

MINUTES

RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP (RGRWPG)
(REGION "M") MEETING - 10:30 A.M. – THURSDAY JULY 30, 2008
LRGVDC TRANSPORTATION CENTER BOARD ROOM
510 S. PLEASANTVIEW DR., WESLACO, TX

PRESIDING: GLENN JARVIS, CHAIRMAN

Chairman Glenn Jarvis called the meeting to order at 10:35 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
Jim Darling, Vice Chairman
Mary Lou Campbell, Secretary
Robert E. Fulbright, Executive Committee
John Bruciak
Sonia Najera
Charles W. Browning
Sonny Hinojosa
Sonia Kaniger,
Donald K. McGee
Tomas Rodriguez
Ray Prewett
Commissioner John Wood

Category

Other
River Authorities
Public
Agriculture
Municipalities
Environmental
Water Utilities
Water Districts
Water Districts
Small Business
Municipalities
Agriculture
Counties

The following members were not in attendance:

Roberto Gonzalez, Executive Committee
Judge Jose Aranda
Joe Guerra
James R. Matz
Gary Whittington

Municipalities
Counties
Electric Generating Utility
Others
Industries

After calling the meeting to order Chairman Jarvis moved to item 2. – Consider Approval of the May 28, 2008 Meeting Minutes. **Commissioner Jim Darling made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Don McGhee seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Chairman Jarvis then moved to item 3. – Hear Public Comment, there being none, the Chairman moved to item 4. – Consider Nominating Committee Recommendations RE: Voting Member Vacancies. The Chairman informed the Group that the bios submitted by the

candidates were in the folders, and that prior to the meeting the Executive Committee met and are recommending Tomas Rodriguez for the Municipalities Category and Carlos Garza for the Small Business Category. ***Ms. Marylou Campbell made a motion to elect Mr. Tomas Rodriguez, City of Laredo, to fill the Municipalities Category. Ms. Sonia Kaniger seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Bob Fulbright made a motion to elect Mr. Carlos Garza, AEC Engineering, LLC, to fill the Small Business Category. Mr. Don McGhee seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Upon conclusion of action on item 4, Chairman Jarvis moved to item 5. – Consider Action on Resolutions. Regarding item 5.A. – 1944 Treaty and 1906 Convention RE: Accounting of Waters at Fort Quitman. The Chairman reminded the Group that Dr. Bob Brandes gave a presentation at the last meeting that determined the two international agreements must be taken in conjunction with each other; however they also conflict with each other as to where, for accounting purposes, the United States' water was to begin. The Chairman then recognized Mr. Herman Settemeyer, TCEQ. Mr. Settemeyer distributed a letter written by TCEQ Chairman Buddy Garcia to Commissioner Carlos Marin, IBWC requesting the accounting change from the historical practice described in the 1944 Treaty to ensure that the United States receives all the water it is entitled to via the 1906 Convention. This topic has been discussed with Commissioner Marin and the IBWC will investigate. Upon conclusion of discussion ***Mr. Bob Fulbright made a motion for approval of this resolution (2008 – 03) as presented. Mr. Tomas Rodriguez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*** A copy of the resolution is made a part of these minutes.

Regarding item 5.B. – Updating Accounting of Water Ownership under 1944 Treaty, Chairman Jarvis informed the Group that this resolution (2008 – 04) pertained to a study Dr. Brandes was commissioned to do by TWDB on the water accounting system used by the IBWC. Dr. Brandes presented the results of that study at the last Region M meeting. Mr. Settemeyer reported that the IBWC was reviewing Dr. Brandes' spreadsheet and comparing it to their FORTRAN program to determine compatibility. ***Mr. Ray Prewett made a motion for approval of resolution 2008–04 as presented. Commissioner John Wood seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*** A copy of the resolution is made a part of these minutes. Mr. Bill Norris stated that Dr. Brandes' report will be included in Region M's Regional Water Plan as an appendix.

Chairman Jarvis then moved to item 6. – Consider Contribution towards Aquatic Weed Control in Rio Grande and recognized Mr. Ken Jones. Mr. Jones informed the Group that Dr. Earl Chilton, Texas Parks and Wildlife estimated the cost of spraying herbicide on the Water Hyacinth growing in the Rio Grande at approximately \$20,000, and Commissioner Carlos Marin stated that Mexico has offered to match dollar for dollar, up to a maximum of \$26,000, the amount raised by the United States for Water Hyacinth Control. Commissioner Marin also informed Mr. Jones that the IBWC had pledged to contribute \$10,000 for this project. Mr. Jones announced that an additional \$3,000 had been contributed by the Irrigation District Managers Association and thanked them for their participation. Mr. Charles Browning asked who would spray the herbicide. Mr. Jones stated that this project would be coordinated through Dr. Chilton using the Texas Parks and Wildlife procurement process, and that the chemical to be used has

been approved by Mexico, and used in previous applications. Mr. Sonny Hinojosa suggested tapping into the Watermaster's Rider Funds for a contribution; Mr. Erasmo Yarrito stated he would investigate that possibility. Mr. Hinojosa suggested that the balance of the match (\$13,000) could be divided between the Region M Group, the RGRWA and the Watermaster's Rider Fund. Upon conclusion of discussion **Commissioner Jim Darling made a motion that the Region M Group contribute \$4,333.33 toward Aquatic Weed Control in the Rio Grande. Mr. Tomas Rodriguez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Upon conclusion of action Chairman Jarvis moved to item 7. - Status Reports.

