

Minutes
Plateau Water Planning Group
REGULAR MEETING
Initiated and Chaired at
Guadalupe Basin Natural Resources Center (GBNRC)
125 Lehmann Drive - Auditorium
Kerrville, Texas
October 26, 2023
10:00 AM

Notice having been given, a Regular Meeting of the Plateau Water Planning Group (PWPG) was held on Thursday, October 26, 2023, beginning at 10:00 A.M. The meeting was initiated and chaired at GBNRC, 125 Lehmann Drive, Ste. 100, Kerrville, Texas. **Present in person**: Jonathan Letz, Kerr County; Tara Bushnoe, Kerr County; Charlie Wiedenfeld, Kerr County; Carlos Velarde, Val Verde County; Dell Dickinson, Val Verde County; Gene Williams, Kerr County; David Mauk, Bandera County; David Jeffery, Bandera County; Jess Erlund, Kerr County; Kenneth Reed, Edwards County; Scott Loveland, Kerr County; Tammy Thompson, UGRA; Lann Bookout, Texas Water Development Board; Tony Smith, Carollo Engineering; Matthew Wilkinson, UGRA (hosted the meeting); Jody Grinstead, Admin. Asst. **Present via Zoom**: Max Martin, Edward/Val Verde/Kinney County; Feather Wilson, Bandera County; Jennifer Jackson (Herrera), WSP; Gabi Davis, WSP; Monica Cerceo, WSP; and Carol Faulkenberry, Texas Department of Agriculture.

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

It was determined that a quorum was present.

II. Public Comments.

No public comments were made.

III. Approval of minutes from the August 2, 2023 Meeting.

Motion by Dell Dickinson to approve the August 2, 2023 meeting minutes; second by Charlie Wiedenfeld. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

IV. Reports.

a. Report from Chair.

The account balance is \$11,307.32

Chairman Letz stated that he will be speaking to Senator Flores, his staff, and leadership at TWDB to discuss issues with the water planning process (i.e. the way populations are calculated, strategies and why brush clearing cannot be used as a strategy).

b. Report from Secretary.

No report was given.

c. Report from Political Entity.

Ms. Bushnoe stated that advance payment request No. 5 has been submitted and she's working with TWDB regarding the timeline for upcoming events.

d. Report from Liaisons.

No report was given.

e. Report from GMA representatives.

No report was given.

V. Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to approve invoices.

Motion by Gene Williams to approve the following invoices: GMR Transcription (8/2/23 meeting) - \$308.00, WSP (07/01/23 to 08/04/23) - \$8,763.73, WSP (08/05/23 to 09/01/23) - \$7,807.49 and WSP (09/02/23 to 09/29/23) - \$10,182.65; second by Charlie. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

VI. Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to approve administrative expenses, and certify that the expenses are eligible for reimbursements and are correct and necessary.

Ms. Bushnoe stated that these are the funds that are reimbursable to Kerr County in the amount of \$1,355.97 for administrative work done by Jody Grinstead and reimbursement for transcript fees. **Motion by Tara Bushnoe to approve the expenses in the amount of \$1,355.97; second by Charlie Wiedenfeld. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.**

VII. Texas Water Development Board Updates.

Mr. Bookout stated that the contract amendments for additional funding for the scope of work have been sent out and are in the process of being executed by the political subdivisions for each region.

VIII. Discuss and consider action to authorize UGRA to negotiate and execute an amendment to the TWDB contract to increase the total project cost and committed funds for the 2026 Region J Regional Water Plan and to amend the agreement between UGRA and WSP for allocation of additional funds.

Ms. Bushnoe stated that this will be an \$85,835.00 increase of the budget which will all go into the subcontractor expense account which will be allocated among several tasks. **Motion by Charlie Wiedenfeld to approve the amendment to the TWDB contract with our political subdivision and with our political subdivision and WSP to incorporate \$85,835.00 in both contracts; second by David Jeffery. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.** Ms. Jackson stated we have flexibility to move the funds into the appropriate tasks if necessary.

IX. Discuss and consider action to authorize UGRA to approve out of state travel for consultant when necessary.

Ms. Bushnoe stated that in the pass through agreement between UGRA and WSP it specifically states that out of state travel is prohibited unless authorized specifically by UGRA and Ms. Jackson has requested that we execute that authorization. Due to changes within WSP she will primarily attend meeting remotely. However there will be some meetings in the future when it would be beneficial to have her attend in person. **Motion by Dave Mauk to authorize approving out of state travel for consultant when necessary; second by Charlie Wiedenfeld. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.**

X. Discussion and Action as appropriate: Update to Regional Water Planning Schedule (WSP), consultants to provide a summary of identified Wholesale Water Providers and Major Water Providers (WSP), report and discussion from Carollo providing a summary of the Hydrologic Variance Request for determining water availability for existing sources and water management strategies; consider taking action to authorize the technical consultant to submit a hydrologic variance request to the TWDB on behalf of the PWPG consistent with the information provided in this meeting, and approve for the consultant to work with the Chair and Administrator to submit further revisions and make responses to revisions requests by TWDB.

Ms. Jackson stated the they are working towards the following deadlines:

March 4, 2024 – Technical Memorandum

June 5, 2024 – Amendments to 2021 Regional Water Plan (if necessary)

She stated all deadlines have been met as of today. The population and water demand revision request has been submitted.

Ms. Jackson briefly reviewed Handout 1 (2026 Plateau Water Plan / TWBD Approved Population Revision Request). She shared TWDB's responses to the revision request letter that was submitted. The letter requested that population under count analysis (the 1.0 migration scenario or the .5 migration scenario) be used for each county. The Board approved use of the under count analysis trend line in all counties. She went on to discuss each county individually and noted that for all the entities that surveyed, and for all of the methodologies applied, the Water Development Board came

back and found favor in all of our requests, except for the one modification that they made to the Laughlin Air Force Base (they dropped the requested amount of 4,000 down to a value of approximately 1,600). She stated that the final data will be received in November once the TWDB votes on it.

