

**Minutes of the North East Texas Regional Water Planning Group
March 31, 2021 – 1:00 P.M.**

The North East Texas Regional Water Planning Group (NETRWPG) – Region D met in an open meeting on Wednesday March 31, 2021, at 1:00 P.M. The meeting was held telephonically only. Notice of the meeting was legally posted.

Jim Thompson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Introductions were made and a quorum was present. Twenty-one members of the planning group were present in person or represented by a designated alternate.

The following voting members were present:

Russell Acker	Allen Beeler	Brandon Belcher
John Brooks	Joe Bumgarner	Donnie Duffee
Nicolas Fierro	Cindy Gwinn	Dennis Hilliard
Conrad King	Richard LeTourneau	Janet McCoy
Rolin McPhee	Fred Milton	Ned Muse
Sharron Nabors	Lloyd Parker	Bob Staton
Cheri Stuart	Harlton Taylor	Jim Thompson

The following alternates were present:

Greg Carter Jim Davis

The following voting members were absent:

Wade Bartley Bruce Bradley Joe Coats

The public was provided an opportunity for comment prior to any action being taken by the planning group. No public comments were made at the beginning of this meeting.

Sharron Nabors made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 16, 2020 meeting. Conrad King seconded the motion. Motion carried, all voting aye.

Chair Jim Thompson asked for updates from the liaisons. Ron Ellis with Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) stated that the water development board is in the process of updating chapter 355 Rules for Regional Water Planning Grants and chapter 357.21 Rules for Public Notice Requirements. The draft rules allow for limited reimbursement for certain labor costs for planning group political subdivisions and the draft rules also remove the 30-day notice requirement which is associated with the water development board action on funding applications. These draft rules have been published and the comment period has been closed. Adoption of these changes is projected for May 2021. The request for applications for the 6th round planning contracts was posted on March 12, 2021 and the deadline for response is April 12, 2021. It is anticipated that the TWDB will authorize negotiation and execution of those contracts in June 2021. Those contracts would be sent out to the planning groups for signature in July 2021. Contract execution deadline is the end of August 2021. The TWDB has contracted with the University of Texas Bureau of Economic Geology to assess mining water use and to assess mining water demand projections to be used in the 2026 Regional Water Plan. The kick-off meeting for that contract was held in December 2020. Aquifer Storage and Recovery Study update: TWDB conducted a statewide survey of the major and minor aquifers in the state to determine their suitability for use in aquifer storage and

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recovery projects or aquifer recharge projects. The completed report was submitted to the legislature in December 2020. There will be a presentation of that report to the NETRWPG board hopefully at the next meeting. Reservoir Yield Uncertainty Study update: TWDB Surface Water Division is conducting a study to quantify the uncertainty of reservoir firm yield. This study has been contracted out to AquaStrategies. The study will evaluate the impact of significant drought events on reservoir yield. From that study a tool will be developed for planning groups to optionally use to assess reliability of that yield. Stakeholder meeting was held on March 30, 2021. The final study results will be shared with all of the planning groups when it is completed. Inter-Regional Planning Council update: The group developed and submitted recommendations to TWDB in October 2020. TWDB has reviewed the recommendations. One recommendation, to revise the Open Meetings Act to allow the continuation of a virtual meeting options for planning groups has been included on the legislative priorities report. That resulted in House Bill 2103 to be filed that would allow planning groups to continue to have the option to meet virtually. Another recommendation regarding the administrative offices of political subdivisions to reimbursed for some labor costs is in the pending rule revision mentioned earlier. Other recommendations regarding coordination with other regions will be addressed in the contracting and guidance with the 6th round of planning. The current inter-regional planning council was dissolved with the adoption of the 2022 State Water Plan in the Summer of 2021. Nominations for the next council will be solicited after that. Please contact Mr. Ellis for further information on any of these updates.

Sharron Nabors stated that GMA #8 and Region C had no new updates. John McFarland with Region I and GMA #11 stated that GMA #11 met earlier this month and will meet in April to adopt new desired future condition numbers and will have open comments after that. Region I met this month to begin to take contracts for a consultant.

Jim Thompson provided a list of the current officers as follows: Jim Thompson as Chairman; Richard LeTourneau as Vice Chairman; Rolin McFee as Secretary; Bob Staton as an At-Large Member; and Joe Bumgarner as an At-Large Member. He then asked for a motions or discussion regarding the election of officers. Sharron Nabors made a motion to keep the current slate of officers. Cindy Gwinn seconded the motion. Motion carried, all voting aye.

