

# MINUTES

MEETING OF THE  
RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP (RGRWPG) (REGION "M")  
10:30 A.M. IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE RGRWA MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2009  
LRGVDC TRANSPORTATION CENTER BOARD ROOM  
510 S. PLEASANTVIEW DR., WESLACO, TX  
PRESIDING: GLENN JARVIS, CHAIRMAN

## 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Glenn Jarvis called the meeting to order at 10:47 a.m. and announced that the meeting had been posted as required by statute and 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  
Jorge Barrera, (*Alternate for Roberto Gonzalez*)  
Charles W. Browning  
Sonny Hinojosa  
Sonia Lambert  
James R. Matz  
Tomas Rodriguez  
Ray Prewett  
Gary Whittington  
Commissioner John Wood

### Category

Other  
River Authorities  
Public  
Agriculture  
Municipalities  
Water Utilities  
Water Districts  
Water Districts  
Others  
Municipalities  
Agriculture  
Industries  
Counties

### The following members were not in attendance:

Judge Jose Aranda  
John Bruciak  
Sonia Najera  
Joe Guerra  
Donald K. McGhee  
Carlos Garza

Counties  
Municipalities  
Environmental  
Electric Generating Utility  
Small Business  
Small Business

## 2. Consider Approval of June 3, 2009 Meeting Minutes

*Mr. Sonny Hinojosa made a motion for approval of the minutes as presented. Mr. Ray Prewett seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

## 3. Public Meeting to Consider Proposed Revisions to Population and Water Demand Projections and to Outline Steps to be Taken to Develop Water Management Strategies

Upon conclusion of action on the minutes Chairman Jarvis opened the Public meeting and stated that two different issues were up for discussion. The first issue is the Population and Water Demand Projection. The TWDB restudied population growth and has identified several regions that have existing

population numbers that exceed their projection, including 23 cities in this region. Accelerated growth will have an impact on the water planning for this region between now and 2060. The Chairman then turned the Public meeting over to Mr. Jake White, NRS. Mr. White introduced Mr. Drew Leeper, a new addition to the NRS group, and distributed a list of the 23 cities in question. Mr. White explained that the State Data Center completed an analysis on all the regions and provided that information to TWDB. TWDB is allowing the Group to seek modifications to the State Water Plan in terms of changes to population only to those 23 cities. The proposed plan of action is to send survey's to the 23 cities to allow them to comment on the revised population figures selecting either the State Water Plan figures or the State Data Center Figures.

Ms. Mary Lou Campbell commented that this issue was brought before the Group approximately five years previous to no avail, and expressed concern about the Group revisiting an unproductive topic. Chairman Jarvis acknowledge her concern and noted that many changes have taken place since then and the Group should explore every avenue to improve the water situation in the region. Mr. Sonny Hinojosa asked if there was a downside in the increase in population figures aside from projecting the demand. Chairman Jarvis stated that one downside was the challenges to Water User Groups to plan for meeting that demand which could impact their plans and projections.

Ms. Sonia Lambert asked if the Group would be given the opportunity to make revisions if it does not agree or is the Group mandated to use the figures provided by the State Data Center. Ms. Connie Townsend stated that even if the Group used the figures from the State Data Center the revision would have to be submitted for review by the TWDB, the same as any population process, any revision put forth must meet the criteria the TWDB sets up, so no population figures are guaranteed to be accepted. Ms. Lambert observed that if the Group goes through the process of surveying the cities for their opinion, then that information comes back to the Group to make a decision whether or not it needs to be changed, then the Group ultimately sends the information to TWDB, the end result could be that the Group will end up with the same amounts originally requested after doing all that leg work. Ms. Townsend stated that the TWDB would be willing to accept population increase percentages plus or minus a projection from the State Data Center values; however, if a projection is for a 50% increase there is probably not going to be enough documentation to hold up a projection that large; smaller increases will be fairly easy for the TWDB to accept. Chairman Jarvis then invited the audience to make comments on population projections; there being none the Chairman preceded to the next topic; the process by which the Region M Group will identify Water Management Strategies (WMS) and identify the strategies that are potentially feasible for meeting the needs of the region. Mr. White stated that the first steps in this process would be to identify all existing strategies recommended in the previous water plan in terms of cost effectiveness, effectiveness at meeting a specific need for the future, potential for implementation, and evaluate potential water management strategies. The Group will then need to identify what the deficit will be for the region and each individual entity, and determine those entity's strategies on how to meet those deficits and prepare recommendations for WMS's to meet future water supply needs. Mr. White then outlined the step-by-step process to determine the above.