Ms. Jackson briefly discussed major water providers. She noted in the previous plan, the Board had given planning groups the flexibility to define what a major water provider is. She stated that Region J Region defined a major water provider as an entity that currently provides significant water supplies greater than 10,000 acre feet per year to other users - and which will continue to develop new supplies to meet the future needs of those whom they supply. Using that definition, the only wholesale water provider that meets that qualification inside Region J is Del Rio Utilities. Mr. Bookout stated that the designation as a major water provider was originally utilized by larger regions that have huge volumes of water. Those groups felt they needed a special designator in the database for an additional look at what that entity was doing and what they proposed to do. Mr. Letz ask if there was any benefit to lowering the number to include more major water providers in the region. A brief discussion ensued regarding Aqua Texas and the City of Kerrville. There was no strong interest to make a change to the definition currently being used.

Mr. Smith presented data regarding surface water source availability and the analysis process that leads to the hydrologic variance request. He briefly reviewed definitions for: availability, DOR (drought of record), DWDOR.(droughts worse than the drought of record), firm yield, GAMs (groundwater availability models), MAGs (modeled available groundwater) source availability, existing water supply, WAM,(water availability model) and surface water availability. Mr. Smith discussed the hydrologic variance request - initially taken from the official TCEQ model and amended with proposed modifications aimed at remaining conservative while reflecting the real world conditions for regional planning purposes.

He stated that TWDB created checklists that must be completed for each river basin when requesting a hydrologic variance request. Mr. Smith presented the draft request to the planning group for their approval (Handout 2 – Hydrologic Variance Request letter from Carollo addressed the TWDB). Once approved it will be submitted to TWDB. **Motion by Charlie Wiedenfeld to authorize the technical consultant to submit a hydrologic variance request to the Water Development Board on behalf of the Plateau Water Planning Group consistent with the information provided today and to allow the consultant to work with the chair and administrator to submit further revisions and make responses to revision requests by the Board; second by David Jeffery. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.**

XI. Discuss and consider action on groundwater sources, groundwater supply analysis, availability and methodology, the status of the identification of infeasible strategies, the preliminary process for identifying potentially feasible strategies, and ongoing engagement efforts for the purposes of the 2026 Plateau Water Plan, and review of the Technical Memorandum requirements.

Mr. Smith stated that multiple water use surveys had been sent out and they would be inputting the information received from those surveys into the TWBD database (DB27) over the next several months. That database generates all of the tables used in the Technical Memorandum which is due on March 4, 2024.

Ms. Jackson discussed the types of water located in Region J (fresh water, brackish water, local supply and reuse) and briefly discussed the various aquifers in the region as well as the groundwater conservation districts and GMA's (groundwater management area) in the area.

She described the groundwater supply analysis process in detail. She reviewed Handout 3 (Desired Future Conditions) with the group. She noted that the only significant change from the previous plan is within GMA 9 - they adopted a slightly different approach to the desired future conditions that impacted Kerr County, Edwards-Trinity Plateau Aquifer. All the other GMAs really had no significant changes around their desired future conditions from the previous plan.

Ms. Jackson then discussed the MAG's that come from the desired future conditions (Handout 4 – Plateau Region – 2026 RWP) and groundwater source availability methodology (Handout 5).

*Chairman Letz left the meeting.

Ms. Jackson discussed infeasible water management strategies as defined by the Water Development Board and the approach WSP and Carollo used to assess all the strategies in the 2021 Regional Water Plan with an online decade of either 2020 or 2030 to determine whether there are infeasible or feasible. She reviewed Handout 6 (Water Management Strategies) with the group. She noted that provide did engagement surveys to all of the entities requesting feedback and received information from all but approximately 12 of the entities. She reviewed the results of the surveys with the group. Mr. Smith noted that the list of potentially infeasible strategies is required to be submitted in the Technical Memorandum. Ms. Jackson stated that she would put the information in a letter for Chairman Mr. Letz to review and determine if it needed to be presented at the next meeting. It needs to be determined whether or not the strategies listed are still feasible considering some of them are six years out. If so, then that information would go into the plan – whether it's in the Technical Memorandum or sometime after that. Ms. Jackson informed the group that for every infeasible strategy identified an amendment must be done to the 2021 plan. The amendment process would include: adjusting the online decade, removing the strategy and replacing it with a feasible strategy or removing the strategy altogether.

Ms. Jackson discussed feasible water management strategies. She reviewed Handout 7 (Process for Identifying and Selecting Potentially Feasible Water Management Strategies to be Evaluated for the 2026 Plateau Water Plan). She noted this information would be used to complete Chapter 5 in the 2026 Regional Water Plan. **Motion by Charlie Wiedenfeld to approve the process used to identify and select potentially feasible water management strategies to be evaluated for the 2026 Plateau Water Plan as presented today; second by Dave Mauk. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.**

Ms. Jackson reviewed what information would be covered in, and the process for preparing, the Technical Memorandum which is due March 4, 2024. She said the draft Technical Memorandum would be presented to the group at the next meeting for approval. The draft Technical Memorandum will be posted on the PWPG website approximately 2 weeks before the meeting.

XII. Public Comments.

No public comments were received regarding the process used to identify and select potentially feasible water management strategies to be evaluated for the 2026 Plateau Water Plan.

XIII. Set next meeting date.

The next meeting was set for February 8, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in Kerrville (the meeting requires a 14-day posting).