

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP (RGRWPG) (REGION "M")

9:30 A.M. WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2015
LRGVDC TRANSPORTATION CENTER BOARD ROOM
510 S. PLEASANTVIEW DR., TX
PRESIDING: GLENN JARVIS, CHAIR

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Glenn Jarvis called the meeting to order at 9:37 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
Tomas Rodriguez, Vice Chair
Sonny Hinojosa, Executive Committee
Frank Schuster, Executive Committee
Dennis Goldsberry
Sonia Lambert
Donald K. McGhee
Carlos Garza
Jorge Barrera
Judge Joe Rathmell
Jaime Flores
Mayor Jim Darling
Judge Humberto Gonzalez
Robert Pena, Jr.

Category

Other
Municipalities
Water Districts
Other
Water Utilities
Water Districts
Industries
Small Business
Municipalities
Counties
Environmental
River Authorities
Counties
Electric Generating Utilities

The following members were not in attendance:

Mary Lou Campbell, Secretary	Public
John Bruciak	Municipalities
Ray Prewett	Agriculture
Armando Vela	Groundwater Management Areas
Robert E. Fulbright	Agriculture
Nick Benavides	Small Business

2. Consider Approval RE: Minutes of the December 10, 2014 Meeting

Mr. Don McGhee made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Sonia Lambert seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

3. Hear Public Comment

No public comments were received.

4. Consider Action RE: Election of Officers & Executive Committee

Chairman Glenn Jarvis announced that he would like to continue service to the Group; however after sixteen years he would like to offer the opportunity to serve as Chair to another voting member of the Group. Vice Chair Tomas Rodriguez declined consideration as a nominee for Chair due to his planned retirement in January 2016. Upon conclusion of discussion it was the consensus of the Group that more time is needed to consider nominees for officers and the

executive committee. **Mr. Tomas Rodriguez made a motion to table this item. Mr. Don McGhee seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

5. Consider Petition by River Authority Voting Member Category Representative Mayor Jim Darling to Serve Additional Term(s)

Mr. Ken Jones was recognized and informed the Group that at their last meeting, the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority (RGRWA) approved the reappointment of their President, Mayor Jim Darling, to the Region M Group. **Mr. Carlos Garza made a motion to acknowledge and accept Mayor Jim Darling's re-appointment to the Region M Group as a voting member in the River Authority category. Mr. Jorge Barrera seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

6. Consider Authorization for Political Subdivision (LRGVDC) to Apply for and Submit Application for 5th Cycle of Regional Water Planning

Mr. Tomas Rodriguez made a motion to authorize the LRGVDC to apply for and submit the application for the 5th Cycle of Regional Water Planning by the submission date of March 3, 2015. Mr. Frank Schuster seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

7. Consider Request from City of Rio Hondo RE: Consistency Waiver Request for Loan Application

Chairman Jarvis recognized Ms. Connie Townsend, TWDB, who informed the Group that the City of Rio Hondo has come to the TWDB for funding for several projects, one of which is for Water Loss Audit Repair which falls in the category of Conservation Strategy in the Regional Water Plan (RWP). However, the components that make up 2011 RWP's Advanced Water Conservation Water Management Strategy (WMS) are of a fairly narrow focus and only specifies Public Information, Education, and Residential Clothes Washer Rebate Program. Broader reaching line items such as those that would address Water Loss Audits were not identified. When applying for a loan with the TWDB the related project must be consistent with the RWP; because this component is missing the City will need to request TWDB to grant a waiver. The City of Rio Hondo is also currently in contact with Region M's technical consultant, Black & Veatch, and will provide all of their planned water supply projects to Region M for inclusion in the 2016 RWP.

Chairman Jarvis then recognized City of Rio Hondo City Manager, Mr. Ben Medina. Mr. Medina introduced their Consulting Engineer, Mr. Pablo Cantu. Mr. Medina stated that the City requests the Group approve support of the City's consistency waiver request so they may continue the application process for automatic meters and line distribution repairs. He also informed the Group that at a later date there will be an additional request for a consistency waiver for a project involving reuse of brackish water and more line distribution repairs. Upon conclusion of discussion **Judge Humberto Gonzalez made a motion to support the consistency waiver as requested by the City of Rio Hondo. Judge Joe Rathmell seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Mr. Carlos Garza asked Mr. Medina, for the record, how many meters does the city have and how many do they plan to retrofit. Mr. Medina stated that there are 750 meters currently in distribution and the City would like to retrofit 100% of those meters. Mr. Garza noted that the Group's support of this consistency waiver will make a drastic change for the better in the City of Rio Hondo's distribution system.

