



Common-tary

Newsletter of Common Cause *Oklahoma*,
Volume 12, Issue 1, February 2006

Updates by Edwin Kessler:

Coffin Sale Monopoly

As noted in our Newsletter of April, 2005, the Washington, D.C.-based Institute for Justice appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court to adjudicate different decisions of the 6th and 10th Circuit Courts of Appeals concerning monopolies granted to funeral homes for sale of coffins. Our Supreme Court declined to take the case, and this leaves the Tennessee law overturned and the Oklahoma law in place. The monopoly-granting provision of Oklahoma's Funeral Services Licensing Act is not the most important issue facing Oklahoma, but it is symptomatic of a very sick political system locally. It is exemplified in this case by the political power of the funeral home lobby, which has effectively blocked three years of effort by Republicans to gain relief for bereaved who pay up to double the price for caskets than is customarily paid in neighboring states. Oklahoma is now among only four states that enforce a ban on sale of coffins by other than licensed funeral directors who have undergone extended training in such as embalming. The situation has been likened to having to buy shoes from a podiatrist rather than in a shoe store.

This year, Representative Paul Wesselhöft, Republican of Moore, is sponsoring H.B. 2511, which, like former representative Carolyn Coleman's H.B. 1640, would exempt from Oklahoma's Funeral Services Licensing Act any persons and businesses that sell funeral merchandise and do not provide any other services related to the transportation or preparation of dead human remains or the supervision of funerals.

It seems to Common Cause *Oklahoma* that this bill should receive strong support from Democrats, although the historical record is strongly counterintuitive! We are told that legislative politics today ensures defeat of any measure that does not have support of members of the controlling party in both House and Senate. Democratic Senator Bernest Cain will co-sponsor Rep. Wesselhöft's bill.

Crosstown Highway route in Oklahoma City

Be sure to read Tom Elmore's discussion of an important new development in a companion article in this newsletter. Here we note that a groundbreaking ceremony for the Crosstown route on November 14th may have been premature! We certainly hope that Oklahoma City will not be the last place in our country to rip up railroad tracks even while they are being laid down elsewhere. In relatively sparsely populated New Mexico, for example, the first phase of a comprehensive rail plan will start with six trains this year that connect Albuquerque with towns to north and south! Other cities in the Midwest, including Dallas/Ft Worth, St. Louis, Little Rock, and Denver either have rail systems already in place or

have well established plans for their implementation while Oklahoma seems still focused on cars and buses.

A typed transcript has been prepared from tape recordings made by Norman city staff during the Council meeting of March 9, 2004. At that meeting there was extended discussion of a proposal to send a letter to Governor Henry asking him to appoint an independent commission to examine the Crosstown route-selection process. The 33-page transcript was presented to the Norman City Council last January 6th. The presented document shows that the Council, which deadlocked 4-4 on the proposal, was swayed by a perceived threat from Director Gary Ridley, Oklahoma Dept. of Transportation. It was perceived that funds otherwise due Norman would be withheld if the resolution passed. A copy of the transcript was sent with a covering letter on January 6th to Secretary of Transportation Tomlinson, but no response has been received a month later.

Risk-Appropriation Bonds

A higher education bond issue for \$500 million, to be applied to capitol improvements at universities around the State, was authorized by House Bill 1191 without the vote of the people or an identified direct tax for its amortization called for by Sections 23-25 of Article 10 of the state Constitution. The proposal for a bond issue was not sent to the Oklahoma Supreme Court for a declaratory judgment because previous approvals of bonds by that body are now perceived to be applicable to this issuance.

As noted in the last issue of this Newsletter, no general obligation bond issue has been authorized by the Legislature since the 1998 5-4 declaration of the Supreme Court of Oklahoma. In that case, OSC held that the proposed road bond that failed to meet the constitutional test represented by a direct tax for its amortization and an approving vote of the people, did not impose a legal obligation on the State for its repayment. Therefore, use of the word *risk* and indication of the requirement that funds needed to amortize the bonds must be found annually, essentially through legislative appropriations. Our present expectation is that competitive bids for these capitol improvement bonds will be received and evaluated by the Commission on Bond Oversight around the end of February.