Jim Thompson provided that action must be taken to authorize Riverbend Water Resources District (RWRD) to provide public notice and hold a pre-planning public meeting to obtain public input on development of the 2026 Regional Water Plan and 2027 State Water Plan. Kyle Dooley, Executive Director/CEO for RWRD, provided that this meeting is necessary to start the process for the 6th round of water planning. It will provide the opportunity for public comment on the upcoming plan. Public notice must be provided as well. This meeting date is anticipated to be in mid to late July and can be held in conjunction with the Region D board meeting. Ned Muse made a motion to authorize Riverbend Water Resources District (RWRD) to provide public notice and hold a pre-planning public meeting to obtain public input on development of the 2026 Regional Water Plan and 2027 State Water Plan. Russell Acker seconded the motion. Motion carried, all voting aye.

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Jim Thompson provided information on the need to select a Technical Consultants in accordance with 31 TAC 355.92 (c). Mr. Thompson provided that in response to a request for qualifications published in March, Carollo Engineers, Inc. and HDR Engineering, Inc. each

submitted a proposal for consideration. At this time each firm was given five minutes to make a presentation to the board. Tony Smith with Carollo Inc.; James Beach with Advanced Groundwater Solutions, LLC; and Stan Hayes with Hayes Engineering Inc. presented their qualifications to continue to provide consulting and engineer services to NETRWPG regarding water planning. Following their presentation, David Dunn and Zach Stein with HDR Engineering Inc.; and Susan Roth with Susan Roth Consulting presented their qualifications to be considered to provide the needed services to NETRWPG regarding water planning.

Discussions commenced among board members comparing the two firms. Jim Thompson then called for a motion to act on the item up for discussion. Rolin McFee made a motion to choose Carollo Inc. as the Technical Consultant for NETRWPG. Ned Muse seconded that motion. Cheri Stuart made a motion to choose HDR Engineering Inc. as the Technical Consultant for NETRWPG. Cindy Gwinn seconded that motion. Mr. Thompson then called for a roll call vote from the voting members of the board. Eighteen members voted to keep Carollo Inc. as the Technical Consultant. Three members voted to award the contract to HDR Engineering Inc. By a simple majority vote, Carollo Inc. will remain the Technical Consultant for NETRWPG.

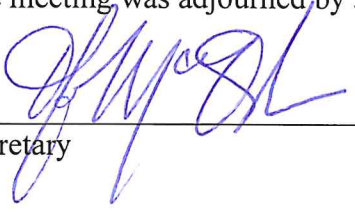
Jim Thompson provided that the next item on the agenda is to review the current NETRWPG Bylaws. No action is required today but they must be reviewed and outdated information will need to be changed. Kyle Dooley suggested that, as the administrator, he and his staff can update the details of the naming of the administrator in the bylaws to be more generic. In addition, TWDB may be updating the notification processes in May of 2021 leading into the 6th planning cycle. A full review of the bylaws will be completed to ensure they are compliant with the enabling legislation. That review will include the generic language surrounding the administrator changes along with the possible update by TWDB to the notification processes. Jim Thompson asked Kyle Dooley to draft up changes to the bylaws as mentioned above. There was no official action taken regarding the bylaws.

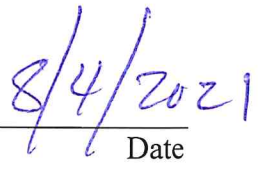
Jim Thompson provided that he is of the opinion that the next NETRWPG meeting should be an in-person meeting. He also discussed the issue of meeting time conflicts for himself and a few other board members. He opened the discussion to change the time of day the quarterly meetings are scheduled from 1:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m. The next NETRWPG meeting date has not been officially decided but should be in mid to late July. Ron Ellis provided information on timing for the next board meeting. He suggests the meeting be held after TWDB meets sometime in June to authorize the negotiation of a funding contract between TWDB and Riverbend. Several board members agreed on meeting in person and moving the meeting time up to earlier in the day. There was no official action taken regarding scheduling meetings.

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There were no further public comments.

The meeting was adjourned by Jim Thompson at 2:47 p.m.


Secretary


Date