

LOWER COLORADO REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP
MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 12, 2005 REGULAR MEETING
McKINNEY ROUGHS

These are the minutes approved by motion at the February 9, 2005 LCRWPG meeting.

Members Signing In:

Jim Barho, Environment
John Burke, Water Utilities
Ron Fieseler, Environment
Rick Gangluff, Electric Generating Utilities
Ronald Gertson, Small Business
Dale Henry, Other
Barbara Johnson, Industries
Dennis Jones, Municipalities
Mark Jordan, River Authorities
Teresa Lutes, Municipalities
Julia Marsden, Public
Bill Miller, Agriculture
Bob Pickens, Other
Stanley Reinhard, Water Districts
Billy Roeder, Counties
Cole Rowland, Alternate for Del Waters
Haskell Simon, Agriculture
Harold Streicher, Small Business
James Sultemeier, Counties
Paul Tybor, Water Districts
Jennifer Walker, Environment

Joe McCarley, TDA, Non-Voting Member
David Meesey, TWDB, Non-Voting Member

Voting Members Absent:

Chris King, Counties
Bill Neve, Counties
Del Waters, Recreation

Consultants/Support

Dan Strub, City of Austin Water Conservation
Cynthia Braendle, Aqua Resources
Reem Zoun, TC&B

Mark Lowry, TC&B
Rebeka Lien, TC&B
Randy Williams, TC&B

Visitors/Others:

Calvin Ransleben
Ron Anderson, LCRA
Chris Lippe, City of Austin
Milton Sunvison, USGS
Jeannie Wiginton, CDM
Carolyn Brittin, TWDB
Rodney Willis

Gary Smith, Black & Veatch
Kelly Payne, Alan Plummer and Associates
Nadira Kabir, LCRA
Mark Alsen, TPWD
Jason Eichler, LCRA
Joel Cooper, LPGCD
Scott Ahlstrom, LCRA

Quorum: Yes

Number of present voting members including designated alternates, representing absent voting members: 21.

Number required for quorum based on current voting membership of 23: 12.

FORMAL ACTIONS TAKEN:

- 1) Approved minutes as amended from December 8, 2004 regular meeting.
- 2) Approved the legislative committee recommendations with additional comments to be received by January 26.

ADDITIONAL DECISIONS MADE:

- 1) None.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR FUTURE ACTION:

- 1) None.

MEETING MINUTES:

1) Call to Order – John Burke

2) Welcome and Introductions

John Burke welcomed Carolyn Brittin. Carolyn reported that the TWDB has three funding requests that will come before the Legislature this session –\$800,000 to continue the regional planning process, approximately \$700,000 to evaluate and complete the GAMs, and \$3.3 million for desalinization projects and studies.

3) Discuss and take action on annual Executive Committee election including officers

Ronald Gertson moved that the group accept the recommendation of the nominating committee and elect John Burke as chair, Haskell Simon as Vice Chair, and Teresa Lutes as Secretary. Billy Roeder seconded. The motion passed.

The group voted to elect Ron Fieseler, Rick Gangluff, and Mark Jordan as members of the Executive Committee.

4) Attendance Report – Teresa Lutes

Teresa Lutes summarized the attendance report, noting that there were no members in violation of the attendance policies.

5) Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes for the December 8th Region K Regular Meeting

Rick Gangluff moved to accept the minutes as amended. Jim Barho seconded. The motion passed.

b. Financial/Budget Report

Mark Jordan provided a report including a handout summarizing both budgets.

6) Committee Reports

(a) Environmental Flows

None.

(b) Groundwater Management Plan Review

Ron Fieseler said that he had received an amended report from the Lost Pines Groundwater District. The original report projected a sustainable level of withdrawals of 7,500 AF, and the amended report changed that amount to 55,000 AF. David Meesey said that it was necessary to change the amount so that it would not conflict with the Region G plan, which listed 55,000AF groundwater for Lee County. Ron Fieseler said that he was concerned because the original estimate used the best available science, but the district was told that they had to change their amount to conform to the regional plan. It was asked why the Region G plan was not required to conform to the district's amount instead. David said that it was a matter of timing, but both numbers were likely to change within the next year. Jennifer Walker asked if the new Region G plan would

have to use the district's original numbers. David said that they did not. If there is a conflict between the regional plan and the district plan, the regional plan takes precedence. The district's groundwater plan must comply with the regional plan by statute. Region G has created a membership position in their group dedicated to groundwater districts to increase the input of the districts into the planning process. Julia Marsden asked if there is a mediation process. David said that the TWDB can mediate conflicts, but it is limited by statute on what they can do. Ron asked if the revised plan had been approved yet by the TWDB. Joe Cooper said that it had not.

