

Draft Meeting Minutes
Lower Colorado Regional Water Planning Group
Public Hearing and Regular Meeting

September 15, 2021
LCRA Dalchau Service Center
3505 Montopolis Drive
Austin, TX
10:00 a.m.

Note: These draft Public Hearing and Regular Meeting minutes have been revised to address comments about the content of the minutes received during the January 26 and April 27 2022 Regular LCRWPG Meetings. The revisions are highlighted in grey in the text below, on pages 1, 5, and 6.

Public Hearing Minutes:

1. **Call to Order** – Chair David Van Dresar called the Public Hearing to order at 10:00 am. The purpose of the Public Hearing was conducted to receive public comments on issues or provisions to be Included in 6th cycle of water planning for Region K.
2. **Welcome and Introductions** – Vice Chair David Wheelock shared information on the process to post notice for the Public Hearing.
3. **Public Comments on Issues or Provisions to be Included in 6th Cycle of Water Planning**
 - Sue Thornton, representing Central Texas Water Coalition - Ms. Thornton expressed that from her point of view the Region K Water Availability Model (WAM) is overly optimistic, and provided three specific recommendations:
 - i. Recommended taking more cautious approach to calculate water availability, including a preference for safe yield rather than firm yield
 - ii. Recommended further study of decreased inflows to the Highland Lakes
 - iii. Recommended consideration of conservation and reuse strategies, including water rates and pricing, gathering metrics on water use to assess success of conservation efforts. Noted that these rates and pricing metrics should be used across all types of water users.

Andrew Wier, representing the Simsboro Aquifer Water Defense Fund (SAWDF), described the SAWDF goal of protecting groundwater rights in Lee, Milam, Burleson, and Bastrop counties. Mr. Wier asked the planning group to emphasize reuse, conservation, and aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) strategies, and recommended that the regional water planning group (RWPG) look at the interaction between surface water and groundwater in more detail. Modeling done with the 2020 GAM for GMA 12 shows that groundwater pumping is curtailed by 59,000 acre-feet in late 2030s or 2040; water is still produced in the model, but it is coming from the Colorado River through the aquifer. The speaker expressed awareness of multiple plans for additional pumping in the area and expressed concern that this could result in reduced flows in the Colorado River downstream of Austin.

- John Carlton, Special Counsel representing Travis County WCID No. 10, noted that they will have written comments before deadline. WCID No. 10 has been a wholesale customer of Austin Water since the 1950s. They will be submitting proposed corrections for the 2022 Region K plan, including population, water demand, and water management strategies.
4. **Adjourn** – John Burke motioned to close the Public Hearing, David Lindsay seconded. All in favor. The Public Hearing closed at 10:16 am

Regular Meeting Minutes:

Members Signed in:

Jim Brasher	Robert Ruggiero
John Burke	Mitchell Sodek
Lauri Gillam	Byron Theodosis
Michael Redman (GMA 10)	Paul Tybor
Barbara Johnson	David Van Dresar
David Lindsay	Jennifer Walker
Jim Luther	David Wheelock
Mike Reagor	Paul Babb (Alternate for Ron Fieseler)
Marisa Flores Gonzalez (Alternate for Teresa Lutes)	Carol Olewin (Alternate for Karen Haschke)
Emil Uecker (Alternate for James Sultemeier)	

Voting Members Absent

Daniel Berglund	Paul Sliva
Jason Ludwig	Jim Totten
Ann McElroy	Charles Offers

Support/Consultants/Visitors

Walt Smith, Hays County	Augusto Villalon, FNI
Lann Bookout, TWDB	John Carlton, Travis Co. WCID #10
Lissa Gregg, FNI	Jamie Burke, B&V
David Buzan, FNI	Andy Wier, SAWDF
Neil Deeds, INTERA	Rex Hunt, Plummer
Christianne Castleberry, CEG	Tyler Hjorth, San Marcos
Robert Adams, Plummer	Lauren Mayes, TDA
Jason Afinowicz, FNI	David Marino, BSEACD
Cecilia Green, Blanton & Associates	Erin Swanson, BSEACD
Blake Neffendorf, City of Buda	Ron Anderson, LCRA
Stephanie Moore, INTERA	Sara Eatman, Austin Water
Helen Gerlach, Austin Water	Sara Hoes, Austin Water
Vanessa Escobar, Blanton & Associates	Velma Danielson, Blanton & Associates
Katie Snyder, Black & Veatch	

