

Meeting Minutes
Region E Far West Texas Water Planning Group Meeting
October 21, 2021 at 2:00 pm

<u>Voting Member</u>	<u>Interest Category</u>	<u>Present (✓)/Absent (X) / Alternate Present (*)</u>
Jesus Reyes, Chair	<i>Water districts</i>	✓
Dave Hall	<i>Agricultural interests</i>	✓
David Etzold	<i>Real Estate</i>	✓
Jeff Bennett	<i>Environmental</i>	✓
Teresa Todd	<i>Industries</i>	✓
Arlina Palacios	<i>Municipalities</i>	✓
Rick Tate	<i>Public</i>	X
Dan Dunlap	<i>Small business</i>	X
Commissioner Albert Miller	<i>Water Utilities</i>	✓
Mayor Summer Webb	<i>Groundwater Districts</i>	X
Scott Reinert	<i>Water Utilities</i>	✓
Randy Barker	<i>Groundwater Districts</i>	✓
Sean Woodward for VJ Smith	<i>Industries</i>	✓
Mayor Becky Brewster	<i>Public</i>	✓
Sterry Butcher	<i>Public</i>	X
Brad Newton	<i>Economic Development</i>	X
Rick Tate	<i>Agriculture</i>	X
Arlina Palacios	<i>Public</i>	X
Michelle Marquez	<i>Counties</i>	X
<u>Non-voting Member</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Present(x)/Absent(✓)/ Alternate Present (*)</u>
William Finn	IBWC	✓
Woody Irving	IBWC	✓
Vanessa Dunes	IBWC	✓
Filberto Cortez	Bureau of Reclamation	X
Otila Gonzalez	Region J Liaison	X
Michael Lemonds	GLO	X
Elizabeth McCoy	TWDB	✓
Others Present:		
Annette Gutierrez, RGCOG	Omar Martinez, El Paso County Water Improvement District	
Jennifer Herrera, WSP	Marlena Hernandez- Tornillo Water District	
John Ashworth, formerly WSP	Gerry Grijalva, Lower Valley Water District	
Danny Chavez	Michael Flores, Lower Valley Water District	
James Golab, TWDB	Evan Strickland, TWDB	
Melissa Duenez, TCEQ	Elizabeth Carlino, PhD Student	
Allyson McDonald, Consultant	Derrick O’Hara, Ft. Bliss	
Kyle Tejashiri, UTAustin		

1. Welcome and call to order

Chairman Jesus “Chuy” Reyes welcomed the group and received confirmation that a quorum was present. The meeting started at 2:08 p.m.

2. Recognition of guests

Chairman Reyes asked if there were any guests who would like to be recognized at this time. There were none.

3. Review and approve the minutes for the meeting held on October 28, 2020.

Dave Hall made a motion to accept the Minutes from October 2020. David Etzold seconded the motion. Chairman Reyes called for a vote and the motion was approved.

4. Chairman Reyes provided an update on the Regional Water Planning Group Chairs’ Call.

Chairman Reyes mentioned there is a new TWDB newsletter detailing many of the activities that we do. He asked for Annette Gutierrez, RGCOG, to distribute the information. She said she would be providing these links on the newly revamped website for FWTWPG. She said the site will be in the same fashion as the flood planning.

5. Member Updates

Chairman Reyes provided an update on the Supreme Court lawsuit between Texas Colorado, and New Mexico. He said there is ongoing testimony that has been going on virtually. He along with others from our area have provided testimony. He said the Judge is going to adjourn soon and on March 1, 2022 will take testimony in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Hopefully the case will be concluded by the end of March and a decision will be reached.

Chairman Reyes also mentioned there is a new IBWC Commissioner for the U.S. side. Her name is Dr. Maria Elena Giner, P.E. She is a graduate of UTEP and knows the border well since she previously headed up the Border Environmental Cooperation Commission. They hope to meet with her soon.

Mayor Summer Webb mentioned to the group that Brewster County District Underground Water District is looking for an Assistant General Manager who can transition into the General Manager position within the next eighteen months.