8. Water Management Strategy Committee Update

Chairman Jarvis gave a brief background of this item noting that Mr. Tomas Rodriguez attended the first meeting on the Chairman's behalf when he was unable to go; and likewise Mr. Sonny Hinojosa was asked to attend the meeting in January when Mr. Rodriguez was unable to go. Ms. Suzanne Schwartz, Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution, was the facilitator for the RPG Chairs in the original meeting and she continued as facilitator for this meeting. Ms. Schwartz provided meeting notes which might be of interest to the Group and are available in the meeting folders.

Chairman Jarvis then recognized Mr. Sonny Hinojosa to give his report on the meeting. Mr. Hinojosa stated that it was an interesting meeting and surmised from discussions there that the previous meeting was also very interesting and exciting. After day-long deliberations the Stakeholder Committee acted to adopt the existing uniform standards and not make any changes; but a lot of background information was brought forth which he appreciated. At the conclusion of his report Mr. Hinojosa thanked Chairman Jarvis and Mr. Rodriguez for affording him the opportunity to attend. No action taken.

9. Drought Management Strategy Subcommittee Report

Mayor Jim Darling was recognized and stated that there was no new information to report from this subcommittee at this time.

10. Report on Water Conservation Projects by Irrigation Districts

Ms. Sonia Lambert was recognized and reported that data on Water Conservation Projects was collected from four of the largest irrigation districts in the region from 2000-2014. The projects included in this report are: conversion of open canals to pipelines, pumping plant replacement, lining of canals, installation of automated gates and reservoir replacement. The total cost of these projects is \$76,357,373 and have conserved, or saved, 49,853 acre feet of water per year. Ms. Lambert added that this does not include any "on-farm" projects.

Mr. Don McGhee asked if there were any Water Management Strategies (WMS) in the current Regional Water Plan (RWP) that would produce that kind of water savings. Ms. Lambert stated there were not, because irrigation districts are limited with what they can do; for their canal system most of the savings would come from piping and open laterals. Mr. McGhee stated that as far as the overall savings as it relates to the RWP this is significant of what the potential could be for irrigation districts. Ms. Lambert agreed and stated that as major water right owners it makes sense to irrigation districts that most of the savings would come from those that use the most water.

11. Status Reports

A. Status on Current TWDB Contract Activities

Ms. Sara Eatman was recognized and began a presentation that covered the following topics:

1. Update on SWIFT Rules RE: Conservation WMS and Second Round of Funding
Ms. Eatman informed the Group that on January 27th the TWDB made an adjustment to how they would evaluate applications for the SWIFT funding. The Conservation WMS that are already listed in the 2012 State Water Plan (SWP), but did not have an associated capital cost will be allowed to simultaneously request amendments to the 2011 RWP and SWP and apply for this round of funding. In addition, the second round of SWIFT funding will probably refer to the 2012 SWP because SWIFT is based on the most current SWP. Ms. Eatman advised that entities that would like to be eligible for the second round of funding should consider amending the 2011 RWP now. In the past, other funding programs have been able to refer to the Initially Prepared Plans (IPP) once they were submitted by the RWPGs, but this will not be the case for the new SWIFT funding program.
2. Consider Request from United ID to Pursue an Amendment to the 2011 RWP
Chairman Jarvis disclosed that he is the legal representative for United ID and as such deemed it appropriate to turn the gavel over to Vice Chair Tomas Rodriguez during discussion and action on this particular item.