Chairman Jarvis asked how the Group will manage alternative management strategies. Ms. Townsend stated that previously alternative strategies were just conceptual and were not required to be "fleshed out". Currently, however the TWDB requires more concrete information on the same level as WMS's. The Chairman informed the Group that during the April 13 Chairs' Conference Call the TWDB indicated that in defining criteria, especially for alternative strategies, it would be up to each Group to determine what criteria would be used, which indicated some flexibility.

At the conclusion of discussion the Chairman asked if there were any comments from the audience on

WMS's; none appearing the chairman concluded the public meeting at 11:58 a.m. and resumed the regular meeting.

#### **4. Hear Public Comment**

There being no public comments Chairman Jarvis moved to the next item.

#### **5. Consider Approval RE: Resolution of Support for the Trans Pecos Water Trust**

Based on discussion from the last meeting the Group concluded the need to pass a resolution in support of the Trans Pecos Water Trust. ***Mr. James Matz made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Commissioner John Wood seconded the motion, and upon a unanimous vote the motion carried.***

### **6 Status Reports**

#### **A. Report on TWDB Contract Activities**

##### **1. Status of Deliverables and Expenditures under Current Contract**

Mr. White was recognized and informed the Group that staff was working under two contracts at present, one is for the Special Studies and the other is for the Second Phase of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Round of Regional Water Planning. Special Studies #2 & #3 have been submitted to TWDB, and Special Study #1 will be submitted by the end of the month to make sure all the comments from TWDB were accurately addressed. On the contract for the Second Phase of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Round of Planning staff is making progress on tasks #1 & #2.

##### **2. Ratify Executive Committee Action RE: Initial Draft Reports**

Mr. Ken Jones was recognized and stated that the Executive Committee authorized submission of reports #2 and #3 before the deadline of July 31, 2009 there is also a request from NRS requesting a 30 day extension on report #1 (Evaluation of Surface Water Management) which the TWDB has allowed; that report is now due on August 31, 2009. Chairman Jarvis recommended reviewing each task. Mr. Ray Prewett brought up the increase in ethanol production as an alternative fuel and the fact that 3 gallons of water are consumed to produce one gallon of ethanol and suggested a stipulation that ethanol producing entities should be required to consult with the Regional Water Planning Group in order to build a production facility. Mr. Sonny Hinojosa stated that the water to produce 12 million gallons of ethanol come to 110 acre feet of raw water per year, which is a nominal amount. Chairman Jarvis commented that the only reason to put ethanol production in the Regional Water Plan would be to keep track of it.

Chairman Jarvis brought the Group's attention back to the task at hand, Task #2: Classify Irrigation Districts as Water User Groups. Upon completion of analysis Mr. White recommended the classification of irrigation districts as Water User Groups (WUGs). Chairman Jarvis stated that upon review of Task #2, it could feasibly be broken into two studies with one as a report on water loss; another alternative would be to add a footnote disclaimer because it shows the same water losses for districts that have primarily pipeline conveyance as those that use primarily surface conveyance. That may not be prudent regarding justification for pipelines for water conservation. Mr. White stated that conclusion came from the fact that staff determined that various irrigation districts were representing and calculating efficiencies using differing methods, and staff settled on using the fixed numbers for regional conveyance system efficiencies. The Chairman stated that this could cause future problems for anyone trying to justify a pipeline project and this study will have to be

explained unless additional language was used.

