

**REGION H WATER PLANNING GROUP
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 6, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Bailey, John Bartos, Arthur Bredehoft, Jun Chang, Mark Evans, Jace Houston, Ken Kramer, Alisa Max, Mike O’Connell, Loyd Smith, and Cynthia Wagener.

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Aaron Abel for Brad Brunett, Karly Stelzer for Yvonne Forrest, Jason Garrard for Glenn Lord, Bobby Walters for Byron Ryder, Veronica Osegueda for Mike Turco, Eric Wilson for Brandon Wade, and Kristie Munoz for Kevin Ward.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gary Ashmore, W.R. Baker, Carl Burch, Caleb Cooper, Robert Istre, Ivan Langford, Marvin Marcell, and Danny Pierce

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

There were no introductions.

3. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 4, 2023 MEETING.

Mr. Bredehoft made a motion to approve the minutes of October 4, 2023. The motion was seconded by Mr. Chang and carried unanimously.

4. RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS 5 THROUGH 7.

There were no comments.

5. SPECIAL ITEMS AND GUEST PRESENTATIONS

- a. Receive update on the Brazos Basin and Bay Area Stakeholder Committee (Brazos BBASC) and consider taking action to make a nomination for a member of the BBASC representing Regional Water Planning Groups. Study and make recommendations about environmental flow for the benefit of the regional planning process.**

Mr. Tom Michel stated that he has been on the Brazos BBASC Committee for several years, however retiring from the San Jacinto River Authority (“SJRA”) on December 4, 2023. He explained the process for appointment to the Brazos BBASC and recommended Mr. Bret

Raley, SJRA Lake Conroe Division Manager to serve on the committee. Mr. Kramer stated that in October, Mr. Aubrey Spear, City of Lubbock Water Utilities Director expressed an interest in the Brazos BBASC membership. Further, he explained that because Mr. Spear is now the newly appointed General Manager for SJRA, Mr. Kramer proposed deferring action until Mr. Spear's preference can be determined. The water planning group agreed to defer action on this item until February, therefore no action was taken.

6. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

a. Receive update from Consultant Team regarding supply availability analyses for the 2026 Regional Water Plan (RWP).

Mr. Taucer provided a brief update related to the supply availability analyses for the 2026 RWP. He explained the various nuances related to surface water, groundwater, and reuse analyses.

b. Receive report from Consultant Team regarding the requirements and process for the RWP Technical Memorandum.

Mr. Taucer provided information related to the RWP technical memorandum which will be considered for approval in February, 2024. He explained that the technical memorandum includes information related to assumptions and unmodified surface water availability values, model files and documentation, methodology for groundwater, process, and list of potentially feasible projects, infeasible WMS analysis, and simplified planning intent.

c. Receive update from Consultant Team and Water Management Strategy (WMS) Committee regarding a process for identifying and evaluating potentially feasible WMS and consider taking action to approve the process for use in 2026 Region H RWP.

Mr. Taucer explained per 31 TAC 357.12(b), the Region H Water Planning Group is required to prepare a summary of its process for identifying and selecting Water Management Strategies (WMSs) for development of the 2026 Regional Water Plan. He provided an overview of each of the necessary steps. Discussion ensued. Mr. Bartos made a motion to approve the process for identifying and evaluating potentially feasible Water Management Strategies in 2026 Region H Regional Water Plan. The motion was seconded by Mr. Chang and carried unanimously.

d. Receive update from Consultant Team and WMS Committee regarding potentially infeasible WMS and WMS Projects in the 2021 RWP.

Mr. Taucer explained that infeasible WMS and WMS projects are defined as those that sponsors have not taken affirmative steps toward implementation. Further he explained that if any projects were identified as infeasible, steps could be taken to amend the plan to adjust online decade, amend the plan to remove it, or amend the plan to replace it. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Houston opined that based on the legislative history and intent, he believes no projects on the list should be considered infeasible. Mr. Houston made a motion to accept and consider all projects on the list as feasible. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bartos and carried unanimously.

- e. Consider approving the submittal of an amendment package to Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) for determination of minor amendment status, and authorization to post public notice and hold a public hearing should the amendment status be deemed major.**

This item was not considered due to the determination that no projects were infeasible related to item 6d.

- f. Receive report from Consultant Team and WMS Committee regarding notice-to-proceed activities and recommendations for WMS analyses.**

Mr. Taucer provided an overview of the process regarding notice to proceed (NTP) for the WMS analyses which includes a scope and fee request and Texas Water Development Board approval. Mr. Taucer stated that the Region H Water Planning Group will consider taking action in February to approve a NTP request and authorize the consultant team, WMS Committee, and the San Jacinto River Authority to submit the request to TWDB, coordinate with TWDB as needed on follow-up information, and execute the subsequent contract amendment.

- g. Discuss and consider taking action regarding certification of administrative expenses to be submitted to TWDB for reimbursement for the sixth cycle of RWP development.**

Mr. Taucer explained that TWDB recognized the effort provided and cost to the political subdivision in administering the RWP and created some flexibility for those costs. He explained, to be eligible for the funding, the Water Planning Group must certify administrative expenses to be submitted to TWDB for reimbursement for the sixth cycle of RWP development. Mr. Chang made a motion to certify administrative expenses to submit to TWDB for reimbursement for the sixth cycle of RWP development. The motion was seconded by Ms. Max and carried unanimously.

- h. Consider taking action to ratify execution of contract amendment no. 2 between San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) and TWDB and take action authorizing SJRA to execute amended contracts with subconsultants.**

Mr. Taucer explained that the contract amendment includes the remaining scope and funding as well as additional legislative appropriation in an approximate amount of \$420,000. He stated that to meet the deadlines, the amendment was executed between SJRA and TWDB, therefore asking the Water Planning Group to ratify contract Amendment No. 2. Mr. Bredehoft made a motion to ratify SJRA executing contract Amendment No. 2 between

SJRA and TWDB and authorize SJRA to execute amended contracts with subconsultants.
The motion was seconded by Mr. Kramer and carried unanimously.

7. GENERAL UPDATES AND OUTREACH

a. Receive update regarding schedule and milestones for the development of the 2026 Region H RWP.

Mr. Taucer provided a recap of the schedule of events and upcoming tasks for the 2026 Region H RWP.

b. Receive update from liaisons to other planning groups.

Mr. Evans reported on the Interregional Planning Council stating that the Interregional Planning Council Report is currently in draft form and will be submitted to TWDB in 2024.

c. Receive report regarding recent and upcoming activities related to communications and outreach efforts on behalf of the Region H Water Planning Group.

Mr. Taucer provided information related to the upcoming Gulf Coast Symposium and Water Forum taking place in February, 2024.

d. Receive update from TWDB.

Ms. Rose reported that TWDB is working through the process of implementing funds approved by Proposition 6.

e. Other agency communications and general information.

There were no other agency communications reported.

8. Receive public comments.

There were no comments.

9. Next Meeting: February 7, 2024.

It was announced that the next Region H Water Planning Group meeting is scheduled for February 7, 2024.

10. Adjourn.

Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35AM.