Vice Chair Rodriguez recognized Ms. Eatman who informed the Group that in response to the Conservation exception in the SWIFT funding, United ID has decided to pursue

an application and a 2011 RWP amendment because Irrigation District Improvements were listed inconsistently in 2011 RWP and United ID would like to specify that "Storage" falls within District Improvements and to use SWIFT for the acquisition of land for a reservoir. Support from Region M is required in order for them to pursue an amendment to the 2011 RWP. Upon conclusion of discussion **Mr. Frank Schuster made a motion to approve the request from United Irrigation District to pursue an amendment to the 2011 RWP. Mr. Don McGhee seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion passed. Mayor Jim Darling and Chairman Glenn Jarvis abstained.**

Ms. Townsend noted that United ID is listed specifically as a Wholesale Water Provider in the 2011 RWP; and that this project is for a new reservoir that is not currently identified as a WMS for the district and is not an element of the "Irrigation Conveyance System Conservation" WMS as described in the 2011 RWP. Ms. Townsend informed the Group that to her knowledge it would not be eligible for the 1st round of SWIFT funding, and recommended that United ID provide all information necessary for Region M to include this specific strategy in the 2016 RWP. However, Ms. Eatman stated that United ID staff spoke with staff at the TWDB and were advised that they may be able to get this project into the 1st round of SWIFT funding after all. After further discussion, and since it is unknown at this time if any amendment requested will need to be minor or major, **Mr. Sonny Hinojosa made a motion to approve submission of a request for a minor amendment determination for United Irrigation District from the TWDB Executive Administrator. Mr. Jorge Barrera seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried. Mayor Jim Darling and Chairman Glenn Jarvis abstained.** At the conclusion of action Vice Chair Rodriguez returned the gavel to Chairman Jarvis.

3. Consider Approval RE: Amendment #6 to B&V Contract Equivalent to TWDB Contract Amendment #5
Mr. Tomas Rodriguez made a motion to approve Amendment #6 to B&V contract equivalent to TWDB Contract Amendment #5 as presented. Mr. Carlos Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.
4. Consider Action on Remaining 20% of Funds for Task 4D Scope of Work
Ms. Eatman explained that when staff received the notice to proceed on Task 4D they reserved 20% of that task's budget for WMS that were not included in their initial estimate. They have since added Fresh Groundwater Evaluation and Conversion/Purchase of Water Rights into the budget and increased allocations for all other WMS except Seawater Desalination. **Mr. Dennis Goldsberry made a motion to approve the revised Task 4D budget as presented. Mr. Frank Schuster seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**
5. Request TWDB Perform Socioeconomic Impacts Evaluation of Water Shortages
Ms. Eatman stated that the TWDB staff generally performs this work; however a RWPG must make a formal request if they would like TWDB to do it. **Mayor Jim Darling made a motion to make a request for TWDB staff to perform an evaluation of the socioeconomic impacts of water shortages for inclusion in the 2016 RWP. Ms. Sonia Lambert seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**
6. December 17th Stakeholder Meetings Recap
Ms. Eatman informed the Group that there were two Stakeholder meetings held on December 17th. During the morning meeting, the topic was On-Farm Water Conservation as a WMS, to which representatives from commodities groups, vegetable growers and citrus growers were invited. Ms. Eatman then summarized the meeting

and stated that the goal was for these representatives to guide the Group in the development of WMS updates pertinent to these fields. Irrigation District Improvements as a WMS was the topic for the afternoon session. Mr. Hinojosa and Ms. Lambert extended an invitation to members of the Irrigation District Managers' Association to attend this meeting. Ms. Eatman summarized this meeting and stated that the goal of this meeting was to guide the Group in the development of updates to WMS pertinent to irrigation.

7. Status of WMS Development, Review, and Recommendations

Ms. Eatman provided a summary of the current status of WMS development.

8. Report on Abbreviated Calculation to Determine if Updating the WAM would Change the Drought of Record

Ms. Eatman stated that Dr. Bob Brandes and Mr. Kirk Kennedy drafted a brief description of the work potentially involved to determine if updating the WAM would change the Drought of Record; they estimated the cost to implement this proposed work task to be a maximum of \$10,000. However, it is unknown if this calculation will indicate whether a WAM updated would impact the current estimates of Firm Yield through updating the Drought of Record. Because all considerations to-date have been inconclusive, Ms. Eatman recommends further discussion with Dr. Brandes and Mr. Kennedy. Mayor Darling offered to put an item on the next RGRWA agenda to consider funding a WAM update. Upon conclusion of discussion **Mayor Darling made a motion to request that the RGRWA include on their next regular meeting agenda an item to consider funding the WAM update. Mr. Don McGhee seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

B. Financial Report

Ms. Marcie Oviedo, LRGVDC, was recognized and reported that the expenses for the past thirteen months, from January 1, 2014 through January 31, 2015 total \$13,042.79 leaving a budget balance of \$4,207.21, and that there is an available local funds balance of \$55,558.04.

