

## Water fight ends

By Steve Bandy, News Messenger

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A settlement agreement that resolves all issues between the city of Marshall and the Caddo Lake Coalition currently pending before the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality was approved by city commissioners Thursday night.

After meeting in executive session for a little more than a half-hour, commissioners returned to open session to unanimously approve the agreement that will end the long-standing litigation between the city and the Caddo groups over Marshall's application to amend its water permit to allow for industrial sales without a hearing to determine environmental impacts.



Courtesy Case/News Messenger  
(ENLARGE)

Jack Canson, a member of the Caddo Lake Institute and the Greater Caddo Lake Association, left, shares a laugh with Mayor William "Buddy" Power after the announcement that issues were resolved between the city and the Caddo Lake Coalition Tuesday at Marshall City Hall.

"It's time we put this behind us and move on with other things," Mayor William "Buddy" Power said following the meeting.

Jack Canson, a member of both the Caddo Lake Institute and the Greater Caddo Lake Association, both groups being members of the coalition, credited Power for spearheading the face-to-face talks that ultimately led to the agreement.

"For a long time it was a group of lawyers talking to a group of lawyers," Canson said. "It was time for all of us to come together and Buddy made that happen."

This agreement, and others the city reached with the coalition and Northeast Texas Municipal Water District in recent weeks, ensures that Marshall now has the flexibility to supply water to prospective industries that seek untreated water and provides the necessary safeguards that Caddo Lake Coalition supporters have sought to protect the lake and its wetlands.

"Marshall has a lifelong partnership with Caddo Lake," Power said. "I am confident that this new agreement will benefit the city and the lake for generations to come."

Caddo Lake Institute President Rick Lowerre praised Power, the commissioners and the city staff for their hard work and determination to make this settlement possible.

"This is a landmark agreement, one that shows that it is possible to find ways to meet all of the needs for water in the region," Lowerre said. "This agreement proves that, when people with different perspectives and goals work together, they can find solutions that balance their needs."

As a prelude to Thursday's agreement, the city recently secured the availability of industrial raw water through NETMWD and received approval from TCEQ, without objection from coalition members, to distribute the water in the Sabine Basin as well as the Cypress Basin.

Another key issue was resolved through the negotiations. The city and the Caddo Lake groups have reached an agreement that resolves the question of whether water being discharged from the wastewater treatment plant is required to be returned to the Cypress Basin.

This provision assures that Marshall will not have to make a significant capital and operational investment related to returning these flows to the Cypress Basin.

As part of the agreement, city and Caddo Lake representatives have committed to meet regularly to work together on common water-related matters and opportunities.

One such topic is the overall health of the lake. To this point, both parties have agreed to work toward improving flows into Big Cypress and Caddo Lake in support of improved water quality, recreation, navigation and the environment.

The Caddo Lake Coalition is comprised of the city of Uncertain, the Greater Caddo Lake Association of Texas, The Caddo Lake Chamber of Commerce and the Caddo Lake Institute.