Chairman Jarvis stated that the purpose of this study was to determine whether to classify irrigation districts as County/Other or WUGs or Wholesale Water Suppliers (WWSs), and asked how information regarding water losses pertained to that purpose. Mr. White stated that was part of the Scope of Work to analyze water supply and demand, take the information of irrigation districts as WUGs with set supply/demand and incorporate that into the original plan along with conveyance efficiencies and the study in Phase II is to evaluate water management strategies. Mr. White recommended moving forward with trying to obtain more accurate information, including that under the existing Scope of Work, and looking at it as an unfunded task to be finalized. Mr. White believes the information is available, but that staff was not able to formulate it in the necessary method. Mr. Hinojosa stated that the Irrigation District Manager's Association would be able to supply the data Mr. White required. Mr. Jones assured the Group that there are potential opportunities to make further revisions to this study based on these discussions. Chairman Jarvis suggested doing another study, and break task #2 into two parts, this one is about classifying Irrigation Districts as WUGs, and losses do not relate to that topic. The reasoning is sound and it was in the Scope of Work. It could be applied to a separate report but that does not help regarding the water conservation projects because it focuses more on it than if it were incorporated in a report that was only about WUGs, or a footnote disclaimer could be added. Mr. White suggested adding verbiage to make it known that these were not necessarily indicative figures. Chairman Jarvis expressed concern that this study could be interpreted that no water could be saved using a closed canal system even though it is practical and water would be saved, the amount of savings is not determined. Regardless, the issue at hand is approval of this final report. Upon conclusion of discussion **Mr. Ray Prewett made a motion to ratify the executive committee action to submit this report, and based on discussions make revisions and submit to the TWDB before August 31, 2009. Mr. James Matz seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Chairman Jarvis next addressed Task #3 and stated that there was a recommendation for saltwater desalination as a Water Management Strategy (WMS), however the Chairman stated that may be an alternative for entities that have access to the waters in the Gulf of Mexico, but not for all other entities and it did not go forward in the large plan. Mr. White confirmed that the need was not there. Mr. Prewett noted on page 10 there is a statement: "As it currently exists, the monetary incentive for implementing on-farm conservation is not in place for the irrigator". Mr. Prewett commented that statement seems a too strong and noted that the EQIP Program has contributed significant funding in this region and there is a 50% cost share. That statement as it is written implies that there is very little incentive available when actually there are significant incentive programs available. Mr. White agreed that statement was too strong and will revise. Upon conclusion of discussion **Commissioner John Wood made a motion to ratify executive committee action on Task #3 with the one change recommended by Ray Prewett. Mr Tomas Rodriguez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

3. Revisions to Population/Water Demand Projections (Non-Steam-electric)

The Chairman stated that a public meeting has been conducted on this topic and it has been determined that funding is available to pursue the population projections within the exiting project.

4. Discussion RE: Unfunded Projects in Recent TWDB Application

- a. Analyze Potential Impact of Increased Groundwater Withdrawal from San Felipe Springs  
Mr. Jones informed the Group that the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority (RGRWA) at their meeting just prior to this meeting received a request from the Lower Rio Grande Water Committee, Inc. to fund this unfunded task and the RGRWA approved funding the project. Mr. Jones suggested the way to facilitate this would be as an add-on scope to the current contract the Region M has with NRS Consulting Engineers, which would be funded through the RGRWA; thus an amendment to that contract would need to be made. ***Mr. Ray Prewett made a motion expressing appreciation to the RGRWA for funding this project and to the Lower Rio Grande Water Committee, Inc. for soliciting this support from the RGRWA, and further to amend the contract to include this project stipulating that it will be funded by the RGRWA. Mr. Sonny Hinojosa seconded the motion, and upon a unanimous vote the motion carried.***

**B. Discussion RE: Status of Joint Groundwater Area Planning in GMA-16 Under HB 1763 (2005).**

Chairman Jarvis reported that GMA 16 has until September 2010 to get Desired Future Conditions, and as of now only GMA 8 and 9 have submitted their Desired Future Conditions to the TWDB. The Group's standing position is that if GMA 16 can submit their data in time that information will be considered.