Subsequent to the higher education bond issue for capitol improvements, another bond issue, this for \$50 million, was proposed to fund the matching portion of private donations toward endowed chairs. This was Case 101409 at the Oklahoma Supreme Court, and there were objections again from Common Cause *Oklahoma* and Jerry Fent, an attorney in Oklahoma City, but the OSC again found the bonds constitutional. Such bonds carry a notice to the effect that they do not constitute a debt of the State, and they are insured, and the interest rate is about ¼ % higher than it would be if they were general obligation bonds. An appeal for rehearing filed by attorney Fent on December 28, 2005 was denied on January 30, 2006, with Justices Lavender and Opala dissenting. These justices also dissented in the landmark 1998 and 1999 cases.

Now, on the issuance of the endowed chair bonds in a month or two, we'll have \$50 million for that purpose, and

end by paying considerably more than that because of interest on the bonds. In the year since the case was brought to the Court, we could have funded several endowed chairs with the sum that must now be appropriated annually in order to amortize the bonds.

The Board of Directors of Common Cause *Oklahoma* favors the presence of endowed chairs at our universities, but believes that use of risk-appropriation bonds for that purpose is unconstitutional, unnecessarily costly, and generally counterproductive. Are the bonds for the bond dealers or for the people?

Oklahoma Roads

There is much fanfare about a sad state of Oklahoma's roads and bridges, and in view of this, some of the projects of the Oklahoma Dept. of Transportation appear puzzling. For example, there is a project to replace Oklahoma's present road signs with signs that carry an outline map of the State. This will cost about half a million dollars. Another project is the building of a **temporary** bridge for about \$7.5 million in Oklahoma City, related to the Crosstown project, which may or may not go forward (see article by Tom Elmore). Was voter lack-of-confidence in ODOT administration indicated by the vote on September 13th 2005, which decisively rejected a proposed five-cent increase in the tax on gasoline? Do highway and trucking lobbies have an inordinate influence on ODOT policies? Requests for better maintenance of the highway system and for new roads and bridges seem constant, but despite years of calls for a cost allocation study that could lead to an equitable sharing of highway maintenance costs by cars and trucks, there has been no motion in that

direction. ODOT requested a bond issue of hundreds of millions of dollars to be used for construction of new highways (the GARVEE bonds), to be amortized with future revenues from federal sources, but no schedule for resultant roadbuilding was presented, and according to an ODOT official, none had been prepared! The bonds were approved anyway.

Underground Petroleum Storage Tanks

This has become a very complex matter, and only a very bare and incomplete sketch is given here. A Corporation Commission decision to pay \$3.6 million from the Petroleum Storage Tank Release Fund to Phillips Petroleum Company was contested as fraudulent via a taxpayer qui tam Demand Letter filed by ten Oklahoma taxpayers, including some members of the CCOk Board of Directors. The Commission responded by filing a petition for declaratory judgment seeking to have the agreement to pay adjudicated as valid and enforceable. Several subsequent important actions led finally to dismissal of the qui tam lawsuit in the Oklahoma County District Court by Trial Judge Barbara G. Swinton. Judge Swinton's decision was appealed by our side to the Oklahoma Supreme Court, and the case was assigned to the Oklahoma Court of Civil Appeals. The latter Court reversed and remanded Judge Swinton's decision, but this latest decision has been appealed by the Corporation Commission.

Justice is slow, but we hope that it grinds fine. Fascinating details of this case can be read in the rather sharply worded analysis and opinion provided by the Court of Civil Appeals under Case Number 101,605, filed on October 18, 2005.

Meanwhile, the whistle-blower lawsuit involving Rachel Mor and Charles Wright continues active at the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma.

On January 9, 2006, a second Taxpayer Demand – Qui Tam Notice was sent to the Corporation Commission. This contests approximately \$4.5 million being paid to numerous recipients from a start date of approximately January 10, 2004, and demands curative action. The letter, signed by many of the same persons who signed the first, including former Corporation Commissioner Ed Apple and several members of the CCOk Board of Directors, alleges that the payments are being made although it was and is known that they were not due and owing and that many of the claims are unsupported by documentation required under Petroleum Storage Tank Statutes. Furthermore, the Demand Letter alleges that technical and accounting staff at the Corporation Commission had reviewed the claims for reimbursement and determined that payment was not permitted by controlling statutes and agency rules and that many of the claims did not contain sufficient information from which the validity of the claims could be properly evaluated. The Demand Letter alleges other malfeasance of an extremely serious kind.

In response to the Demand Letter and to related matters discussed in part above, Corporation Commissioners met in Executive Session last January 18th, but the outcome of that meeting is not known to CCOk and there has been no response to the Demand Letter up to the time of preparation of this Newsletter.

