

Minutes
Plateau Water Planning Group
Regular Meeting - Leakey, Texas
May 15, 2019
10:00 AM

Notice having been duly given the Plateau Water Planning Group (PWPG) conducted a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, beginning at 10:00 A.M. at The Frio Canyon Baptist Church, 919 US-83, Leakey, Real County, Texas. Present at the meeting were: Kathleen Jackson, Texas Water Development Board; Ray Buck, Kerr County; Jonathan Letz, Kerr County; Gene Williams, Kerr County; Grant Terry (for Scott Loveland, Kerr County); Jody Grinstead; John Ashworth, WSP and LBG-Guyton & Associates; Jennifer Herrera, WSP and LBG-Guyton & Associates; William Alfaro, Texas Water Development Board; Chad Norris, Texas Parks and Wildlife; Charlie Wiedenfeld, Kerr County; Michael Redman, Bandera County; David Mauk, Bandera County; Charlie Flatten, Kerr/Bandera/Real Counties; Dell Dickinson, Val Verde County; Max Martin, Edwards/Val Verde/Kinney Counties; Feather Wilson, Bandera County; Carl Schwing; Joseph McDaniel, Jerry Simpton, Val Verde County; Genell Hobbs, Kinney County; Tooter Trees, Real County; David Jeffery, Bandera County; Tyson Broad, Tina Ashley, Ernie DeWinne; and Andrea Croskey, Texas Water Development Board.

I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Certification of Quorum in Compliance with Texas Open Meetings Law.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

II. Public Comments.

No public comments were made.

III. Remarks from Kathleen Jackson, TWDB Director

Director Jackson thanked the Board for the work they do. She spoke briefly regarding: trends she is seeing as she travels across the state including people taking an interest in water conservation and looking at multiple water management strategies; the first major reservoir to be built in Texas in 30 years; SWIFT funding; brackish water (inland and desal plants); using surface water first; TWDB's pilot program that is working with communities with populations of less than 10,000 to provide engineering consultant work to help them get their operating procedures up to date.

She encouraged the members to contact her with any thoughts or ideas they may have. She congratulated UGRA on the Rainwater Harvesting Award they received

IV. Approval of minutes from the January 30, 2019, Regular Meeting.

Motion by Ray Buck to approve the January 30, 2019 minutes; second by Max Martin. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

V. Reports.

a. Report from Chair.

Chairman Letz stated the balance in the administrative account is \$11,599.72

b. Report from Secretary.

No report was given

c. Report from Political Entity.

No report was given

d. Report from Liaisons.

Carl Schwing gave a brief update on Region M Chairman, Tomas Rodriguez. Joseph McDaniel gave a brief update on Region L.

- e. Report from GMA representatives.
Feather Wilson spoke briefly regarding Senate Bill 1010

VI. **Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to approve invoices.**

Motion by Gene Williams to approve the following invoices: WSP - \$9216.02 (12/29/18 through 2/1/19); WSP - \$10, 876.67 (2/2/19 through 3/1/19); WSP - \$2,213.25 (3/2/19 through 3/29/19); and JP Morgan (credit card) – Paid to GMR Transcription - \$250.00 (transcript of 1/30/19 mtg); second by Joseph McDaniel. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

VII. **Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to accept resignation of Joel Pigg.**

Chairman Letz informed the Group that Joel accepted a new job and is no longer eligible to be a board member. Motion by Joseph McDaniel to accept the resignation of Joel Pigg; second by Ray Buck. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

VIII. **Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to appoint a new Vice-Chair.**

Motion by Tooter Trees to nominate Genell Hobbs as the Vice-Chair; second by Jerry Simpton. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

IX. **Texas Water Development Board Updates. (William Alfaro, Project Manager)**

Mr. Alfaro congratulated UGRA for their rain catcher award. Ray Buck briefly described the “EduScape” (educational landscape) project that won the award. A brief discussion ensued regarding whether or not water providers must be informed when people install rainwater collection systems.

Mr. Alfaro said that TWDB was working on the drought preparedness recommendations that were submitted to them. They met on April 16 and will be sending a formal letter to each of the regional water planning groups.

He spoke briefly regarding the updated Chapter Seven template that is now on the TWBD website and two new educational materials: one related to the function of the regional water planning group (what they do) and one related to SWIFT prioritization process.

Upcoming deadlines:

- May 31st – data due for Socioeconomic Impact Analysis Report
- March 3, 2020 – due date for Initially Prepared Plan (IPP)
- September – contract amendment related to funding

Although TWDB did not lobby for any of the Bills before the Legislature but they are tracking some of them. After the session is complete Mr. Alfaro will give the Group and update on the Bills that passed, how they may affect the planning process, and how the Water Development Board is expecting to address them.

X. **Update on the regional water planning schedule. (WSP)**

Ms. Herrera briefly discussed the regional water planning timeline. WSP is currently working on developing and updating strategies as well as unique stream segments.

She recapped items that were discussed at the last meeting:

- Approved requesting the Board to conduct a socioeconomic impact analysis.
- Discussion regarding draft chapter three.
- The Task 5A scope and budget was approved by the Board. Region J was then funded that extra dollar amount to proceed with strategy development.
- Discussed ecologically unique stream segments.

She discussed things to be discussed at today's meeting:
Water management strategy evaluation process.
Unique stream segments

XI. **Review process for recommending Water Management Strategies. Discuss relevance of current list of Potentially Feasible Strategies.**

Ms. Herrera explained the process that is used to determine whether or not a planning area is projected to have any water shortages within the 50-year planning cycle and whether or not a water strategy is needed or not. Water strategies are developed for entities that show a need. Strategies from the previous plan are carried over to the new plan for those entities that are still interested in having those strategies in the plan for funding purposes. Previously the planning group agreed to a conservation commitment for any utility or WUG experiencing a water loss greater than 10%.