Regarding item 7.A. – Report on Current TWDB Contract Activities and recognized Mr. Bill Norris, NRS Consulting Engineers. Mr. Norris informed the Group two sections of the contract were being analyzed: Classify Irrigation Districts as WUG's or WWP's and Analyze Results of Completed Demonstration Projects, then turned the floor over to Mr. Jake White, NRS Consulting Engineers. Mr. White informed the Group that this first task required the assistance of the Irrigation Districts and that Requests For Information (RFI's) were being prepared and were scheduled to be mailed the following week. Mr. White then discussed Analyzing Results of Completed Demonstration Projects and stated that information had been gathered related to on-farm conservation strategies such as water measuring and metering on the field, replacing field ditches and siphon tubes with poly pipe or gated pipe. Mr. Ray Prewett suggested drip irrigation be added for information gathering purposes. Chairman Jarvis then suggested holding this discussion until item 7.D. – Discussion RE: Response to Texas Water Conservation Advisory Council is discussed to see if there is any relation between the two.

The Chairman then moved to item 7.A.1. – Report on Funds for Expenditures on the Scope of Work and asked Mr. Jones to report. Mr. Jones stated that there was a balance of \$139,507 in the TWDB grant. It was the consensus of the Group to have this as a standing item on the agenda. Mr. White then informed the Group that comments requesting clarification on certain items had been received from TWDB, and staff was in the process of revising the draft accordingly; the draft should be finalized by the end of the week.

Regarding item 7.B. – Discussion RE: Status of Joint Groundwater Area Planning in GMA – 16 Under HB 1763 (2005), Chairman Jarvis announced that there was no new information to report on this item. However, Mr. Bob Fulbright informed the Group that a meeting was held the previous day in Falfurrias, TX regarding the formation of a Groundwater Conservation District that would cover a portion of Brooks County, the northern portion of Hidalgo County, Jim Hogg County and the southern portion of Jim Wells County. Mr. Fulbright stated he would keep the group apprised and may ask for a letter of support from the RGRWPG in the future.

Regarding item 7.C. – Discussion and Presentation of Monthly Water Accounting System for Rio Grande below Fort Quitman. Chairman Jarvis stated that this was a carry over item that was acted upon with the adoption of Resolution 2008 – 03, and recommended this item stay on the agenda for follow-up purposes.

Regarding item 7.D. – Discussion RE: Response to Texas Water Conservation Advisory Council. Chairman Jarvis stated Mr. C. E. Williams, Chairman of the Texas Water Conservation Advisory Council (TWCAC) had sent the Group a letter requesting information regarding water conservation strategies in the Regional Water Plan and figures on the amount of water saved

using said strategies. The Chairman stated that this request had been anticipated and an effort was made to add it to the TWDB application. Chairman Jarvis informed the Group that the response to Mr. Williams' letter was in the folders, and this Group's responses were very similar to those of the other Regional Planning Groups. There were four specific questions in the original letter and three were answered. The question not answered was for "a list by water user of the amount of water saved on an annual basis by each conservation strategy implemented". Mr. Jones asked Ms. Connie Townsend if there was any discussion on a statewide level regarding any additional discretionary funding for this item. Ms. Townsend stated that the TWDB realized that there were no funds available to do the work the TWCAC requested and advised the Water Council funds were not available for this to occur in the time requested. Ms. Townsend added that the Water Conservation section in the TWDB was developing a survey to ascertain many of the answers to the questions posed by the TWCAC and the Board would require the help of the Regional Planning Groups to gather the requested information. No action taken.

Regarding item 7.E. – Reports RE: Other Water Planning Groups, the Chairman stated that there was no new information to report on this item.

Upon conclusion of the Status Reports Chairman Jarvis moved to item 8. – Reports from Federal and State Agencies.

Regarding item 8.A. – TWDB, Chairman Jarvis recognized Ms. Connie Townsend. Ms. Townsend stated that staff had received the first letter of clarification and the review process was coming to a close. There was a total of \$11.3 million applied for from all the Regional Planning Groups and there was currently \$6 million available for the current TWDB cycle. However, staff anticipates an additional \$3 million during the next biennium for a total of \$9 million to fund the current applications. Ms. Townsend stated that the way the breakdown was occurring, priority would be given to Changed Conditions and tasks that were definitely needed to complete a plan. The remaining tasks that would generally enhance a plan would be looked at on a competitive basis because the Board does not have funding for all the requests received. Action will be taken on the applications at the August 25, 2008 Board meeting. Mr. Jones requested notification of when formulation of a TWDB staff recommendation was made. Ms. Townsend stated the earliest that could happen would be a couple of days prior to the meeting.

Regarding item 8.B. – IBWC, Com. Carlos Marin was unable to attend and no report was provided.

Regarding item 8.C. – TCEQ Watermaster, Chairman Jarvis recognized Mr. Erasmo Yarrito who read the Water Master's report on reservoir levels and added the current flow information. Mr. Yarrito noted that the reservoir information in the Binders was collected prior to Hurricane Dolly and it will take a couple of weeks before there is an increase in the flows from the storm. However, the elevation of Falcon and Amistad Reservoirs had increased even though there was no rainfall directly over them. Mr. Yarrito informed the Group that the Watermaster's office received many calls during the storm event regarding concerns about the levee system. There were many reports that the levee broke but upon conclusion of investigation it was determined that the levee was in tact and indeed it was irrigation and drainage ditches that had over flowed. Mr. Yarrito stated that the Rio Grande never left its banks so it was impossible for the levee to break.

Regarding item 8.D. – TPWD, Chairman Jarvis announced that Mr. Mark Lingo was

unable to attend and no report was provided.

The Chairman then moved to item 9 – Discussion and Possible Action RE: Meeting Schedule. Upon conclusion of discussion it was the consensus of the Group not to meet in August, and to schedule the next meeting for Wednesday, September 17, 2008 at 10:30 a.m.

Chairman Jarvis then moved to item 10 – New or Old Business. There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Glenn Jarvis, Chairman

Mary Lou Campbell, Secretary