

MINUTES

**RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP (RGRWPG) (REGION "M")
MEETING @ 10:30 A.M. – WEDNESDAY JUNE 20, 2007
MISSION CITY HALL – COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM
1201 E. 8TH STREET – MISSION, TEXAS**

PRESIDING: GLENN JARVIS, CHAIRMAN

Chairman Glenn Jarvis called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m., and announced that the meeting had been posted as required by statute, and then stated that a quorum was present. The following voting members were in attendance:

Board Members

Glenn Jarvis, Chairman
Mary Lou Campbell, Secretary
Charles W. Browning
Joe Guerra
Sonny Hinojosa
Sonia Kaniger,
Donald K. McGee
Adrian Montemayor
Ray Prewett
Xavier Villarreal
Gary Whittington
Commissioner John Wood

Category

Other
Public
Water Utilities
Electric Generating Utility
Water Districts
Water Districts
Small Business
Municipalities
Agriculture
Small Business
Industries
Counties

The following members were not in attendance:

Jim Darling
Robert E. Fulbright, Executive Committee
Roberto Gonzalez, Executive Committee
Judge Jose Aranda
John Bruciak
James R. Matz

River Authorities
Agriculture
Municipalities
Counties
Municipalities
Others

After calling the meeting to order, Chairman Jarvis introduced Miriam Medel Garcia of the Mexican Consulate's office and Sonia Najera of the Nature Conservancy and welcomed them to the meeting.

The Chairman then moved to item 2. – Consider Approval of the March 28, 2007 Meeting Minutes. **Mr. Xavier Villarreal made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner John Wood seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Upon conclusion of action on item 2, the Chairman moved to item 3. – Hear Public Comment. As there were no Public Comments the Chairman then moved to item 4. – Ratify Executive Action of TWDB Contract. Chairman Jarvis reminded the Group that at the last meeting the Group had authorized the Executive Committee to review and approve the Texas Water Development Board Contract; and noted that the \$6,000 which was omitted due to TWDB staff oversight had been put back into the contract. Mr. Bill Norris was then recognized and summarized the contract. Chairman Jarvis stated that he was hopeful that during the next round of planning, which was to begin in the fall of 2007, the Group could reapply for projects that did not get funded in this contract. Upon conclusion of discussion **Mr. Ray Prewett made a motion to ratify Executive Committee Action to execute the TWDB Contract. Mr. Gary Whittington seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Upon conclusion of action on item 4, the Chairman moved to agenda item 5. – Consider Approval of Contract with NRS Consulting Engineers, Inc. Chairman Jarvis asked Mr. Bill Norris to summarize the contract. Mr. Norris stated that what the TWDB approved in their contract with the Group was attached to the NRS Consulting Engineers, Inc. (NRS) contract, and the firm must abide by what was approved in the TWDB contract even though the NRS contract was with the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC) as the administrative agent for the Region M Group. Chairman Jarvis assured the Group that the LRGVDC would not execute the contract until the Group had authorized it. Mr. Ray Prewett stated that he would like to see NRS bring in a consultant to look more closely at agriculture. Mr. Norris stated that topic could be considered in the next round of regional planning. Upon conclusion of discussion, **Ms. Sonia Kaniger made a motion for approval of the Contract with NRS Consulting Engineers, Inc. Commissioner John Wood seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Upon conclusion of action on item 5, Chairman Jarvis moved to item 6. – Consider Authorization to Initiate Public Notice to fill voting member vacancy RE: Environmental Category. The Chairman informed the Group that Ms. Karen Chapman had submitted her resignation to the Region M Group. A plaque had been created for her in recognition of the time she had served; however, Ms. Chapman had relocated out of state and was unable to attend and accept the plaque. Staff will make arrangements to get the plaque to Ms. Chapman. **Commissioner John Wood made a motion to authorize initiation of Public Notice to fill the voting member vacancy in the Environmental Category. Ms. Mary Lou Campbell seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

The Chairman then moved to item 7. – Reports from Federal and State Agencies.