Chairman Reyes was asked about the condition of Elephant Butte. He said the Dam was at 8% of capacity. He was hopeful there would be snowfall this winter to help with the condition but anticipated they wouldn’t start releasing water until June 1, 2022. He also mentioned El Paso Water had one of their main sewer lines break in the west side that has caused raw sewage to leak on Doniphan road and into the river. The Irrigation District has been working together to get the sewage water treated have the Irrigation District use it.

Jeff Bennett reported that the Rio Conchos River is at 32% capacity and Boquillas is at 60 to 70%. He didn’t think there will be a release out of the Conchos.

6. Selection of a technical consultant firm for the 2026 Regional Water Plan based on recommendation from Executive Committee.

Mayor Summer Webb made a motion to accept the recommendation from the Executive Committee to select WSP as the technical consultant for the 2026 Regional Water Plan. Teresa Todd seconded the motion. Chairman Reyes called for a vote and the motion was approved.

7. Discussion and nomination(s) of a Region E member and a designated alternate to be appointed by the TWDB to serve on the Interregional Planning Council until adoption of the 2027 State Water Plan.

Jeff Bennet made a motion to nominate Scott Reinert as the Region E member to be appointed by the TWDB to serve on the Interregional Planning Council until adoption of the 2027 State Water Plan. Dave Hall seconded the motion.

Chairman Reyes called for a vote and the motion was approved.

8. Vacancies and postings

Dave Hall made a motion to allow RGCOC to post vacancies as presented following the bylaws as required. Jeff Bennett seconded the motion. Chairman Reyes called for a vote and the motion was approved.

9. TWDB update

Elizabeth McCoy provided an update to the group. She informed the group of the regional water planning rulemaking changes specific to amendments related to 31 TAC Chapter 355 and 357.21, which were adopted in May of 2021. These changes now make the water planning process more aligned with the flood planning process. They are also in the process of reviewing their state and regional water planning guidance principles. They must conduct this process every five years. They anticipate some rulemaking changes to occur later this year.

She also informed the group that the 2022 State Water Plan was adopted on July 7, 2022, and the documents are available online interactive State Water Plan as well as regional water plans that were prepared for each of the regions.

She next covered the Interregional Council. She mentioned the Inaugural Council was dissolved upon adoption of the 2022 State Water Plan and that TWDB would be seeking nominations from regional water planning groups for new Council representatives. She also provided a legislative update on House Bill 1905, which went into effect September 1, 2022.

She next discussed the Mining Water Use Study, which is being conducted by the UT Bureau of Economic Geology, through a contract for the 2026 regional water plans.

Finally, she provided more information on the sixth cycle planning website. She informed the group that a website has been created featuring documents that will be needed for the sixth cycle.

10. TWDB presentation on the Statewide ASR-AR Suitability Survey
James Golab, a Geoscientist with the Texas Water Development Board in the Conservation and Innovative Water Technologies Division, provided an overview of the Statewide Survey of Aquifer Suitability for Aquifer Storage Aquifer Recharge Projects.

7. The group revisited agenda item #7. David Etzold made a motion to appoint Dave Hall as the designated alternate to the Interregional Planning Council. Teresa Todd seconded the motion. David Etzold withdrew his motion.

Dave Hall made a motion to appoint David Etzold as the designated alternate to the Interregional Planning Council. Teresa Todd seconded the motion. Chairman Reyes called for a vote and the motion was approved.

11. TWDB presentation on the Edwards-Trinity (Plateau) Aquifer brackish groundwater study
Evan Strickland, a Geoscientist with the TWDB, presented on the Edwards-Trinity (Plateau) Aquifer brackish groundwater study.

12. Propose next meeting date
The group decided to meet on February 17, 2022, in Alpine.

13. Adjourn
Jeff Bennett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:41 pm. Dan Dunlap seconded the motion. Chairman Reyes called for a vote and the motion was approved.

Janet Adams


02/17/2022

Date