Two New Issues

Edwin Kessler

Alternative Fuels – The high price of petroleum and looming shortfalls of supply in relation to demand have stimulated a search for alternative liquid fuels. At a time when true patriotism is sorely needed, it is in very short supply, with special interests scrambling for subsidies and getting them through the present political system. A federal tax credit of about sixty-eight cents per gallon for ethanol production is a provision of the energy bill passed by Congress in 2005, and an additional 20 cents per gallon tax credit was provided in Oklahoma during the 2005 legislative session. Nearly 100 plants for producing ethanol from corn have already been established in the United States. No such plants yet exist in Oklahoma, but a proposal being pursued in Enid would involve the Oklahoma Farmers Union and Chaparral Energy, an Oklahoma-based company with major interests in oil and gas. The facility proposed for Enid would be similar to others in its conversion of about 50 thousand bushels of corn daily into 50 million gallons of ethanol annually. That much ethanol would have the energy equivalent of about one million barrels of gasoline, which is about 5% of one day's supply for our country. In fact, if **all** of our Nation's corn, about nine billion bushels annually, were converted to ethanol, it would displace just about 5% of present petroleum consumption.

The federal and state subsidies for ethanol are insufficient for advocates of the Enid facility, and in spite of indications that the return on investment there with existing subsidies would be in the neighborhood of 50% annually, tax increment financing (TIF) is also being

sought. TIF is enabled in Oklahoma by a law passed in 1990, and involves the use of local taxes increased by the development itself for the construction of supportive infrastructure. However, Oklahoma law expresses legislative intent to limit use of TIF to cases where economic development would not take place otherwise.

A press release from the office of Senator John McCain in 2003 includes: "Ethanol is a product that would not exist if Congress didn't create an artificial market for it. No one would be willing to buy it. Yet thanks to agricultural subsidies and ethanol producer subsidies, it is now a very big business -- tens of billions of dollars that have enriched a handful of corporate interests - primarily one big corporation, ADM. Ethanol does nothing to reduce fuel consumption, nothing to increase our energy independence, nothing to improve air quality." A letter to the editor from *CCOk* has been published in *Enid News*, and at this writing it seems possible that it and other documentation provided to Enid officials and to the newspaper may have somewhat slowed the lunge for a food-to-fuel facility at that place.

Four other consequences inherent in increased usage of agricultural products for the manufacture of liquid fuels are larger loss of natural habitat, increased degradation of agricultural lands and applications of pesticides harmful to humans and animals, and tendency of the price of foods to become locked to the price of oil. The last named is already quite noticeable as a rapid recent increase in the world price of sugar, much of which is converted to ethanol in Brazil. Global spread of destructive policies related to decline of liquid fuel resources is also illustrated by large

scale replacement of Malaysian jungle with palm plantations, from which oil is converted to diesel fuel. The large rate of loss of wildlife habitat in Malaysia has been reported from London by George Monbiot.

Other processes for production of liquid fuels that are being stimulated by the increasing price of petroleum involve tar sands, coal, and natural gas, as well as conversion of other agricultural crops such as switchgrass. Advocative publicity invariably omits critically important factors, and for reasons too lengthy for inclusion here, all of the alternative processes fall seriously flat.

The biggest tragedy may be our country's failure to take stronger action that can be markedly effective at present, such as development of alternative transportation systems and strong conservation, such as federally imposed aggressive CAFE standards. But the related issues are nothing if not enormously complex, involving an aging and very costly transportation infrastructure, greenhouse warming, and a cultural infatuation with physical growth, to name just three that are not explicitly cited above. Underlying all is a paucity of rational discourse and a surfeit of political discourse that is guided by the wealth of narrow interests.

Weyerhaeuser Craig facility in McCurtain County, Oklahoma

The Craig site is an abandoned paperboard manufacturing plant that created hundreds of thousands of pounds of toxic and hazardous waste before being closed about fifteen years ago. It is one of many artifacts of the extensive Weyehaeuser operations in the area, which involve cultivation of pine trees and suppression of deciduous growth on

several hundred thousand acres of Weyerhaeuser-owned and leased land. Discharges of water from the Craig site go to an unnamed tributary of the Mt. Fork River, which drains to the Red River and eventually to the Gulf of Mexico. An application for renewal of a discharge permit provoked a large outcry from area residents who fear toxicity in the discharges. Complaints were heard from speakers among more than a hundred people who attended a public meeting conducted by Oklahoma's Dept. of Environmental Quality on October 6th of last year in Broken Bow, Oklahoma. Common Cause *Oklahoma* was represented at the meeting in an information-gathering mode.