**C. Discussion of IBWC Water Accounting at Fort Quitman**

Chairman Jarvis stated that there has been some success on this topic but will defer until item 7.C.2. when Mr. Herman Settemeyer gives his report.

**D. Report RE: Other Water Planning Groups**

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

Chairman Jarvis stated that there was no new information to report at this time.

**E. Report on LRGVDC/RGRWA Activities**

1. Report on Water Conservation Plans and Drought Management Plans Filed with Region.

Chairman Jarvis stated that one plan had been received from the Military Water Supply Corporation.

**7. Reports from Federal and State Agencies**

**A. TWDB**

Ms. Townsend was recognized and stated that the majority of her topics had been covered under previous agenda items, and added that TWDB had received the sub-contract between NRS Consulting Engineers and the LRGVDC, and that it is being reviewed for consistency. Ms. Townsend then asked Mr. White when the survey results are anticipated to be completed. Mr. White stated it should be ready by mid-September.

Chairman Jarvis brought up an email Ms. Townsend sent regarding climate change and identifying a Drought of Record. Ms. Townsend informed the Group that the email contained a simple question asking if any entity was using a new Drought of Record, this does not pertain to the current round of planning. Mr. White stated that staff had not changed the Drought of Record that was previously used for reference. The Chairman suggested adding this topic on the next agenda.

B. IBWC

Mr. Roberto Montero was recognized and informed the Group that Mr. Patrick Daize has left IBWC and accepted a position out of country. Mr. Montero proceeded to give status reports on the Edinburg Pump Levee Relocation and Channel Crossing, Hidalgo Levee Improvements (Phase 1 and 2), Aerial Survey of LRG River and Floodway Levees, Lateral A to Retamal Dam River levee, Banker Floodway North Levee, and Interior Floodway Levees & Arroyo Colorado N. Levee.

C. TCEQ

1. **TCEQ Watermaster**

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

Mr. Settemeyer was recognized and stated that TCEQ does not have an English translation of the model and staff does not know if one is coming; IBWC may get a translation sometime in the future.

b. Status of Study of Irrigated Acres and Crops Grown

Mr. Settemeyer noted Mr. Erasmo Yarrito provided a report on Irrigated Acres, but was not familiar with that topic himself so was unable to expound on it.

2. **TCEQ Water Supply Division**

a. Definition of Extraordinary Drought

Mr. Settemeyer stated that in 2007 the Border Governor's at the Border Governor's Conference issued a proclamation directing the Border States to work on a definition of extraordinary drought. Staff at TCEQ prepared a couple of scenarios and presented those to Mexican entities at the Border Governor's workshop held this March. Mr. Settemeyer then summarized the two definitions and how they came to be. Mr. Settemeyer stated TCEQ was open to additional ideas. Chairman Jarvis commented that the definition would have to be derived from the treaty. The first definition is general, and is no where in the treaty; runoff would have to be measured for the whole basin. The second definition tries to determine how to measure the runoff. Mr. Settemeyer stated that the second definition is a conceptual approach, and the only way staff could determine naturalized flows was to look at the three major reservoirs that were upstream on the major tributaries. Mr. Hinojosa commented that conceptually both factors there could be below average rainfall in some locations and a significant storm downstream from that location that would provide enough water that is captured; yet Mexico could say there is Extraordinary Drought because one or the other occurred, and one does follow the treaty. Chairman Jarvis confirmed the next meeting was scheduled for September 2, 2009 and eagerly anticipates any information from that meeting.

b. IBWC Water Accounting at Fort Quitman

Mr. Settemeyer informed the Group that TCEQ has an intern that will begin working on this item.

D. TPWD

Mr. Willy Cupit was recognized and introduced himself as the new liaison for TPWD.

**8. Discussion and Possible Action RE: Meeting Schedule**

It was the consensus of the Group to next meet on Wednesday, September 2, 2009.

**9. New or Old Business**

The Chairman stated that Drought of Record needed to be included on the next agenda as a topic the Group should consider for future planning purposes.

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Glenn Jarvis, Chairman

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Mary Lou Campbell, Secretary