Quorum

Quorum: yes
Number of voting members or alternates representing voting members present: 19
Number required for quorum per current voting membership of 25: 13
Number of voting members required for 2/3 vote: 17

Formal Actions Taken:

1. Carol Olewin was elected to represent the Public interest category, replacing Karen Haschke
2. Minutes from the July 21, 2021 regular meeting were approved as written

Minutes:

1. **Call to Order** – Chairman David Van Dresar called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m. A roll call of the planning group members was taken to record attendance.
2. **Welcome and Introductions** – Chairman David Van Dresar welcomed all to the meeting.
 - Roll Call
3. **Introduction of new Region K consultant** – Chairman David Van Dresar introduced Barbara Johnson, Chair of the Consultant Selection Committee.
 - Barbara Johnson provided an overview of the process to review consultant applications, including listing Consultant Selection Committee members and describing LCRA support provided to ensure the committee was following purchasing rules and process. Two submissions were received, one from INTERA and one from Black and Veatch. INTERA scored higher in the selection process and the committee unanimously recommended INTERA.

Stephanie Moore introduced herself as a hydrologist as well as the Region K project manager for INTERA. She described INTERA's consultant team which includes INTERA, Plummer, Freese and Nichols, and Blanton & Associates. Ms. Moore mentioned resilience, conservation, and conjunctive management as key themes to incorporate in the next planning round. Stephanie Moore then introduced Project Principal Neil Deeds, PhD, P.E., and four senior team members, Van Kelley, Rex Hunt, PE, Simone Kiel, and Velma Danielson. Stephanie also introduced team members present at the meeting, including Jason Afinowicz PE, Lissa Gregg, PE, Robert Adams, PE, Cecilia Green, Vanessa Escobar and lastly Dave Buzan. Jennifer Walker requested a copy of the consultant presentation and asked for slides prior to and/or at the meetings; Stephanie noted that we will review standard practices for how and when to post information based on revised state guidance.

4. **Regional planning schedule for sixth round of Regional Water Planning** – Stephanie Moore provided a schedule for the sixth round of planning. The consultant team has divided the planning process into four phases:
 - Pre-planning: prior to TWDB draft data availability;
 - Core planning: begin when data is delivered from TWDB, and includes the Technical Memorandum, due 3/4/2024;
 - IPP: due 3/3/2025;
 - Final Plan: is due 10/20/2025.

Stephanie also noted that they would be happy to meet with the planning group members and share onboarding materials.

5. **Discuss nominations received for Public Interest and Counties membership positions. Discuss and take action to fill Public Interest and Counties positions on Region K Group.** – Vice Chair David Wheelock provided an overview of the vacancy postings, in accordance with Texas Open Meetings Act and TWDB rules. Chair David Van Dresar noted that election of a new voting member requires a 2/3 vote of the voting membership (17, based

on voting membership of 25) to approve the nomination, and offered nominees the opportunity to speak to the planning group, if desired.

- Public Interest: Carol Olewin, Public Interest nominee, noted that she has served on various boards and is a long time Travis County resident, and expressed her interest in serving in this position. John Burke made a motion to approve the nomination and Lauri Gilliam seconded. During discussion, David Wheelock noted Karen Haschke's years of service. Motion was approved with all voting in favor.
- Counties. Chair David Van Dresar noted that three nominations were received for the Counties vacancy and gave the nominees an opportunity to speak to the group.
 - Emil Uecker, Blanco County Commissioner, spoke and is the current Counties alternate. He noted his 22 years working with James Avery and his experience in domestic water and industrial waste, including working to write procedures to recover industrial waste. His intention is to make things better for those that follow.
 - Walt Smith spoke and noted that he is County Commissioner for Hays County and noted the importance of water in his fast-growing county. He described his experience in the legislature as well as the agriculture commission. He worked in agriculture at Capitol Hill and had started the office for the National Rural Water Association in DC. He currently serves on the board of the West Travis County Public Utility Agency (WTCPUC) as secretary and treasurer. His focus in North Hays and Western Travis Counties is preservation of groundwater to support growth.
 - Mayor Rachel Lumpee was not present to speak.

Chair David Van Dresar opened the floor for any other nominees beyond those already nominated, no other nominations were made.

