



FAR WEST TEXAS WATER PLANNING GROUP – REGION E
 GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 9, 2020
 1:00 P.M. (MST)
 13247 Alameda Ave., Clint, TX 79836

Voting Members Present	Voting Members Present
Jesus “Chuy” Reyes, Chairman	Brad Newton
Scott Reinert, Vice Chairman	Randy Barker
Teresa Todd, Executive Committee	Omar Martinez for Mike Davidson
Janet Adams, Executive Committee	Dave Etzold
Becky Brewster, Executive Committee Alt.	Commissioner Albert Miller
Dave Hall, Executive Committee Alt.	Mayor Summer Webb
Commissioner Mike Sanchez	Kevin Urbanczyk, Environment
Nonvoting Members Present	Nonvoting Members Present
Greg Stanton, USGS	Daniel Hernandez, LVWD
Woody Irving, Bureau of Reclamation	Ed Long, LVWD
Michael Flores, LVWD	Tim Leary, BCGD
RGCOG	WSP, USA
Annette Gutierrez, RGCOG	John Ashworth, WSP, USA
TWDB	Jennifer Herrera, WSP, USA
Elizabeth McCoy	

Item 1: Welcome – Chairman Jesus “Chuy” Reyes

Chairman Jesus “Chuy” Reyes welcomed everyone to the Far West Texas Water Planning Group meeting. The time was 1:00 pm.

Item 2: Recognition of Guests and Designated Alternates

Chairman Reyes next asked for everyone to introduce themselves.

Item 3: Review and approve the minutes for the GENERAL MEETING held on Thursday, November 14, 2019.

Janet Adams motioned to accept the minutes of November 14, 2019 with the corrections as noted by Dave Etzold page 8, fifth paragraph, *“Next he explained he pulled out the region’s contribution to that and there were only three entities - Horizon, El Paso, Water and City of Marfa”*. It is supposed to read *“Next he explained he pulled out the region’s contribution to that and there were only three entities - Horizon, El Paso Water, and City of Marfa”*. Teresa Todd seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 4: Chairman – Update on the RWPG Chairs’ Conference Call

Chairman Reyes provided the group with a presentation of the concrete lining of their canals for El Paso County Water Improvement District #1 (EPCWID#1) and the project with the Paso del Norte Foundation (PDN), City of El Paso, and the El Paso Water Utilities (EPWU) with El Paso County joining in the future as well. They have been working on concrete lining their canals with funding from the Texas Water Development Board, International Boundary and Water Commission IBWC and any other entity who will fund this initiative. This last year they were successful in obtaining 5.4 million in grants from two governmental entities. They are now working on some projects with IBWC for Wasteway no. 2, which is located near the border of Hudspeth County.

He then showed the group the Franklin Canal, which has historical significance since it has portions of it that go through downtown. They are working on the area near Paisano Drive. In this section, they are collaborating with the Medical Center of the Americas, the PDN, and the Children’s Hospital, in beautifying the area that will include walking and bicycle path while at the same time working with EPWU, to relocate some water and wastewater lines.

He then featured a project where they worked with EPWU, Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), and PDN. EPWU wanted to relocate a water and sewer line from the north side of Alameda to the south side. It would require EPCWID#1 to give them permission to place the lines along their banks. They also worked with TXDOT who is expanding Alameda or Highway 20 as they call it, from downtown to eventually Tornillo. Through this project, TXDOT funded EPCWID#1 to line the canals with concrete and PDN awarded them funding for the bike and walking paths. The project turned out to be beneficial for all parties involved.

The future plan is for the EPCWID#1 is to continue this effort all the way to Tornillo. People will now be able to walk from Anthony, New Mexico, to downtown El Paso to the Franklin Canal, and eventually all the way to Tornillo. For EPCWID#1, the benefits include less maintenance and their water that flows faster. Mr. Reyes was asked if there are dealing with trash or other issues in terms of maintenance. Mr. Reyes said he thinks the project has had a positive effect on the surrounding communities. They have experienced minimal trash or graffiti.

Dave Etzold asked if there was a calculation determined of how much water was saved by doing this initiative. Omar Martinez, EPCWID#1, mentioned that for every mile the canal is concrete lined, they

conserve anywhere 220 to 240 acre feet per mile. In terms of cost, they are looking at \$70 per acre foot in savings as a return on conservation.

