

**Minutes of the North East Texas Regional Water Planning Group
August 4, 2021 – 10:00 A.M.**

The North East Texas Regional Water Planning Group (NETRWPG) – Region D met in an open meeting on Wednesday August 4, 2021, at 10:00 A.M. The meeting was held at the Region 8 Education Service Center, 4845 US 271 N, Pittsburg, TX 75686. Notice of the meeting was legally posted.

Jim Thompson called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. and welcomed everyone. Introductions were made and a quorum was present. Seventeen members of the planning group were present in person or represented by a designated alternate.

The following voting members were present:

Allen Beeler	John Brooks	Nicolas Fierro
Cindy Gwinn	Dennis Hilliard	Conrad King
Richard LeTourneau	Janet McCoy	Rolin McPhee
Fred Milton	Ned Muse	Sharron Nabors
Bob Staton	Jim Thompson	

The following alternates were present:

Marla Abernathy	Greg Carter	Jim Davis
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The following voting members were absent:

Russell Acker	Wade Bartley	Brandon Belcher	
Joe Coats	Joe Bumgarner	Lloyd Parker	Cheri Stuart

Tony Smith of Carollo Engineers made a presentation providing an overview of the Regional Planning Process.

The public was provided an opportunity for comment prior to any action being taken by the planning group. Please see the attached Public Comment forms.

Tony Smith of Carollo Engineers presented information regarding potential process for conducting interregional coordination regarding water management strategies during development of the 2026 Regional Water Plans. This included compiling a list of strategies from approved plans in the state of Texas. He then identified the strategies and course of action for coordination between Region D and Region C. No action taken.

The public was provided another opportunity for comment at this time.

- Howdy Lisenbee, City Manager for the City of Commerce, Texas requested time before the board to be considered as a voting member of the Region D Board.

Fred Milton made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 31, 2021 meeting. Dennis Hilliard seconded the motion. Motion carried, all voting aye.

Ron Ellis with Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) provided an update on TWDB. The 2022 State Water Plan was adopted on July 7, 2021. This is the result of 5 years of regional water planning compiled into a comprehensive State Plan. The regular session of the 87th legislature wrapped up at the end of May. The passing of HB1905 directly affects regional water planning. This bill removes some requirements for the planning groups. Groups are no longer required to submit an Infrastructure Financing Report to TWDB. It also removed the requirement for applicants under the SWIFT Loan program to fill out an Infrastructure Financing Survey as well as removed the requirement that planning groups prioritize projects within the State Water Plan. Another bill that passed is Senate Bill 669. It eliminated a biennial water use report that the TWDB sent to the legislature. That information is now updated on the TWDB website. House Bill 2225 gives the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department the additional duties related to the Texas Water Trust. In addition to the duties of the TWDB and TCEQ, they are also now authorized to facilitate the dedication of water rights. The previous Interregional Planning Council was dissolved with the adoption of the 2022 State Water Plan. They will be soliciting nominations for the next council this Fall. The council will submit a report to TWDB in March of 2024. The previous council's report is on the TWDB website under the section for the Interregional Planning Council. The funding for water planning is authorized in each legislative session that occur every two years. This meant that administrators for regional planning groups were required to submit funding applications multiple times during a 5-year planning cycle. A change in Chapter 355 of the Water Code regarding Regional Water Planning Grants eliminated that requirement. Now, Riverbend, the political subdivision administrator for Region D, can apply for limited reimbursement for personnel costs. Notices for committee and meeting materials also changed. The time frame for notices of committee meetings and posting of meeting materials increased from three to seven days. The notice requirement for adopting final plans increased from three days to fourteen days. Notices required for applying for funding for regional water planning has been removed. A new contract between Riverbend and TWDB to begin the 6th cycle of water planning has also been executed. TWDB is contracting with the University of Texas Bureau of Economic Geology to assess mining water use and to update the mining water projections for the current planning cycle. A stakeholder survey developed for round five of regional water planning has an anticipated distribution date in August of 2022. The survey will ask for feedback on TWDBs staff assistance with planning, on planning group administration and, on planning for educational resources. Mr. Ellis then provided links to the TWDB Water Planning, best management practices guide, the Rules document, contracts, the studies on the use of mining water, and any other TWDB activities.

