

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE
RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP (RGRWPG) (REGION "M")
10:30 A.M. IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE RGRWA MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2009
LRGVDC TRANSPORTATION CENTER BOARD ROOM
510 S. PLEASANTVIEW DR., WESLACO, TX
PRESIDING: JIM DARLING, VICE CHAIRMAN

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Vice Chairman Jim Darling called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m. and announced that the meeting had been posted as required by statute; however a quorum was not yet present. It was the consensus of the Group to proceed with non-action items until those members in transit arrived.

3. Hear Public Comment

Vice Chairman Darling recognized Mr. Godfrey Garza, Hidalgo County Drainage District #1. Mr. Garza updated the Group on the status of the levee system rehabilitation project in Hidalgo County and stated that IBWC Commissioner Bill Ruth submitted a project schedule for the Rio Grande Flood Control System Rehabilitation Project. Mr. Garza suggested the Group send a letter to Commissioner Ruth requesting the IBWC keep the Group engaged, informed of meetings, apprised of the status of the project, the planning stage of the project, segments going out to bid, status of how the project budget was moving forward and if further funding from Washington was required. In addition, Mr. Garza suggested the Group encourage IBWC to keep the public informed and maintain the Project Schedule as presented. Mr. Garza stated that Hidalgo County Judge J.D. Salinas submitted a letter to IBWC with a similar request.

Upon conclusion of Public Comments a quorum of voting members was present with the following voting members in attendance:

Board Members

Jim Darling, Vice Chairman
Mary Lou Campbell, Secretary
Robert E. Fulbright, Executive Committee
John Bruciak
Charles W. Browning
Sonny Hinojosa
Donald K. McGhee
Tomas Rodriguez
Gary Whittington
Commissioner John Wood

Category

River Authorities
Public
Agriculture
Municipalities
Water Utilities
Water Districts
Small Business
Municipalities
Industries
Counties

The following members were not in attendance:

Glenn Jarvis, Chairman	Other
Roberto Gonzalez, Executive Committee	Municipalities
Judge Jose Aranda	Counties
Sonia Najera	Environmental
Joe Guerra	Electric Generating Utility
Sonia Kaniger	Water Districts
James R. Matz	Others
Ray Prewett	Agriculture
Carlos Garza	Small Business

2. Consider Approval of March 4, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Tomas Rodriguez made a motion for approval of the minutes as presented. Mr. Robert Fulbright seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

4. Status Reports

A. Report on TWDB Contract Activities

1. Status of Deliverables and Expenditures under Current Contract

Mr. Bill Norris was recognized and stated that everything was on track with reimbursement billing. Mr. Jake White stated that the three pending reports were submitted to TWDB and staff was waiting for comments from TWDB, once comments were received they would be incorporate into the reports. Mr. Jones suggested the Board request an additional 30 day extension, from May to the end of June, in order provide sufficient time to make any necessary revisions after comments were received from the TWDB. ***Mr. Robert Fulbright made a motion to request said extension. Commissioner John Wood seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Vice Chairman Darling mentioned the Bureau of Economic Geology (BEG) Report on Steam Electric demand and suggested the inclusion of this item on the next agenda. The TWDB has asked the Group to determine on a county-by county basis if the water use projections from the BEG or from the 2007 State Water Plan should be utilized.

2. Discussion RE: Unfunded Projects in Recent TWDB Application

a. **Analyze Potential Impact of Increased Groundwater Withdrawal from San Felipe Springs**

Mr. White stated that staff was working on coordinating a meeting with Region J members and was optimistic that it would not prove difficult to facilitate.

B. Discussion RE: Status of Joint Groundwater Area Planning in GMA-16 Under HB 1763 (2005). There was no new information to report at this time

C. Discussion of IBWC Water Accounting at Fort Quitman

Vice Chairman Darling stated that he and Chairman Jarvis met with Ms. Karen Chapman, Rio Grande Project Manager for the Environmental Defense Fund (and former Region M Member) to discuss the Trans Pecos Water Trust. Ms. Chapman is scheduled to give a presentation on this topic at the next meeting.

Report RE: Other Water Planning Groups

1. Reports from Liaisons with Regions E, J, L, & N

Vice Chairman Darling stated that the other Water Planning Groups were involved in the same type of activity as the Region M Group.

5. Reports from Federal and State Agencies

A. TWDB

Vice Chairman Darling recognized Ms. Connie Townsend. Ms. Townsend stated that the majority of topics she planned to discuss had been discussed under previous items, but confirmed that the TWDB was scheduled to meet on April 14 in Austin.

B. IBWC

Mr. Rodolfo Montero was recognized and provided status reports on several topics including the Certification of Structures and the Certification of Levees. Mr. Montero stated that IBWC staff was currently certifying the levees in Cameron County. Mr. Montero reported that two of the four pumps at El Morillo Drain were functioning properly; however, the first pump was disassembled and under repair and the second pump was experiencing electrical problems that limited its use. Mr. Montero stated that information on the Recovery Act Projects was available online at the IBWC website: www.ibwc.gov.

C. TCEQ

Vice Chairman Darling recognized Mr. Erasmo Yarrito. Mr. Yarrito gave the status of the reservoir levels and stated that a new five year water accounting cycle under the 1944 Treaty began on March 1, 2009. TCEQ staff went to San Diego to attend the Border Governors Conference that included a workshop on drought. Topics for the Border Governor's Conference scheduled for September were discussed and include: Coordinating with United States Governors regarding assisting with decisions on reservoir issues to prevent a repeat of the catastrophic flooding that occurred in Presidio in October 2008; a proposed bi-national agreement on how to more efficiently operate releases in the Presidio area; proposed bi-national workshop for the status of and plans for desalination projects for salt water and ground water; and a bi-national conference to explore developments and technique

to manage pollutants going into water sources. In addition TCEQ staff asked their Mexican counter part to develop a definition for “extraordinary drought” as it is stated in the 1944 Treaty. TCEQ staff provided Mexico’s staff with draft definitions staff developed for review.

1. Status of Water Availability Model (WAM) for Mexico

Mr. Yarrito stated there was no new information to report since the last meeting.

2. Status of Study of Irrigated Acres and Crops Grown

Mr. Yarrito stated that this report should be available for the next meeting.

D. TPWD

No representative from TPWD was in attendance and no report was available.

6. Discussion and Possible Action RE: Meeting Schedule

It was the consensus of the Group to not meeting in May and schedule the next meeting for Wednesday, June 3, 2009

7. New or Old Business

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Glenn Jarvis, Chairman

Mary Lou Campbell, Secretary