The new unified costing tool provided by Water Development Board has included some cost changes with steel, and there are just enough economic impacts there that made some changes with the tools. So, new strategies are going in through a new tool that will account for those current costs.

Mr. Ashworth discussed his handout entitled "Potentially Feasible Water Management Strategies" in depth. A brief discussion ensued regarding interregional work. Mr. McDaniel stated that AquaTexas may have an interest in surface water rights at the new plant for the Center Point Waste Water Project in Kerr County. Mr. Letz stated that it's more of an ideal right now and that they are looking at the feasibility of various options right now. Mr. Ashworth briefly described how water demand strategies are designated and how the entities are notified. He stressed that part of the PWPG board members responsibility is to make sure that the people they represent understand the need for them to participate in this process if they think they're going to need Water Development Board funding. Mr. Alfaro stated that there is a process that can be followed to request amending the population predictions. Mr. Ashworth stressed that the Group is only making recommendations; they are not telling any entity that they need to do any of these things. The Group is trying to give them a little education of what to expect over the next 50 years and make some justifiable suggestions in how they might solve their water needs.

Mr. Ashworth reminded the Group that WSP is working with well water and aquifer sources and they have subcontracted with Carollo Engineering to do the work on surface water. He stated that TWDB has a very good interactive site that shows water data for each area.

XII. **Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to approve process for recommending Unique Stream Segments within the PWPG.**

Chairman Letz spoke briefly regarding his handout entitled "Draft: Procedure for PWPG recommending a Unique Stream Segment "USS"". He acknowledged that based on the last meeting that there is a lot of differing opinions on this subject. He stated the document was a good starting point for the discussion. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the procedures and whether or not this fell under the purview of the planning group at all as well as who would be responsible any related costs. Mr. Norris spoke briefly regarding a report that had already been prepared by Texas Parks and Wildlife that included Region J ecologically significant stream segments they found to be unique. Mr. Alfaro reminded the Group that the planning group is not required make any recommendations; it's up to the planning group whether or not they want to make any recommendations. Tyson Broad expressed his concern with any procedures being put in place as the process "for unique stream segments and reservoir designations" are already codified in 357 of the statute. The discussion continued at length.

Motion by Ray Buck to approve Procedure for Recommending a Unique Stream Segment as amended today; second by Dell Dickinson. The motion passed by a majority vote of 11 to 3. Those voting in favor were: Ray Buck, Dell Dickinson, Jonathan Letz, David Jeffery, Charlie Wiedenfeld, Gene Williams, Genell Hobbs, Tooter Trees, Jerry Simpton, Max Martin and Joseph McDaniel. Those voting against were: Feather Wilson, Dave Mauk and Charlie Flatten. *A copy of the final procedures is attached to these minutes.

XIII. Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to consider potential Unique Stream Segments and authorize consultants to begin further evaluation.

Mr. Ashworth discussed his handout entitled “Requested Unique Stream Segments”. Letters and Resolutions were received for the following rivers from the following groups:

Devil’s River – Texas nature Conservancy

Nueces, Frio and Sabinal Rivers – Nueces River Authority (Con Mims)

South Llano River – Llano River Watershed Alliance and Ruth B Russell

Medina, Sabinal Rivers and West Verde Creek (Bandera County) – Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District

Guadalupe River and Tributaries (Kerr County) – Upper Guadalupe River Authority and Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District

Chairman Letz stated that based on the prior motion the direction would be for the consultants to work the entities or individuals that have submitted these to help them with the process and provide guidance for them (not do the work for them). The process should be from a standpoint that the cost would come from the local entities or individuals. Then, if the Commissioners’ Court in that county approves them, the Group can vote to concur with the recommendations at the next meeting.

Mr. Norris reminded the Group about the report previously prepared by Parks and Wildlife and stated that would be a good reference to use and Texas Parks and Wildlife would be happy to assist where needed.

Motion by Charlie Wiedenfeld to table further discussion until we have received recommendations from the county commissioners’ court for these stream segments; second by Joseph McDaniel. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

**XIV. Hill Country Trinity Aquifer Brackish Groundwater Study Stakeholder Presentation.
(Mark Robinson)**

Ms. Andrea Croskrey made the presentation on behalf of Mark Robinson. Ms. Croskrey works for the Texas Water Development Board mapping brackish groundwater for their program called BRACS. She stated that they are starting projects that map brackish groundwater in the Hill Country Trinity Aquifer and Edwards Trinity Plateau Aquifer. She provided an outline of their study and explained the meaning of brackish water as it pertains to their study. She briefly reviewed the study topics including: brackish groundwater production zones (required by House Bill 30), recommending groundwater monitoring for those zones and working with stakeholders in those areas, criteria for the zone designation, mapping the stratigraphy, lithology and measured water quality. Once the study is complete they will provide a final report and solicit comments from the stakeholders then the Board will possibly designate any brackish groundwater zones. She requested any data the members could share with them including: aquifer tests, water chemistry, geophysical well logs and injection well data. A brief discussion ensued regarding geophysical logs, geophysical signatures, log calculations and how to calculate total zone salts.

Ms. Croskrey spoke briefly regarding the preliminary maps that were put out about a year ago stating that work was contracted out. She said there were some inconsistencies in the Hill Country

data so they decided to do a whole study for the Hill County and not just use the data that the contractor provided. Mr. Martin asked what Legislature's purpose was in directing TWDB to do this study. Director Jackson stated she believed it was to get a better understanding of the aquifer as a whole. A brief discussion ensued. Mr. Letz stated that the Legislature needs to be watched closely because there are frequent movements to centralize groundwater.

XV. Set next meeting.

The next meeting will be in August.