

MINUTES

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

9:30 A.M. WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2016

LRGVDC MAIN CAMPUS – KEN JONES EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM
301 W. RAILROAD STREET, WESLACO, TX
PRESIDING: TOMAS RODRIGUEZ, CHAIRMAN

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. and announced that the meeting had been posted as required by statute and a quorum of the voting membership was present. LRGVDC Executive Director Ron Garza welcomed the Group to the LRGVDC main campus and the new Ken Jones Executive Board Room and briefed them on the amenities and the new computer tablets that replaced the three-ring binders for meeting information. The Chairman then introduced two new Voting Members: Mr. Dale Murden and Dr. Neal Wilkins.

The following voting members were in attendance:

Board Members

Tomas Rodriguez, Chairman
Sonny Hinojosa, Vice Chairman
Donald McGhee, Secretary
Frank Schuster, Executive Committee
Mayor Jim Darling
Carlos Garza
Jaime Flores
Armando Vela
Judge Humberto Gonzalez
Dale Murden
Dr. Neal Wilkins

Category

Public
Water Districts
Industries
Other
River Authorities
Small Business
Environmental
Groundwater Management Area
Counties
Agriculture
Agriculture

The following members were not in attendance:

Nick Benavides, Executive Committee
Glenn Jarvis
John Bruciak
Sonia Lambert
Dennis Goldsberry
Jorge Barrera
Judge Joe Rathmell
Robert Pena, Jr.
Riazul Mia

Small Business
Other
Municipalities
Water Districts
Water Utility
Municipalities
Counties
Electric Generating Utility
Municipalities

2. Consider Approval RE: Minutes of July 13, 2016 Meeting

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

3. Hear Public Comment

No requests for Public Comments were received.

4. Consider Authorizing LRGVDC to Provide Public Notice and Submit a Grant Application to TWDB on Behalf of Region M for Funding to Complete the 5th Round of Regional Water Planning, and Negotiate and Execute the Amendment to TWDB Contract No. 1548301841

Mayor Jim Darling made a motion to authorize the LRGVDC to provide public notice and submit a grant application to TWDB on behalf of Region M for funding to complete the 5th Round of Regional Water Planning. Judge Humberto Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

5. Status Reports

A. Discussion RE: Sierra Club Workshop

Chairman Rodriguez announced that he has been invited to speak at the SWIFT Funding Workshop: Focus on Water Conservation scheduled for October 20, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. The workshop is being coordinated by the Sierra Club and the Chairman invited and encouraged the Group to attend.

B. Status on Current TWDB Contract Activities

Ms. Sara Eatman, Engineer for Black & Veatch was recognized and stated that at the beginning of the plan process there is little activity. However the main project staff has worked on over the past months has been reviewing the TWDB's draft list of Water User Groups (WUGs). This planning cycle WUGs are changing from city-based to utility-based, so it is important to make sure that population and demands are appropriately projected in the upcoming cycle of planning. This will lay the groundwork for the next Regional Water Plan.

C. Financial Report

Ms. Marcie Oviedo, LRGVDC was recognized and stated that as per unanimous action taken at the last meeting and the Group's request, she has researched revamping riograndewaterplan.org, the Group's website. She presented samples of other Regional Water Planning Groups' websites on the screen for comparison and consideration. Mr. Carlos Garza stated that based on what he learned when his company revamped their website he suggests that riograndewaterplan.org should be mobile friendly and able to adjust to screens on cell phones and other handheld devices, as well as laptops and desktop computers. Ms. Oviedo, Ms. Eatman, Mr. Garza and Mr. Jaime Flores agreed to work on the specifications for the website refurbishment. No action was taken at this time.

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

Mr. Armando Vela stated that there was no new information to report at this time.

E. Discussion of IBWC Water Accounting at Fort Quitman

The Chairman stated that there was no new information to report on this item at this time.

F. No Charge Releases from the San Juan River

Mr. Sonny Hinojosa was recognized and stated that some of the irrigation district managers had a conference call with TCEQ, who again offered diversions as a way to repay the debt from the releases. The managers declined the opportunity to pick up excess flows because Mexico would get credit against their water debt, which would result in less water released upstream, and less water in the reservoirs.

G. Reports RE: Other Water Planning Groups

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

There was no new information to report.

a. **Consider Liaison for Region N**

Mayor Jim Darling made a motion to assign Judge Humberto Gonzalez as Liaison to the Region N Water Planning Group. Mr. Don McGhee seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously. Staff will contact Region N to advise them of this change.

- H. Reports on Water Conservation Plans and Drought Management Plans Filed with Region
No new plans have been received since the last meeting. It was the consensus of the Group to post this list on riograndewaterplan.org and highlight those entities that are not current.
- I. Report on Notices of Applications for Funding and Grants
No new notices have been received since the last meeting.
- J. Status of Studies and Activities on Rio Grande Basin Groundwater Interaction with Surface Water
There is no new information on this study.

6. Reports from Federal and State Agencies

A. TWDB

Ms. Townsend was recognized and gave a presentation on Region M RWPG Updates that included deadlines for the 5th Cycle of Regional Water Planning that extended to the beginning of 2017. She reiterated information on the Sierra Club SWIFT Conservation Workshop in Weslaco will be held on October 20; announced the TWDB Financial Assistance Workshop will be held on December 6 at 9:00 a.m. at the McAllen City Hall; the Water for Texas 2017 Conference will be held January 23 – 25 in Austin, and the Texas Legislative Session will be from January – June 2017.

1. Presentation RE: Interactive State Water Plan

Ms. Townsend gave a detailed demonstration of the new 2017 Interactive State Water Plan website illustrating what a valuable tool it could be to water related entities.

B. IBWC

No representative from the IBWC was present and no report was provided.

C. TCEQ Watermaster

There were no representatives from the TCEQ Watermaster's office; the report on reservoir levels was on the tablets.

D. TPWD

No one from TPWD was present and no report was provided.

7. Discussion and Possible Action RE: Meeting Schedule

It was the consensus of the Group to continue meeting at the new LRGVDC Main Campus Board Room and to schedule the next meeting on January 11, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Group the meeting was adjourned at 10:46 a.m.

Tomas Rodriguez, Chairman