

**MINUTES OF THE
REGION I - EAST TEXAS REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP MEETING
Wednesday, October 4, 2023 – 10:00 A.M.**

- 1. Call to Order** – Chairman John Martin called the meeting to order at 10:08 A.M.
- 2. Invocation/Pledge** – David Alders led the invocation. John Martin led the Pledge.
- 3. Notice of Meeting** – Notice was sent to Voting Members and posted as required.
- 4. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum** – The roll was called by Cheryl Bartlett and quorum was determined as follows:

Voting Members Present: (14 of 22)

David Alders - Agriculture
Chris Davis – Counties *(Virtual)*
Scott Hall – River Authority *(Virtual)*
Kelley Holcomb – River Authority
Fred Jackson – Counties *(Virtual)*
John Martin – GMA-14
Matthew McBroom - Environmental
John McFarland – GMA-11
Matthew Mettauier - Agriculture
David Montagne – River Authority *(Virtual)*
Monty Shank – River Authority
Mike Snyder – Electric Power *(Virtual)*
Rob Starr – Water Utilities *(Virtual)*
Terry D. Stelly – Public

Voting Members Absent: (5)

Kate Dietz - Municipality
Roger Fussell – Water Utility
David Gorsich – Industry
Emily Whitworth – Water District
Christopher Wiesinger – Small Business

Voting Member Category Vacancies: (3)

Environmental
Small Business
Public

Other Attendees

Agencies:

Sarah Lee, Michele Foss - Tx Water Development Board *(Virtual)*
Teresa Griffin – Panola County GCD
David Miley – Rusk County GCD
Chang Lee – Dallas Water Utilities
Stephen Lange – Tx Parks & Wildlife
Manuel Martinez – Tx Dept of Agriculture

Staff and Consultants:

Cheryl Bartlett - City of Nacogdoches
Brigit Buff, PE – Plummer Asso.
Cody McCann – Plummer Asso. (Virtual)
Jordan Skipwith – Freese & Nichols

5. Public Comments: None

6. Consideration and Approval of the minutes of the June 21, 2023 meeting

Robb Starr made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2023 meeting as presented, 2nd by Kelley Holcomb, passed unanimously.

7. Report from City of Nacogdoches

Cheryl Bartlett: No updates to report. Financial information will be forthcoming in the Finance Committee report.

8. Reports of adjoining regions activity:

- a. Region C – David Montagne: nothing significant to report
- b. Region D – John McFarland: nothing to report.
- c. Region H – Scott Hall: no report.
- d. Interregional Liaison – Kelley Holcomb: Interregional Planning Council met Aug 15th – Group is in review mode, attempting to identify the data to include in this Planning Cycle Report and having discussions about items not implemented in the previous cycle report. Next Meeting is Nov 30th.
(Reminder: activities of the Interregional Council can be found on the TWDB website.
<https://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/rwp/ipc/index.asp>)

9. Report from Standing Committees:

- a. Executive Committee – John Martin: Met earlier this morning, discussed possible nominees for open positions. These will be talked about later after discussion/voting on the proposed changes to the ByLaws.
- b. Finance Committee – Kelley Holcomb: Met earlier this morning to review the proposed contract amendments that will be addressed in Agenda Item #10.
- c. Bylaws Committee – David Alders: will defer report to Agenda Item #11.
- d. Technical Committee –
Scott Hall: Technical Committee met virtually (based at the LNVA office in Beaumont) on July 27th to discuss, and approve, the updated population and municipal demand numbers with the consultant team.
- e. Nominations Committee – Monty Shank: committee did not meet.

10. Consideration and Approval of Contract Amendments – Kelley Holcomb

- a. Authorize the City of Nacogdoches to Negotiate and Execute Amendment #2 to Technical Consultant Team (Plummer) Contract for \$483,361.00 to Match Current Total Project Costs and Committed Funds for the 2026 Region I Regional Water Plan
Kelley made a motion to approve as presented, Terry Stelly 2nd, passed unanimously.

