based on well thought out reason. Doyle's frequent question was— "what are we doing here? What is the goal?" Every February Doyle asked the meeting to be moved due to the Sweetheart Dance conflict.

Red Childers—Red has probably served on the District's Board of Directors longer than anybody. He is the "longevity" Director that has been involved in several of the milestone developments of the District—its start and development and its switch to water independence. Red recalls the early days of when no wastewater system was in place and always took improving the District and community seriously. Red was the fiery defender of the people, protecting the people's tax funds, advocating for homestead and other tax exemption amounts. Red was the "questioner." Directors that served with Red say often you would hear Red say— "Just to play devil's advocate...." Red has returned for a second round of service. Red can always be counted on to come to the office if needed for signatures on documents. Red says his greatest accomplishment during his first stint was getting the District operational and during his second it was "getting the RO system and having our own water supply."

Tom Ekstrom—Tom came to the Board with utilities work experience; he was appointed to fill Don Ragin's spot. Tom was the "advocate for growth" and having water and wastewater services available for everyone in the District. Tom's repeated phrase was— "We need to put pipe in the ground; what do we need to do to put more pipe in the ground?" This statement was often accompanied by his hands slapping the table for emphasis. Tom strived to get all the prepaids hooked up so they could benefit from having services available. Along with Doyle, Tom volunteered his own time to help man the early large bin solid waste haul off days. Tom says his greatest challenge was the 8" waterline to the Sanctuary and how to allocate costs and control the water use and connections of the Sanctuary prior to the drilling of the well. Controlling the water use was something he felt he owed to the people of Port O'Connor. Directors that served with Tom state his utility experience along with his emphasis on building out the system contributed greatly to the District's early development.

The next wave: Leon Brown, Marshall Bradford, Allen Juneke, Joe Newsome, Nathan O'Neill with brief stints by Bobby Raybon and James Martin.

This wave was one of the most contentious periods in District history. Leon and Marshall came on board determined to chart the course of the District and challenge everything that had transpired before their time on the Board. They brought a lot of conviction to their methods and the focus appeared to lean more towards investigations.

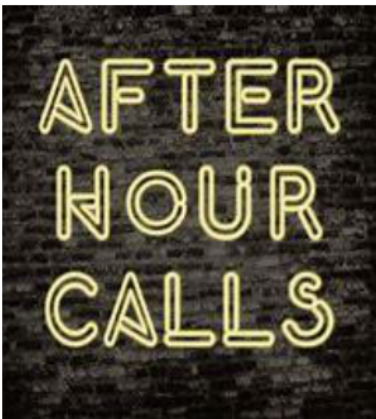
Leon Brown— [asked to be excluded]

Marshall Bradford—was direct and a strong personality that was very aggressive in asserting his positions. Marshall reviewed District policies and changed several during his reign on the Board. Marshall was a strong advocate for the hardship policy.

Nathan O'Neill—the "system knowledgeable" Director. Nathan is currently in his second term. His first tenure occurred during the District's contentious era. Nathan was employed by the District so he understands the system and what is needed to run it more than others. When discussions turn technical regarding facility upgrades or issues, Nathan is the director that takes the lead in discussions. If training for employees, safety equipment, or equipment purchases are the issue then Nathan will offer his input as someone that has been in the shoes of the employees. Nathan always views things from an efficient and operations viewpoint. Directors that serve with Nathan say his work experience and the perspective gained from it offer very valuable insight for the rest of the Board Members. Nathan is very invested in the Port O'Connor community and is present at every meeting (unless he gets called out for fire department emergencies).

CONTACT US 24/7

For an after-hours
problem or emergency
please call the POCID
Office at 361-983-2652
and a call will be
dispatched to the on-
call personnel.



Allen Juneke—Allen was the “determined” director; he brought his can-do attitude to the Board. Allen was appointed after the resignations of Teddy, Doyle, and Tom and served as President. Allen was re-elected after a tiebreaker election. Allen successfully navigated a very difficult time period in the District and jumped in to serve when not a lot of people were willing to take on the headache or character assassination associated with being on the Board of Directors for the District at that time. Allen, amid a lot of opposition, accomplished a lot while he was President by sheer determination and dedication to the district (and by calling another meeting in 72 hours when someone sought to delay a vote). Anyone that knows Allen knows he does not back away from a challenge. Perhaps Allen’s greatest contribution was creating standing contracts with outside construction firms to help keep the District moving on construction projects, connections, etc. when the District was short on man power. Allen says he felt handcuffed during his time on the Board due to the Board dynamics at the time, but feels his greatest contribution was perhaps being instrumental in securing the RO discharge easement, not just once, but twice. A former director says Allen deserves a lot of credit for being willing to step up for the community and serve when he did.

Joe Newsome—Joe also stepped in to serve at a time when no one wanted to serve on the Board in a District that had a lot of issues to address. Joe was the “challenger.” Despite taking a lot of abuse during Board meetings, Joe was determined to help steer the District forward and while always courteous, he stood his ground on several key issues and never backed down from asserting his position. Joe had a way of asking the hard questions to challenge an assertion he felt had no merit and demanded the person explain their position and reasoning. Joe also would rebuke and condemn unacceptable Director behavior that was detrimental to making informed decisions that would benefit the people of Port O’Connor. Always respectful, always cordial, yet resolute in his beliefs—that was Joe. A former director states that Joe’s determination to do things right and for the benefit of the people in Port O’Connor during a very difficult time deserves a lot of appreciation.

Bryan Redding—Bryan came to the Board as an appointee at the same time as Allen and Joe. Bryan also had previously worked for the District. He was concerned with the successful ongoing operation of the District during his time on the Board and was willing to serve even though he was not comfortable with the constant conflict that was present. He knew strong management was needed and was often the “swing vote” on motions to keep the District moving forward in a productive manner. Bryan’s willingness to serve the people of Port O’Connor, particularly at this time, is commendable; his swing vote was extremely valuable as it helped the District continue to operate. Allen Juneke says: “the value of Bryan’s swing vote was the key.”

Erny McDonough- Erny was the “peacemaker” Director. He served as President after a very tumultuous time for the Board of Directors and was determined to create a Board of peace and cooperation. Erny would proudly remark on how every vote of the Board he governed was unanimous on issues. Erny took great pride in creating and presiding over a cohesive board. Erny insisted on a prayer before meetings and conducted meetings in a respectful and inclusive manner. This created a Board that was ready and capable of addressing the complex issues the District had to confront (and there were many). Erny remembers his greatest challenge was the decision on the future water supply source and his greatest accomplishment was his role in the District securing water independence. Erny says he enjoyed serving on the Board and misses it.

David Randolph—David was the “quiet” director; he was quiet-until he wasn’t. His comments, though rare, were always straightforward and were usually what most were thinking but did not say. David called a spade a spade. Often his comments were also witty, and everyone had a good laugh. David had a construction knowledge background and served on the building committee for the new office building and his contributions there were very beneficial. David resigned once he knew he could no longer perform the duties of a director due to his health.

Maria Denney—Maria was the “soft-spoken” Board Member that brought human resource knowledge to the table and could always be counted on to be present to make sure a quorum was met; she took her duties as a director very seriously and was always very conscientious. Maria helped fashion the procedures used for employee annual reviews and contributed to other human resource related matters while she served on the Board. Maria’s greatest contributions were helping the District switch from an operator-operated district to an employee-operated district with employees.

Mike Clifton—Mike Clifton is the “supportive” Director. Mike is a Director that stresses he is a representative elected by the people. Mike engages with the community on concerns and issues but always supports and defers to the District Manager’s role in running the District. Mike elected to serve when the District had many things that demanded immediate attention—the sewer system, developing a water source, and many other things all amid a backlog of maintenance issues. If Mike disagrees with a Board position, he very respectfully presents his case and then supports the majority decision. Mike’s tenure has involved some very important decisions—wastewater system improvements, the future of the water supply for the District, consolidation, annexation, and the decision to build the new office building are only a few. Board members say they appreciate Mike’s calm, respectful nature, and his dedication to the people of Port O’Connor and how he has juggled the demands of the Board with his schedule. Mike is very committed to the District adopting a fair tax rate, that covers the necessary expenses, but is not higher than necessary.

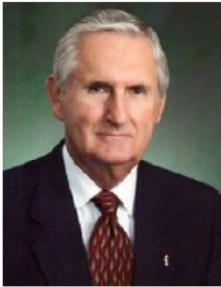
November 2024 Directors' Election Cancelled

This year there were two Directors' positions up for re-election: John "Red" Childers and Victor Mozisek. Both incumbents filed for re-election. The deadline to file an application to be a candidate was August 19, 2024. The deadline to file an application to be a write-in-candidate to serve as director of the District was August 23, 2024. Since no one else had filed by the August 23rd deadline, the incumbent directors were unopposed and declared directors elected to office in lieu of holding the election.

Danny McGuire—Danny also came on to the Board when it seemed like there were issues behind every corner—management, facility upgrades, backlogged maintenance, lack of supervision and oversight, a lack of employees and licensed personnel...; these were just a few of the issues. Danny is the “doer” Board Member; he gets things done. The red tape of government stretches his patience since he wants things done yesterday. Danny was elected by the Board to serve as President after Erny’s tenure ended. In that role, Danny has led a Board that has achieved a lot of things in a very short while. Much of that progress is the result of the incredible amount of personal time he has devoted to District business. Danny brought his business background to the table to make the District more business-like in its operations. He is constantly pressing for progress on projects and does not hesitate to spur everyone along when things get bogged down. He holds everyone accountable and is very conscientious of the needs of the community, the realities of growth, and the need to plan for it instead of wishing it would not happen. Like other members of the current Board, Danny is very concerned about keeping living expenses in check for the general population. This concern was the driving force behind seeking water independence. Danny states: “Water is the most important asset we have. The early Board that secured a reliable water source through GBRA did an awesome job with the limited funds and options they had. Hopefully history will remember this board for building on that work and securing a sustainable and dependable water source for the next 30 years. Water independence is a huge milestone for POCID.”

Victor Mozisek—Victor previously served on the LaSalle WCID No. 1A Board of Directors for 10 years, so he came to the Board with a lot of knowledge and experience. His current Board Members note Victor is the “solid” Board Member—you can count on him to be present at every meeting, to be engaged, to be familiar with what is being discussed and to speak up with questions or to contribute to the deliberations in meaningful ways. He listens to all points of view and then is one of the first to vote for or against a proposition. Victor is also the “status requestor;” he always wants to know the status of projects. Victor played a huge role in the successful consolidation of the District with LaSalle WCID No. 1A. Per Victor: “I got to know Danny McGuire, POCID President, and we discussed the possibility of merging the two districts since we were in close proximity to each other, and it would be mutually beneficial to both districts to merge and operate as one district.” Victor says he continued to attend POCID Board Meetings after the merger because he was interested in the upcoming water projects. Victor says: “it has been exciting to work with my fellow board members-Danny, Nathan, Red, and Mike—to develop a new independent water supply for Port O’Connor. In the long run I believe we can provide a reliable low-cost water supply for Port O’Connor and not be subject to the ever-increasing cost of river water from the private company in Port Lavaca. The new wells we drilled are also free from micro plastics that are becoming an ever-increasing problem with river water.”

POCID DIRECTORS



Kenneth Clark
1977-1984



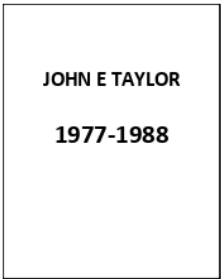
C Joe Bright
1977-1984



William Loden
1977-1984



Allen Berger
1977- 1986



John E Taylor
1977-1988



Johnny Hawes
1985-1986



Mike Overton
1985-1987



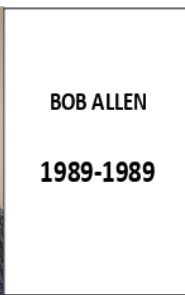
Paul Hawes
1985-1991



Calvin Ragusin
1986-2001



John "Red" Childers
1988-2015/2021-Present



BOB ALLEN
1989-1989



Henry Anderson
1989-1995



Thomas E Lambright
1989-2001



Teddy Hawes
1992-2015



Doyle Adams
1995-2015



DONALD RAGAN
2001-2008



Wanda Redding
2001-2014



Tom Eskrom
2008-2015



Leon Brown
2014-2018



Marshall Bradford
2014-2018



Bryan Redding
2015-2016



Allen JuneK
2015-2017



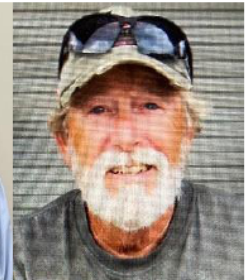
Joe Newsome
2015-2017



Nathan O'Neill
2016-2018/2020-Present



James Martin
2017-2017



Bobby Raybon
2017-2018



Erny McDonnough
2018-2020



Danny McGuire
2018-Present



Mike Clifton
2018 - Present



Maria Denney
2019-2020



David Randolph
2019-2022



Victor Mozisek
2022 - Present