Jennifer Walker nominated Walt Smith due to the growth of Hays County. Lauri Gillam seconded that nomination. Chairman David Van Dresar the opened up the floor for discussion. Barbara Johnson recognized Emil Uecker's service as alternate for James Sulzemeier, former Blanco County Commissioner, who vacated the position that was posted for and noted that Walt Smith brings a depth and range of experience to this process and supported his nomination. Jim Brasher also noted that Hays County is heavily populated and expressed concern about rural counties not being sufficiently represented. Jennifer Walker noted that planning group has the latitude to review membership makeup and add/or change positions. It was also noted that we need representation from Blanco County. Jim Brasher sought clarification on the maximum total number of planning group members. Lann Bookout, TWDB, noted that he would check to see if there are any statutory or rule limits. It was noted that Region L has 30 planning group members. Jennifer Walker added that the bylaws currently limit the RWPG to 25 voting members; any additional members would require a change to the bylaws. It was also noted that GMA 9 represents Hays County. Planning group member Judge Byron Theodosios noted that he would like to have both Emil Uecker and Walt Smith serve on the group. Chairman Van Dresar called for a vote on the motion. The motion did not pass on a vote of six in favor and eleven opposed.

Chair Van Dresar called for any other nominations. There were none.

Judge Theodosius made a motion and Paul Tybor seconded the motion to nominate Emil Uecker for Counties interest vacancy. The motion did not pass on a vote of twelve in favor and five opposed.

Since a 2/3 majority was not achieved to elect a new Counties interest representative, the group consensus was to table the issue and re-visit it at the next meeting. The group discussed that the Bylaw Committee should convene to review the bylaws including a review of the number of voting members (see Agenda Item 10, below). It was noted that the Bylaws Committee should consider the number of voting members with respect to geographic representation. Members discussed the high quality of candidates.

- 6. Receive public comments on specific issues related to agenda items numbers 9 through 12 – None.**
- 7. Attendance report and financial Report –** Marisa Flores Gonzalez called roll at the beginning of the meeting and referred individuals to the financial report included in the packet.
- 8. Approval of Minutes from the July 21, 2021 regular meeting –** John Burke moved approval of the minutes as written and the motion was Seconded by Michael Redman. The motion passed with none opposed.
- 9. Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) –**
 - a. Update on regional water planning activities and schedules: Lann Bookout provided a report on the status of the mining water use study being conducted with the University of Texas to update demand projections for the 2026 plan, the Interregional Planning Council (IPC) nomination process, the rulemaking process, updates to the Planning Round 6 website, and the status of an interactive site for the current state plan. Lann also provided a legislative update HB 1905, SB 669, HB 2225. Lann noted that funds would begin to populate the expense budget soon. Jim Brasher noted that Colorado County has significant sand and gravel mining and asked for process to gather information to make those numbers more accurate. Lann directed him to the study website and said he would make the slides available.
- 10. Discussion of Region K bylaws. –**
 - a. Bylaws Committee Membership: Bylaws Committee Chair Barbara Johnson identified some areas where clarifications and updates may be considered in the current (2013) Bylaws. Current Bylaws Committee Members are Barbara Johnson, Teresa Lutes, Dave Lindsay, Carol Olewin, Rob Ruggiero, and Paul Tybor, all of whom are willing to continue sitting on the committee; Chair Van Dresar charged the committee with reviewing the bylaws to address membership and representation questions and a general review as mentioned by Ms. Johnson.
 - b. Contact information as required by the bylaws: The group discussed what type of contact information is currently required by the bylaws and whether that needs to be updated.
- 11. Discussion of interregional coordination efforts –** Vice Chair David Wheelock introduced the item as an introductory discussion with no action required. Stephanie Moore provided an

overview of the Interregional Coordination guidance from TWDB. She noted that many RWPGs have liaisons that attend adjacent RWPG meetings, although it is not required. The RWPG will be required to select a representative to serve on the Interregional Planning Council spring of 2022, but no action is required at this time.

12. Communications from neighboring regional water planning groups – Chair Van Dresar recognized Diane Wassenich, who serves on Region L. Region L has had a number of retirements, and therefore has many new members including leadership positions. Region L sought to choose their consultants through a new selection committee process which did not result in an approved selection; tabled for a future meeting.

13. Agenda items for next meeting –

- LCRA's Dalchau Service Center, Wednesday, January 26, 2022 at 10 am
- Bylaws Committee to meet before January 26, 2022

14. New/other business – David Lindsay asked how the public comments provided would be taken into account. Stephanie Moore noted that the comments will be compiled and provided to the group for consideration.

John Burke stated that he is resigning from the planning group and recommends his Designated Alternate Christianne Castleberry as his replacement. The consensus of the RWPG was that the position would need to be filled through a public notice and the nominations process.

15. Public Comments – None.

16. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 pm