- b. Authorize the City of Nacogdoches to Negotiate and Execute an Amendment #2 to the TWDB Contract for \$227,480.00 to Increase the Total Project Cost and Committed Funds for the 2026 Region I Regional Water Plan

Kelly made a motion to approve as presented, Matthew McBroom 2nd, passed unanimously.

- c. Authorize the City of Nacogdoches to Negotiate and Execute Amendment #3 to Technical Consultant Team (Plummer) Contract for \$167,480.00 to increase the Total Project Cost and Committed Funds for the 2026 Region I Regional Water Plan

Robb Starr made a motion to approve as presented, Fred Jackson 2nd, passed unanimously.

- d. Discussion and possible action regarding a budget amendment providing for the City of Nacogdoches/Political Subdivision to be reimbursed for salary and wage expenses.

This is a new line item in the TWDB regional planning group budgets to allow a political subdivision to bill for increasing administrative costs. After a conference call discussion between Kelley, Cheryl and Brigit, we are proposing a realignment of existing budget amounts to allow the City of Nacogdoches to receive a budget amount of \$60,000 and Plummer to add \$167,480 for a total allocation of \$227,480 in Amendment #2 (see items b and c above) for this portion of the planning cycle. The Planning Group is required to approve the wages for the political subdivision in order to request the funds from the state.

Robb Starr made a motion to approve as presented, Chris Davis 2nd, passed unanimously.

11. Consideration and approval of updates to the Bylaws – David Alders

Proposed changes to the Bylaws were available online and some printed copies were passed out. David briefly reviewed some of the proposed changes again including: general cleanup of names, specific statute references, grammar, changes to officer designations, reducing the number of officers from 5 to 3 and electing one slate of officers to serve for the entire planning cycle instead of annually. David also presented a few items that were discussed in the committee meeting this morning which includes proposed changes to Article 5 to clarify the number of members representing each of the twelve different interest groups; absentee and attendance rules expanded from 12 to 24 months and formally remove the quarterly meeting requirement since the Planning Group meetings are generally just being held as needed now.

David Alders made a motion to adopt the ByLaws as presented, including minor grammar and formatting changes as needed to print, Monty Shank 2nd, passed unanimously.

12. Report from consultant team – including discussion and possible action by RWPG Brigit Buff, Plummer Asso. & Jordan Skipwith, Freese & Nichols

- a. Review of 6th Cycle Water Planning schedule – Brigit Buff

Brigit reviewed the planning cycle calendar (available on the Region I website). The deadline for the Technical Memorandum is March and we will be reviewing the various approvals/actions required by the RWPG needed to finalize that report. TWDB plans to adopt both municipal and non-municipal projections in **October 2023**. It appears that they have generally accepted the few changes we have submitted so no problems are expected.