A permit for continued discharges was issued by DEQ with a covering letter dated January 4, 2006. The following statement is given on page 27 of that permit: "... The DEQ acknowledges the personal importance to many of the people commenting on the proposed OPDES permit regarding their concerns over Weyerhaeuser corporate policy, forestry and harvesting operations, toxic release inventories (from when the facility was active), atmospheric emissions, landfilling of solids and waste materials, treatment/storage/disposal of hazardous wastes, operations at other active Weyerhaeuser facilities, occupational safety and health, and incidence rates of cancer and other illnesses of public health significance. However, these areas are not within the scope and authority of this OPDES permit. As such, these other subject areas cannot be addressed in this response to comments and final permit decision."

An important exchange of information between *CCOk* and the Executive Committee of the Oklahoma Chapter of

the Sierra Club occurred on January 29th, and the discharge permit was subsequently examined by David Brown, an environmental engineer who came recently to Oklahoma from Arkansas, and is now on the SC Exec. Committee. . Among several possible weak points in ODEQ's permitting action is a Tier II designation of the facility although a Tier III designation may be required. The difference involves a substantial procedural shift. A letter requesting administrative suspension of the effective date of 1 March 2006, a supplemental technical review, additional public comments, and discussion and evaluation of identified issues at the next regularly scheduled DEQ Board meeting is in preparation as this Newsletter is in press. Principal action is with Mr. Brown and concerned citizens in McCurtain County.

Judicial Campaign Reform Bill

Lynn Howell

We are pleased to report that our proposal to provide for public financing of district judge campaigns has been introduced as Senate Bill 2001. Senator Bernest Cain has sponsored the bill for us.

To qualify for funding, a candidate for district or associate district judge must gain contributions of no more than \$25.00 from 1% of the qualified voters in that particular judicial district, so as to weed out any frivolous candidates. After qualifying for funding, a candidate will not be permitted to accept any other contributions. The level of funding will be based upon the average expenditures in the previous two contested races in that judicial district. There is also a provision to increase the level of funding if an opponent who has opted out of the system spends more than the candidate

accepting public funding, or if an outside interest group spends money in an effort to influence the election.

Certainly everyone can agree that a judge's impartiality should never be in question. This bill will eliminate the challenge to that impartiality caused by the need to raise campaign funds. We hope that you will speak positively of this bill to your legislator and others when you get the chance.

Ethics Commission Developments

Lynn Howell

Last year, Common Cause Oklahoma submitted a proposal to the Ethics Commission that would completely ban all gifts from lobbyists to state employees who are not elected or appointed. The limit set in the Ethics Rules was \$300 per year. We contended that even minimal gifts to state employees can lead to a relationship between the donor and the recipient that sometimes results in favoritism or even corruption.

We were initially opposed by the Oklahoma Public Employees Association, but we tweaked our proposed rule amendment slightly and gained its support. After hearing arguments from us and lobbyists in opposition all year, this December the Commission compromised and passed a rule revision that lowered the annual gift limit from \$300 to \$100. While not entirely what we wanted, this is still better than the old rule, and would not have happened without Common Cause's efforts.

The new rule will become effective unless it and other proposed revisions are vetoed by the legislature this session.

Any support you can give would be helpful.

Crosstown

Tom Elmore

Despite the show made by state and local officials in the November 14, 2005, "groundbreaking" for the "New Crosstown" project held south of Bricktown near downtown OKC, credible efforts to stop the project and the destruction it would bring to the historic OKC Union Station rail yard continue.

In mid-October, 2005, the federal Surface Transportation Board in Washington, DC announced that, unless it heard credible protest from reliable parties, it had determined to grant a request by Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company and the Stillwater Central Shortline railroad to abandon a key 2.95 mile segment of the former Frisco rail line linking the Oklahoma City Union Station rail yard to Will Rogers Airport, Mustang, Chickasha, Lawton and Altus to the west and southwest and to Midwest City, Stroud and Tulsa to the east and northeast, effective November 12. To the apparent surprise of those railroad companies and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, which is the real source of the push for this destruction of strategic gateway rail line, protest was lodged -- first in the form of a barrage of critical comments to the STB's Environmental Analysis section from a number of informed parties, including retired railroaders and state representative Al Lindley, and then as formal petitions to have the abandonment application declared null and void. Washington attorney and

former Interstate Commerce Commission general counsel Fritz Kahn filed the formal petitions on behalf of North American Transportation Institute and Bio-Energy Wellness Center, run by near-northwest OKC neighborhood leader Michael Richards.