He mentioned they are also working on a survey from Bowie High School to the Fox Plaza area near the University Medical Center of El Paso. The survey also includes the El Paso Zoo, which has had some issues previously in terms of EPCWID#1's ability to provide maintenance. Mr. Reyes also mentioned the survey will include Jefferson High School and areas that belong to the El Paso Housing Authority. Mr. Reyes expressed the Franklin Canal project will have many positive implications for the entire area because of this initiative.

Item 6: Chairman – Consider voting member nomination recommended by the Executive Committee for an Agriculture position

Mayor Summer Webb presented Tom Leary to the FWTWPG group. She mentioned Mr. Leary is the Vice Chair of the Brewster County Groundwater Conservation District and a long-time member of the ranching community in Marathon and Brewster County. She also mentioned how he would be an asset to the group because of his experience with water management and agriculture. Janet Adams made a motion to accept the recommendation by the Executive Committee for Tom Leary to be appointed to the Agriculture position. Janet Adams seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 5: Member Updates

Chairman Reyes then asked for member updates. Scott Reinert from EPWU informed the group that EPWU is working on an aquifer recharge program. Since 1985 they have been injecting the spreading basins highly treated wastewater effluent to recharge the Hueco Bolson. Now they have plans to supplement that with river water a way to enhance and recharge the Hueco Bolson as a long-term management strategy for El Paso.

Brad Newton reminded the group that Presidio now has its railroad bridge and the tracks should be in place by the first of the year. He mentioned Texas Pacifico is the operator. By the end of summer, they should be able to run rail. He also mentioned that interested groups have been looking at the cantaloupe storage facility and there is a possibility of establishing a cold storage facility as well as a United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) lab. The closest USDA lab is in Nogales, Arizona. Coming through Presidio would save time and keep the value of the vegetables.

William Finn from IBWC, also gave an update on activities they were conducted, which included cleaning up parts of the Rio Grande.

Item 7: Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) – Presentation from Dr. John Ellis on the results of the Region E socioeconomic impact analysis

Dr. John Ellis presented the results of Region E's socioeconomic impact analysis, which TWDB conducted recently. He explained the analysis evaluates the social and economic impacts of not meeting identified water needs for a single year drought of record. All impact estimates are in year 2018 dollars and were calculated using a variety of data sources and tools, including the use of a region-specific IMPLAN (Impact for Planning Analysis) model. Dr. Ellis explained he would cover the methodology, some results for Region E and provide information on their website that demonstrates these results.

Item 8: Review the FWTWPG schedule

John Ashworth, from WSP, USA, provided a review of the FWTWPG schedule for the remaining 2021 water planning cycle process.

Item 9: WSP, USA – Review and discuss final changes to the IPP chapters

John Ashworth and Jennifer Herrera, from WSP, USA, provided the final changes to the IPP chapters.

Item 10: RGCOG – Adopt and submit the IPP to the Texas Water Development Board and authorize WSP to address any planning group changes to the IPP document prior to submitting

After reviewing the final changes to the IPP chapters and hearing the remaining schedule, Brad Newton made a motion Adopt and submit the IPP to the Texas Water Development Board and authorize WSP to address any planning group changes to the IPP document prior to submitting. Teresa Todd seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 11: RGCOG – Select date for IPP public hearing and authorize the RGCOG to post notice for the hearing

Annette Gutierrez, RGCOG, informed the FWTWPG group that they needed to select a date for the Initial Proposed Plan Hearing. After discussion, Teresa Todd made a motion to select April 14, 2020, at 6:00 pm, at the El Paso County Water Improvement District. Becky Brewster seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 12: TWDB Updates

Elizabeth McCoy, Planner, Regional Water Planning for TWDB, provided updates. She provided information on what items are still going to be required of the group for review and approval. She also discussed the upcoming schedule for the TWDB board.

Item 13: RGCOG - TWDB review and comment on rules and other items to implement legislation passed by the 86th Texas Legislature is due January 31, 2020

Annette Gutierrez, RGCOG, provided information on the TWDB's review and comment on rules and other items to implement legislation passed by the 86th Texas Legislature. She informed the group the comments are due January 31, 2020.

Item 14: Adjourn

Brad Newton made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Albert Miller seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned.