



**Collaborative Adaptive Sensing of the Atmosphere (CASA WX) Executive Council
Meeting
NCTCOG Regional Forum Conference Room / Teams
August 14, 2024, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM
Minutes**

Call to Order and Opening remarks

Chase Wheeler, CASA WX Vice Chair

Item 1: Vote on February meeting minutes (9:32 AM)



CASA WX Members

Motion: Michaela Sandefer made a motion to approve the February meeting minutes; Amber Gardner second, the motion passed. No opposed.

Item 2: Vote and Approve Vice-Chair position (9:35 AM)



CASA WX Members

• Amanda sent out nomination forms for Vice Chair, only one was received. Chase Wheeler was nominated and accepted.

Motion: Michaela Sandefer made a motion to approve the CASA Vice Chair position; Mariah Phipps-Jack second, the motion passed. No opposed.

Item 3: Vote on additional funding for UMASS (9:40 AM)



CASA WX Members

• We have a little over \$100K in contingency funds from CASA dues. We want to keep those funds available for aging radar equipment failure. We've had to spend more money this year in the FY24 budget than anticipated due to equipment repairs. They are requesting additional funds in the amount of \$9,300 and are at a \$4,200 deficit. This will give them an additional \$5,000 to spend through March 2025.

Motion: Mariah Phipps-Jack made a motion to approve additional funding for UMASS; Michaela Sandefer second, the motion passed. No opposed.

Item 4: Radar website update

Brenda Philips, UMASS

• UMASS has been working on an interface so that researchers can gain access to the archive data. It has been linked to an NWS database.

Item 5: Radar network updates

Brenda Phillips, UMASS
Eric Lyons, TxSense

• We received a call from EWR stating they want the radar back that they contributed to Johnson Co. It was installed in 2013-2014. We did not pay for this radar. We've talked to Jamie Moore about this, and plan to have a follow-up discussion to determine if there is additional funding to keep the radar there.

Johnson Co. – March – There was a failing hard drive and data RAM in the processing computer inside the radar. We purchased a new hard drive and ram that cost \$700, and the radar is back up and running. A site visit to make repairs found a hawk's nest. We consulted with Jamie Moore and others before moving it. We had to acquire a permit from the US Fish and Wildlife Service to work around an active hawk's nest.

David Finrock wanted to know if there is any way to prevent the hawks from nesting. Eric – the nest was built several years ago; we can now get rid of it.

• **Denton** – Repairs were made to the radar in April. In May there was a power loss at the site that required a visit. In June there were some new security protocols in effect, firewall updates, and changed some data.

• **UNT** – March and April were good. In May we had a failed pedestal motor. It was less than a year old. There was a warranty to replace the part. The warranty covered the repairs, and the radar is back up. A sunshade was constructed in mid-June, and we have not had any interruptions due to the heat this summer. The cost was about \$250.

• **Midlothian** – The radars were up in March and April. There were some IP changes such as firewall

updates and data protocol configuration. In June, the contractor damaged the fiber, power going to the radars. Midlothian (Tonya) was very active and oversaw those repairs.

- **Fort Worth** - A repaired pedestal was installed in March. We had to repair an oscillator that cost \$800. In April there was a thermostat replacement. In May, there were some powerful thunderstorms, that caused some power outages. Radar is up.
- **Mesquite** – In March, we had multiple fiber cuts due to ongoing construction at the airport. The network was down for a while. In May we experienced an issue of a failing radar part that may require another repair. We could possibly use some of the \$5,000. The radar is currently offline, but the site is in good shape.
- **Facilities Report**
 - UMass Green Energy High Performance Compute Center (data center) annual shutdown was moved from August to May (May 22nd - 24th). Everything remained online during the shutdown, and the data was good, it didn't miss anything. All of the data was transferred back to the archive once it came back up.
 - In May, the NWS monitoring code stopped working due to the base no longer being updated and it was replaced by a new NWS API. New retrieval codes were built, and it is working again.
 - After the flooding in Johnson Co. this year, we updated the website to bring in a watershed basin to do water monitoring.
- **Weather Report**
 - In April, May and June, we had large hail events, and several flooding events that included fatalities. There were some strong tornadoes in Denton and Collin counties in May that included fatalities.
- **New Collaborations** Brenda Phillips, UMASS
 - The new collaborations are not funded and are more research oriented. We will continue the collaborations with DFW Airport doing stormwater monitoring and winter weather projects that are ongoing. There is a new grant that CASA is a part of and it is the Department of Transportation, Smart Mobility grant that was awarded to the City of Fort Worth. The focus is for drones/UAV to provide weather information to monitor roads. UMASS is collaborating with a company called TruWeather.
 - UMASS has been collaborating with NWS, Amanda Shroeder has been piloting the idea of flash flood severity index.
 - We were awarded an NSF Planning grant that focuses on Human Centered Warning.
 - We have been in conversations with NCTCOG Environmental Development department who is doing a Transportation Infrastructure Stormwater grant and is interested in CASA data.

Item 6: Funding Subcommittee Update

William Wessel, CASA WX Vice Chair

- We've been busy over the past year looking for funding to enhance the network for radars. We submitted a project for funding. It's been reduced from \$8 million, to \$4.5 million. Grainger fully supports our project. Congress is in recess until the end of September. The bill for \$4.5 million dollars is for radar replacement and expansion. This is congressional money that will go toward FY25. However, it may be postponed until after the election. The bill that was voted on by the Appropriations Committee, congress will need to vote on it also.

David wants to know when will the senate pass it? Chase – it came out of appropriations, and then everyone went on recess. Brenda recommends to circle back to congressional offices and is recommending Emergency Managers to write supporting letters to congress. Brend is also talking to the Government Relations person at the University of Massachusetts to get some support.

Amanda – The bill we are following is the FY2025 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Next Steps/Priorities

CASA WX Members

CASA invoices will go out in October.

Adjournment

Resources: CASA WX Website: www.nctcog.org/CASAWX

**Next CASA WX Executive Council Meeting:
November 13, 2024
9:30 AM- 11:30 AM**