(c) Legislative

Deferred until agenda item 10.

(d) Liaison Reports

John Burke said that Region G needs a liaison, and Mark Jordan volunteered, with Jennifer Walker serving as a back up. David Meesey said that he goes to all Region G meetings. John said that while that was appreciated, Region G was requesting a member from Region K as a liaison.

(e) Nominating Committee

See item 3.

(f) Public Information

Julia Marsden said that there was a sheet in the meeting packets for members to record public contacts. She asked if the public information committee needed to meet to discuss locations for meetings and hearings for the proposed plan. Jennifer Walker said they should meet soon. Julia said the committee would meet in February. Jennifer suggested that the group meet somewhere other than McKinney Roughs in March.

(g) Unique Stream Segments

Jim Barho said that there was an update to Chapter 8 in the packets. In 2004, the committee met at TC&B and was told that the designation of unique stream segments does little to protect those segments. As a result, the committee recommended to leave the information in Chapter 8 and to disband the committee. It also recommended adding information on Hamilton Creek to the Chapter. Julia Marsden asked if there was value in leaving the chapter in the plan. Jim said there was value leaving it there to provide information on the stream segments, but not to recommend designation.

(h) Water Modeling Committee

Deferred until agenda item 9.

7) Consider and take action on Chapter 1 Report

Rebeka Lien said that she has continued to receive comments on Chapters 1 and 2, and has not finalized the drafts. She recommended that the group move to accept the comments received, close the comment period now, and then finalize the drafts before the next meeting. James Sultemeier said that he had assumed that the deadline was December 20. Mark Jordan said that it was important that the items are adequately addressed and correct after the comments are adopted. Rebeka said that she would make sure that members got a copy of the draft with the comments incorporated before the next meeting, but she needed to close the comments period in order to move on. Teresa Lutes asked if they would have an opportunity to discuss the version with adopted comments. Rebeka said they could do that at the next meeting. Mark Lowry said the amended version would be posted on the web. Julia Marsden asked for paper copies of the chapters.

8) Consider and take action on Chapter 2 Report

See item 7.

9) Present Draft Chapter 3 Report

Rebeka Lien passed out Chapter 3. She suggested that comments be accepted until January 31 and then the comments be discussed at the next meeting. Barring significant changes, the final draft could then be voted on. If there are significant changes, the final draft could be voted on at the March meeting.

Jamie Burke presented on the chapter. David Meeseey asked what was the largest change in availability from the last plan, considering that availability has likely decreased in WAM run 3. Mark Lowry said that inflow changes may have offset the changes due to the WAM run. Jamie said that the run of river rights are much higher this time, as shown in Table 3.3. David said that availability has increased somewhat since the last plan. Ronald Gertson asked for an analysis of the differences since the last plan. Rebeka Lien said that it would be done for the next meeting. Teresa Lutes asked about the groundwater availability amounts shown in Table 3.27. Rebeka said that those figures were not total groundwater availability, just the totals collected from well contracts and permits. She said that pages 3-38 and 3-39 summarized the totals more accurately. Ronald said that there is almost 500,000 AF more available this time. Teresa said that the increases were mostly in LCRA run of river irrigation rights that were given zero values last plan. Billy Roeder asked how livestock water supplies were accounted for. Rebeka said that they were listed under local supply sources, as in the last plan.

Randy Williams presented on groundwater estimates. Ron Fieseler asked if the changes that the groundwater committee asked for were incorporated in the chapter, and Randy confirmed they were. Ron said that on page 3-39, 100,000 AF is attributed to "other aquifer." When he did a groundwater management plan, he had to deal with the 10,000 AF listed for "other aquifer" that did not exist. Rebeka said that the "other aquifer" amount was taken out of the plan for Gillespie and Blanco counties, and that it can be taken out for the other counties as well. John Burke suggested that they be removed from the entire planning area. Bob Pickens said that there could be unrecognized river valley aquifers that would not be credited. Julia Marsden agreed with setting the "other aquifer" amount to zero. Mark Lowry said that there are a number of water districts or municipalities that have wells that do not fit into other categories, and zeroing out the "other" categories could create the appearance of shortages that do not exist. John suggested setting the "other" amount to zero unless there are wells that belong in the "other" category, in which case the availability would be set to the amount of water coming from those wells. Rebeka said that they do not have good numbers for those wells currently. Ron said that an attempt was made to find the source documents for wells in Blanco County, but it failed because the source was not always listed for wells.

Jim Barho requested a table to compare page 3.34 in the December 2004 report with page 3.39 in the current report, breaking down the changes and the reasons for those changes. Ronald Gertson asked if the 100,000 AF in "other aquifers" was provided only in areas without groundwater districts, and Rebeka said it was in all of the counties except Gillespie and Blanco. Ronald said in his district, the water availability was shown on a district basis instead of a county basis.