To date (early February, 2006) the abandonment has been forestalled as the STB considers the protest petitions and the evidence behind them. Several groups and individuals have come forward to help pay the legal fees involved in this effort, including Common Cause *Oklahoma*, for which we are very grateful.

While the Surface Transportation Board has great authority in these matters, it is unfortunately not concerned with such issues as the obvious diminution of public safety the substitution of exclusively street-level railroad crossings for the historic Robinson and Walker Street underpasses would plainly bring. It also does not address the proposed destruction of prospects for needed rail transit development the ODOT plan would bring. Instead, our protests necessarily centered on the claims of the railroad companies to have had no revenue traffic generated on the segment proposed for abandonment in the two years prior to the application. We have surveyed businesses on the line that depend on rail service and have brought evidence of those claims to the STB. We believe there may well have been other businesses served on this line segment displaced by pressure from ODOT. We hope to prevail in this effort, and are assured by counsel that even in the event of an adverse decision from the STB, we've now positioned ourselves to make further effective appeals if necessary, resources permitting.

Suffice it to say that the effort to abandon this elegant and high-quality rail line has nothing whatever to do with operational or safety considerations of the railroads. There is no doubt that the ODOT plan would diminish safety and increase expense. Instead, it has everything to do with the desire of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation to replace the historic rail facility with an unnecessary urban expressway the agency can neither afford to build nor maintain -- even as the quality of roads and bridges statewide continues to fall.

If Oklahomans take President Bush's recent call for less foreign oil dependency seriously, the best possible transportation plan, for both OKC and the rest of the state, would be immediate suspension of the "New Crosstown project" accompanied by aggressive redevelopment of Union Station and its rail lines for innovative passenger and freight service. The effect on regional motor fuel consumption, air quality, general mobility and economic development would be both rapid and significant, positioning the state for wise, sustainable development and building a very real hedge against diminishing world oil supplies and uncertain prices. As noted in my last *Common-tary* article, the obvious, overwhelming troubles with Oklahoma's highways and highways-only transportation policies will yield only to informed and doggedly persistent citizen action. Nothing has changed in state government. Purported plans for improvement of state roads, both from the legislature and the administration, have all been tried before with disastrous results. It's time to insist on replacement of "business as usual" at the state capitol with wise reform and accountable management.

Conference Lays Foundation for State Reforms

Brenda Moore-Finch

The Southwest Election Reform Conference organized by Common Cause national was held Oct. 19-21, 2005, in Estes Park, Colo. Government officials, academics and advocates met to focus on strategies for election reform at the state level. The conference was also open to the public.

Conferees stayed in comfortable accommodations and attended workshops in lodges and cabins at the beautiful YMCA of the Rockies, established more than a hundred years ago.



The Oklahoma Group L>R: David Splinter, Brenda, Joy Turner, Nathaniel Batchelder, Tim Mauldin.

States represented were Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Texas, Oklahoma and Arizona, and included charismatic New Mexico Secretary of State Rebecca Vijiil-Giron, representatives from Arizona's governor's office, and several state legislators. Other groups or state officials included political parties, the League of Women Voters, Clean Elections Institute, disability law centers, Latina and African-American voter

groups, Colorado Director of Elections, several voter education and voters' rights groups, civil liberties groups, political science professors and others.

Attending from Oklahoma were Oklahoma City University professor Dr. Tim Mauldin; Libertarian Party member David Splinter; Oklahoma City Peace House Director Nathaniel Batchelder; Oklahoma Disability Law Center attorney Joy Turner, and board member of Common Cause Oklahoma Brenda Moore-Finch.

Workshops addressed a wide array of election reform issues and topics including legislation, grassroots organizing, collaboration and networking, campaign planning and moving from talk to action. Speakers included Common Cause New Mexico Executive Director Max Brix, who is also chair of the state coalition New Mexicans for Campaign Finance Reform. Brix helped pass the Clean Elections Initiative in Albuquerque.

Also presenting were Wendy Weiser, associate counsel with the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, who helped author the "Response to the Report of the 2005 Commission on Federal Election Reform; Donetta Davidson, U.S. Election Assistance Commissioner and former Secretary of State in Colorado; Common Cause President Chellie Pingree, other CC state and national directors, and others.