1. Consider Approval RE: 2015 Annual Budget

Ms. Oviedo stated that staff recommends approval to use the same budget amount of \$17,250.00 for 2015 as was used in the 2014 budget. **Mr. Tomas Rodriguez made a motion to approve the 2015 budget as recommended by staff with the understanding that it may be subject to revision in the future. Mayor Jim Darling seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

C. Status of Joint Groundwater Area Planning in GMA's 4,5,7,13 & 16

Mr. Armando Vela was unable to attend and no report was available at this time.

D. Discussion of IBWC Water Accounting at Fort Quitman

There was no new information to report.

E. Reports RE: Other Water Planning Groups

1. Reports from Liaisons with Regions: Region E, Chairman Glenn Jarvis; Region J, Tomas Rodriguez; Region L, Don McGhee; and Region N, Robert Fulbright

Mr. Don McGhee was recognized and reported that he attended the most recent Region L meeting and that they were at the same point in the regional planning process that Region M is. There was however a difference of opinion amongst the Region L voting members regarding methods of brush control as a potential WMS which resulted in an interesting and lively discussion. No consensus could be made at that meeting and the item was tabled. No action taken.

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

Chairman Jarvis noted that there have not been any new plans filed with the Group since the last meeting and that this item is on the agenda in order to be aware of how many plans have been received.

G. Report on Notices of Applications for Funding and Grants

The Chairman noted that no new notices of applications for funding have been received since the last meeting and that this item is on the agenda in order for the Group to be aware of what applications for funding and grants have been received.

H. Status of Studies and Activities on Rio Grande Groundwater Interaction with Surface Water

Mr. Tomas Rodriguez was recognized and reported that at last night's City of Laredo Council meeting the Council voted to approve Dr. Ron Green to conduct the study on the Pecos River as it relates to groundwater and surface water. Mr. Rodriguez sent letters requesting contributions to the cost of the study to several cities, but so far only Zapata County and the Irrigators have made contributions. However Mr. Rodriguez requested that the Laredo City Council approve Dr. Green's contract, to which they agreed and guaranteed payment. Mr. Rodriguez however, will continue in his efforts to collect from those entities that have already been solicited. The cost of the study is just under \$100,000. Mr. Rodriguez will discuss with Dr. Green the possibility of presenting his latest findings to the Group in the near future.

12. Reports from Federal and State Agencies

A. TWDB

Ms. Connie Townsend, TWDB, was recognized and introduced Mr. Juan Santana, TWDB Field Representative. Mr. Santana took the floor and stated that with the recent reorganization at TWDB his new responsibilities include outreach. He is based at the Harlingen Field Office and looks forward to working with all the Regional Water Planning Groups and local entities.

Mr. Santana then yielded the floor back to Ms. Townsend who brought the Group's attention to a slide on the projector screen entitled IPP Process Schematic. This slide illustrated a timeline for the steps and due dates for the Initially Prepared Plan (IPP), due May 1, 2015 and lastly the adoption of the RWP, due December 1, 2015, and all the required tasks and their schedules to be completed in between.

B. IBWC

No one from the IBWC was in attendance and no report was available at this time.

C. TCEQ Watermaster

Mr. Pablo Medrano was recognized and gave a report on the current reservoir storage amounts, releases and allocations.

D. TPWD

Mr. Willy Cupit reported that he represented Texas Parks and Wildlife last week at a Regional Water Planning Representatives meeting at TWDB in Austin.

13. Discussion and Possible Action RE: Meeting Schedule

It was the consensus of the Group to schedule the next regular meeting on March 11, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. and the following meeting on April 15, 2015 at 9:30 a.m., both at the LRGVDC Transportation Center Board Room.

14. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Group the meeting was adjourned at 11:47 a.m.

Glenn Jarvis, Chairman

Mary Lou Campbell, Secretary