10) Discuss and possibly take action on policy statements

Ronald Gertson presented on the proposed recommendations to the Legislature. The policies submitted for action at the January 12, 2005 meeting were: 1) Management of Surface Water Resources, 2) Environmental Flows – Instream Flows and Freshwater Inflows to Bays and Estuaries, 3) Protection of Agricultural and Rural Water Supplies, 4) Agricultural Water Conservation, and 5) Environmental – Sustainable Growth including Impacts of Growth. The set of recommendations included in the packet was not complete, and there will be two or three other recommendations that will be proposed at the February meeting. Julia Marsden said that those recommendations will concern reuse, public involvement, and public education. Comments on the recommendations are due by the January 26 committee meeting. Jennifer Walker asked if changes made after the January 26 meeting would be distributed in the next meeting packet, and Ronald confirmed that they would. David Meeseey commended the committee for its work, saying that a lot of work had gone into the recommendations, and that they were very well thought out. Mark Jordan asked if there were recommendations concerning municipal conservation. Ronald there were not and would not be unless Mark wanted to write it. Teresa Lutes said that it was not one of the top 20 issues on the survey that the group conducted.

Jim Barho moved to adopt the committee report with additional comments to be received by January 26. Paul Tybor seconded. The motion passed with Julia Marsden opposed. The approved policies were: 1) Management of Surface Water Resources, 2) Environmental Flows – Instream Flows and Freshwater Inflows to Bays and Estuaries, 3) Protection of Agricultural and Rural Water Supplies, 4) Agricultural Water Conservation, and 5) Environmental – Sustainable Growth including Impacts of Growth.

11) Presentation and discussion on Texas Water Development Board planning grant study relating to feasibility of a Central Texas Regional Water Treatment Plant

Scott Ahlstrom and Chris Lippe presented. John Burke asked if the raw water diversion proposed from Bastrop County would be surface water, and Scott confirmed that it was, although SAWS has asked that the Simsboro Aquifer water be considered as well. John asked which water rights would be diverted there. Scott said that it could be any or all of the rights of the parties participating in the treatment plant. Billy Roeder asked if this was the first treatment plant of its type, in that it served a region on behalf of multiple water providers. Scott said it was not, although it is fairly unique for large metropolitan providers to share a plant. In California, treated water is moved very long distances. Haskell Simon asked how large the plant would be. Scott said it was projected to be able to treat about 300 MGD. Haskell asked who was performing the study and how much it cost. Scott said that Karen Frieze was performing the study, and the grant from the TWDB was for \$180,000 after a 50 percent required match, of which \$120,000 was for the consultant's study. Jim Barho expressed concerns about the project in that the diversion could have a large impact on instream flows. Ronald Gertson asked when the study would be complete. Scott said it would be final in May, with a draft report available sooner. Ron Fieseler asked if the study was going to examine possible detrimental effects on surrounding counties and communities. Scott said that it would not in that it was just the first step in the process and those issues would be taken up if these preliminary efforts looked promising. David Meesey pointed out that the water that would supply the plant is already accounted for in the plan. Rick Gangluff asked if they would need to revise the wording of the SAWS strategies to include the plant, and was told they would not. David said that they just needed to ensure that any plant conforms to the terms of the deal. Haskell asked about an apparent difference between the capacity of the plant and the amount of water available to supply it. Scott pointed out that the capacity of the plant is peak capacity, and it would not run at that capacity at all times. Julia Marsden thanked Scott and Chris for the advance notice on the project.

12) New/Other Business

Dale Henry announced that he was stepping down from the group, as he has moved out of the planning area to Lampasas. He said that he would like to continue as a non-voting member, and said that his alternate, Judge Robert Lindsey was interested in assuming his member position. The group thanked Dale for his years of conscientious service.

13) Calendar

February 9, 2005, McKinney Roughs – Regular Meeting
March 9, 2005, McKinney Roughs – Regular Meeting

14) Agenda for next meeting

Agenda items for next meeting include:

- (a) Adopt Chapters 1 and 2 of the plan.
- (b) Discuss comments on Chapter 3, and adopt the Chapter if appropriate.
- (c) Timeline of plan deadlines and schedule of required meetings and public hearings.

15) Public Comments

None.

Thanks to the City of Austin for supplying lunch.

Meeting minutes prepared by Dan Strub for Teresa Lutes, Secretary, Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group (2/2/05). These minutes of the Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group January 12, 2005 meeting were approved in a motion passed at the February 9, 2005 Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group meeting.

Signature on File 2/9/2005
TERESA LUTES, SECRETARY DATE
Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group