Numerous voting issues were stressed but two issues rang loud and clear: so-called Voter ID reforms or laws would be discriminatory and would probably cause senior citizens, lower-income, minorities, and homeless persons who don't have current identification more trouble at the polls and should be opposed. Public financing of elections

at the local level was seen as more achievable than statewide measures to level the playing field for election of candidates to represent voters.

Davidson urged citizens to visit electionline.org (for threats to elections), and EAC.gov, to take the Election Day Survey--the latter as a way for the election service commission to evaluate conditions in each state.

“This data can tell us a world about your state,” Davidson said. “Did your elected officials respond to the EAC? That is important. ...A lot of you are going to be suing people.”

On the local level, the Oklahoma group stated that ballot access laws in Oklahoma are the most restrictive in the nation, and that Oklahoma’s optical scanning ballot-counting machines, will soon need replacing. Oklahoma uses the same type of equipment in all 77 counties and is admired nation-wide. State Rep. Al Lindley, D-OKC, said Oklahoma’s technology is not incorruptible, however. Although these machines are backed up by a paper trail, the machines can be set up to not count or misread ballots. He also said that security is lax at the ballot-counting site and anyone can walk in unchallenged—and so he and a colleague did just that after receiving a complaint from a constituent.

An election reform group was formed following the conference and anyone interested in working on this issue is welcome to join in, just call the CCOK office number.

Common Cause Oklahoma agreed at its January board meeting to look at ways to engage the public in discussion groups and in their government. Stay with us—there will be more to come.

CCOK Annual Meeting Features Attorney General

Brenda Moore-Finch

CCOK held its annual meeting and banquet Thursday, Sept. 8, 2005, in the historic Oklahoma Room at the Boulevard Cafeteria, located downtown at 525 NW 11th in Oklahoma City.



Attorney General Drew Edmondson visits with Carter Bradley prior to his speech

Theme for the event was “Speaking Generally with the Attorney General.” The Keynote address was given by Oklahoma Attorney General Drew Edmondson who spoke about the need for older Americans (and non-Americans), and others who suffer needlessly from debilitating chronic pain to have better access to pain management and lead more productive lives.

Edmondson said he is concerned about the Drug Enforcement Administration’s policies which are aggressive and cause doctors to fear prescribing narcotics for fear of losing their license or being incarcerated. Edmondson’s wife Linda has a foundation that works with senior citizens, many who are very ill and need pain management.

Other issues were mentioned and a question/answer session followed.

The AG left shortly after the meeting for Washington, D.C. to speak to the conservative Heritage Foundation about the pain management issue.

Numerous studies have shown that people who are in extreme pain and take narcotics do not get high, and that if the medication is taken as directed, can take the medication a long time without needing the dosage increased, said John Andrus, M.D.



Richard Hilbert receives his outstanding board member award from Dr. Edwin Kessler.

Three people were honored for exceptional service to CCOK during the event. Dr. Edwin Kessler received “The Lifetime Achievement Award” for outstanding volunteer work leading and mentoring CCOK. Kessler, who is vice-chair, served as chair more than a decade. He still works relentlessly and often alone on numerous issues.

Dr. Richard Hilbert and O. Gail Poole were named “Outstanding Board Members for 2005” for their leadership and volunteer work. All three deserve more space and time than can be allowed in this newsletter. If you would like to hear more about their contributions, as well as other board members and how they contribute, please let us know.

Approximately 35-40 people attended the event which was moderated by Board Chair Lynn Howell.

Howell, Brenda Moore-Finch and Robyn Farber organized the event.

Board of Directors

Common Cause Oklahoma:

Lynn Howell, Chair – Edmond
Dr. Edwin Kessler, Vice-Chair – Norman
David Whitney, Treasurer – Norman
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Dr. Benjamin Alpers – Norman
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Marjorie B. Greer – Norman
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Brenda Moore – Choctaw
O. Gail Poole – Norman
Jim Stanley – Norman
Gary Wilburn – Seminole

Common Cause *Oklahoma* has an office in the Oklahoma Disciples Foundation Building in Oklahoma City. We pay a nominal rent of \$100 per month and have a part-time staff assistant: Robyn Farber. If you wish to contact Robyn at our office, the number is 405-525-6334. Our email address is:

commoncause@sbcglobal.net

If you have not done so, please send us your email address to facilitate our ability to quickly contact you on important matters.

WEBSITE: WWW.COMMONCAUSE.ORG

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From time to time, our readers may want to read more detail concerning an issue mentioned in our newsletters. We will be happy to assist by providing the information directly from our files or by directing the inquiry towards a pertinent source.