Regarding item 7.A. – TWDB, Ms. Kathleen Ligon was recognized and gave a brief overview of the legislation that was passed, which included amending the Regional Water Plans, re doing TWDB rules that cover regional water planning, water conservation issues, and all

nineteen reservoir sites in Texas being designated as Unique Reservoir sites. Ms. Ligon added that the National Flood Insurance program had been transferred from the TCEQ Board to TWDB, and that the TWDB received \$45,000,000 for debt service to fund \$756,000,000 for projects to implement the state water plan and that TWDB staff would be available to give presentations on this lending program to interested parties.

Mr. Ray Prewett mentioned that a bill had been passed that contained a section for funding water development projects in Texas, and asked Ms. Ligon if a representative from TWDB would be able to provide a written report or make a presentation to the Group regarding this topic. Chairman Jarvis stated that the idea of the Region M Group sponsoring a forum had been discussed in recent conversations. Mr. Ken Jones suggested that he coordinate with Ms. Ligon regarding a timeline for such a forum.

Regarding item 7.B. – IBWC, Commissioner Carlos Marin was unable to attend; however, Mr. Rick Reyes was recognized and gave the IBWC report in his stead. The report consisted of progress on improvements to El Morillo Drain; efforts to rectify the Amistad Dam sinkhole situation; staff efforts to dissuade the Department of Homeland Security from building a Border Fence, and continued efforts to rehabilitate the Levees. Regarding the Amistad Dam sinkholes Mr. Carlos Rubinstein stated that there was an accounting system in place to balance the water the U.S. was losing and Mexico was gaining from the flow of the sinkholes. Mr. Ray Prewett asked if Mr. Rick Reyes could obtain a copy of the 5-Year Study on the Sinkholes. Mr. Reyes answered in the affirmative. Mr. Ken Jones asked Mr. Reyes if Commissioner Carlos Marin could keep the Group apprised of this situation so that the Group might assist IBWC in spreading the word regarding efforts to acquire additional appropriations. Chairman Jarvis stated that there were actually two issues to consider regarding the sinkholes: 1) the integrity of Amistad Dam; 2) the accounting of the Water.

Regarding item 7.C. – TCEQ Water Master, Mr. Carlos Rubinstein was recognized and read the statistical report from the Watermaster's office. Mr. Rubinstein then informed the Group that there was more than sufficient water in the basin to meet the needs of the Rio Grande Valley at least until the end of the current cycle. Chairman Jarvis asked about the status of the deficit with Mexico. Mr. Rubinstein stated that as this was not a cycle year where drought was in place, no deficit was expected by October 1st, the end of the cycle; and that TCEQ expected Mexico to honor the treaty by delivering 370,000 acre feet by that time.

Regarding item 7.D. – TPWD, Mr. Mark Lingo, was not in attendance; no report was available at this time.

Chairman Jarvis then moved to item 8. – Status Reports. Regarding item 9.A.1. – Reports from Liaisons with Region E, J, L & N the Chairman stated that the other Groups were doing much the same as this Group; however, some groups were experiencing more Board Member turnover.

The Chairman then moved to item 9 – Discussion and Possible Action RE: Meeting Schedule. Upon conclusion of discussion it was the consensus of the Board that the next meeting would be scheduled for 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday August 22, 2007.

Chairman Jarvis then moved to item 10 – New or Old Business. Chairman Jarvis turned the floor over to Commissioner John Wood who discussed the 10th Annual Report of the Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB). The Commissioner distributed copies of the report to the Group and informed them that the GNEB was appointed by the President of the United States and its purpose was to advise the President and Congress of environmental issues along

the U.S. / Mexico Border. This report focused on the adverse effects on the environment caused by illegal immigration and the crossing of hazardous materials into the United States. The next report was to focus on natural disasters and their impact on the environment. Mr. Ken Jones offered to distribute the reports for Commissioner Wood.

Chairman Jarvis then turned the floor over to Ms. Mary Lou Campbell. Ms. Campbell informed the Group about the Texas Border Coalition's efforts to discourage the Department of Homeland Security from building a Border Fence due to the potential negative environmental impact it would have. Ms. Campbell stated the environmental community had come together and would try to convince HSL to create a "virtual fence" as opposed to a physical fence. Ms. Campbell requested that the next Region M Group agenda include an item of support by the Region M Group for a Virtual Boarder Fence.

As there was no further business to discuss the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 12:09 p.m.

Glenn Jarvis, Chairman

Mary Lou Campbell, Secretary