Sharron Nabors stated that GMA #8 and Region C had no new updates.

John McFarland stated that Region I has held one meeting for this planning cycle and plans another for August 18, 2021. An update for GMA #11 is that due to TWDBs revision to the ground water availability model, GMA #11 had to run scenarios on projected pumping an aquifer levels drawdown. Those scenarios yield a decrease in aquifer levels throughout the region. Those aquifer levels will affect Region Ds projects.

Ron Ellis with TWDB played a recorded a presentation on Statewide Aquifer Storage & Recovery (ASR) Study or Aquifer Recharge (AR). This study was legislatively mandated to determine the suitability of aquifers for ASR or AR projects. Aquifer Storage & Recovery

uses wells to inject water into an aquifer for the purpose of subsequent recoveries and beneficial use. Aquifer Recharge is the intentional recharge of an aquifer may not be done for full recovery of the water from an aquifer but instead for other reasons, such as reducing the decline in the water table or improving water quality. In 2019 the Texas Legislature passed HB721 directing TWDB to survey aquifer storage and recovery and aquifer recharge potential for the state. The survey, conducted with HDR Engineering, identified areas in Texas with three important components for a successful ASR or AR project. The Hydro-geological Perimeter Screening identified aquifers with appropriate characteristics. The Excess Water Screening identified sources of water to inject or infiltrate and the Water Supply Needs Screening identified water demands for such projects. The scores from these three screenings were combined for a relative final suitability rating all across Texas. The results were published in December 2020.

Jim Thompson, Chair, asked for a motion to authorize Riverbend Water Resources District (Riverbend) to execute a contract with Carollo Engineers to be the Technical Consultants for the 2026 Regional Water Plan for Region D. Kyle Dooley, Executive Director/CEO explained that the board reviewed proposals and selected Carollo Engineers as the technical consultant. Ned Muse made a motion to authorize Riverbend to execute a contract with Carollo Engineers. John Brooks seconded the motion. Motion carried, all voting aye.


Jim Thompson asked for discussion regarding approval changes to the Region D Bylaws. Some changes were updating the name and address of the Administrator. Other changes were suggestions for the Board to consider. The Board decided that discussion and a vote would be postponed until the next board meeting. Kyle Dooley stated that he will accept suggestions for any additional changes to the Bylaws via email. No action taken.

Jim Thompson presented the list of expiring terms of office for current voting members on the Region D Board as well as their successor. Terms of each position are for 3 years, commencing on September 1, 2021. Selection process for positions will consider any additional nominations from voting members. Positions to be appointed include positions currently held by Wade Bartley, Sharron Nabors, Joe Coats, Jim Thompson, Bob Staton, Dennis Hilliard, Cheri Stuart, and Brandon Belcher. The Executive Committee met before the board meeting and unanimously recommended to the board the following nominations: Sharron Nabors, Joe Coats, Jim Thompson, and Brandon Belcher to serve another term, as well as Wade Bartley to be replaced by Andy Endsley, Dennis Hilliard to be replaced by Richard Garza, Cheri Stuart to be replaced by Billy Henson, and Bob Staton to be replaced by Bob Tardiff. Mr. Thompson asked Mr. Dooley to research what needed to be done in order to allow Howdy Lisenbee to become a member of the Region D Board. Ned Muse would like Mr. Lisenbee appointed as his official alternate. Sharron Nabors made a motion to approve the appointees as listed and as recommended by the Executive Committee. Fred Milton seconded the motion. Motion carried, all voting aye.

Rolin McPhee asked if we could look into alternate methods for allowing those that are not permitted to attend meetings in-person due to travel restrictions placed on board members by their employers with regards to the ongoing pandemic.

Discussion was also held regarding the next meeting. It should be close to the end of October or early November. Kyle Dooley will send a reminder out once a date is selected.

Rolin McPhee made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Richard LeTourneau seconded the motion. Motion carried, all voting aye to adjourn the meeting at 12:18 p.m.


Secretary


Date