- b. Discussion and Approval of the Definition and List of Major Water Providers – Brigit Buff
Brigit reviewed the definition of a “major water provider” for our group and the current list was presented. *Kelley Holcomb made a motion to approve both the definition and the list with no changes, David Alders 2nd, passed unanimously.*
- c. Discussion and Possible Action on Infeasible Water Strategy Methodologies, Results, and Recommendations and Receive Public Comment – Brigit Buff and Jordan Skipwith
TWDB changed the public comment period to 14 days for this item (new for this Planning Cycle) – information was sent out earlier than it is for our normal meetings. Brigit reviewed the screening process flowchart for evaluating strategies and outlined the changes that would require modifications to the 2021 Plan. Sarah Lee & Michele Foss with TWDB clarified some questions raised about the steps in the process of determining feasible and infeasible strategies for identified projects. Much discussion was held on the possible need to change the evaluation process, including changing the time frame assigned to infeasible/feasible projects. Any amendments to the previous plan would need to be approved by the RWPG at the same time as the Technical Memorandum in March. The consultant team has deemed that all our current proposed projects are feasible, so no amendments to the 2021 Plan will be needed and any changes made to the screening process should not affect the status of projects on the list for this cycle. After much discussion, the RWPG accepted the results as presented by the consultant team, tabled an official vote and recommended more evaluation of the screening process by the Technical Committee before approving.
- d. Discussion and Approval of the Hydrological Variance Request for Surface Water Supplies to the TWDB – Jordan Skipwith
After Jordan briefly reviewed the variances used, the consultant team recommended that the RWPG adopt the historical variances as used in previous cycles. *Kelley Holcomb made a motion to approve the variances as presented, Terry Stelly 2nd, passed unanimously.*
- e. Discussion and Approval Process to Identify and Evaluate Water Management Strategies and Receive Public Comment – Jordan Skipwith
Jordan discussed the water management evaluation strategies process, which is similar to previous cycles. *Matthew McBroom made a motion to approve the Water Management Strategies as presented, Monty Shank 2nd, passed unanimously.*
- f. Discussion and Approval of Notice to Proceed on Task 5B – Brigit Buff
Brigit reviewed the items on Task 5B. At such time as the TWDB issues the appropriate contract amendment, it is executed by the City of Nacogdoches and the corresponding amendment to the subcontract agreement between the City and Plummer is also executed, the consultant team may begin work on Task 5B. *Kelley Holcomb made a motion to approve the Notice to Proceed, with conditions as presented, Robb Starr 2nd, passed unanimously.*
- g. Overview of the contents of the Technical Memorandum, due **March 4, 2024** – Brigit Buff
Brigit presented and briefly reviewed the items to be included in the Technical Memorandum. She proposed having two meetings before the March deadline – one to review and discuss any possible changes to the Technical Memorandum and a second meeting to review and approve the final document. Members agreed to skip Item #12h and defer to Item #15 on the agenda.
- h. Overview of proposed agenda for February 2024 RWPG Meeting Date for Technical Memorandum approval – Brigit Buff (Delay discussion - include in Item #15 discussion)

13. Reports from other state agencies, as necessary:

- a. Texas Water Development Board – Michele Foss
Contract amendments are in legal review and should be sent out in the next few weeks. Revised Exhibit C has been posted online for review by those interested. One of the legislature-requested revisions includes funding for additional rural outreach in the water planning process. TWDB is also requesting input on policy change suggestions and will be discussing them at the next Interregional Council meeting (Nov 30th).
- b. Texas Department of Parks & Wildlife – Stephen Lange
Discussed several recent management changes, including a new Exec Director, as well as regional reorganization within TDPW. Also mentioned increased funding from the legislature for several programs.
- c. Texas Department of Agriculture – Manuel Martinez
Discussed two grant programs currently offered:
The Young Farmer Grant (\$20,000) for applicants from age 18 to 46 to assist with creating or expanding farming operations – deadline to apply, Oct 11th.
The Battleground To Breaking Ground Grant, offered by TAMU AgriLife for veterans or active military who want to go into agricultural production – deadline to apply, Dec 8th.
See the TDA website for applications and/or more details on these opportunities.
- d. Texas Soil and Water Conservation Board – not present; no report.
- e. Groundwater Management Areas –
John McFarland (GMA 11) – GMA 11 had nothing new to report.
John Martin (GMA 14) – GMA 14 still working with the TWDB to finalize a new model developed by the USGS for the Gulf Coast Area. They will be meeting Oct 26th.

14. General Discussion - none

15. Set Next Meeting Dates –

After much discussion and coordination with facility availability, meetings were set for **Wednesday, January 10th** to review information to be included in the Technical Memorandum and **Thursday, February 15th** to vote on final approval of the Technical Memorandum.

16. Adjourned at 12:26 pm.

APPROVED THIS 1-10-24


John Martin, Chair
ETRWPB – Region I

ATTEST:


Terry Stelly, Secretary