



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

July 23, 2024
10:30 A.M. (MDT) / 11:30 A.M. (CDT)
8037 Lockheed, Suite 100
El Paso, TX 79925

<u>Voting Member</u>	<u>Interest Category</u>	<u>Present (✓)/Absent (X) / Alternate Present (*)</u>
Chairman Scott Reinert	<i>Water Utilities</i>	✓, physically present
Vice-Chairman Dave Hall	<i>Public</i>	✓, physically present
Secretary, Teresa Todd	<i>Counties</i>	✓, virtual
David Etzold	<i>Real Estate</i>	✓, physically present
Rebecca L. Brewster	<i>Public</i>	X
Tom Beard	<i>Agriculture</i>	X
<u>Non-voting Member</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Present(✓)/Absent(X)/ Alternate Present (*)</u>
Others Present:		
Jennifer Jackson, Carollo, virtual	Jon Albright, Freese & Nichols, virtual	
Kristal Williams, Freese & Nichols, virtual	Annette Gutierrez, RGCOG, physically present	
Peggy O'Brien, RGCOG, physically present	John T. Kennedy, Presidio Municipal Development District, virtual	
Raquel Onsurez, El Paso Electric, physically present	Jose Landeros, El Paso County, virtual	
Daniel Bueno, Village of Vinton, physically present	Thomas Black, San Elizario, virtual	

1. Welcome –Chairman Scott Reinert

Chairman Reinert, with a quorum present, called the meeting to order at 10:30 am MDT. All present introduced themselves.

2. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

3. Recognition of Guests and Designated Alternates

Chairman Reinert and the group welcomed two nominees who were physically present (Raquel Onsurez, nominee for Electric Generating Utilities and Daniel Bueno, nominee for

Economic Development, Rural) and three who were in attendance virtually (John T. Kennedy, Jose Landeros and Thomas Black).

4. **Review and approve the minutes for the General Committee Meeting held on April 23, 2024**

Dave Hall made a motion to table this item until the General Membership Meeting this afternoon, as the entire board (not the Executive Committee) should approve minutes for the General Membership Meeting. Scott Reinert seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.

5. **Discuss and consider action regarding all nominations related to FWTWPG vacancies for voting members**

Chairman Reinert addressed the candidates and asked that each to introduce him/herself to the group. The group reviewed the materials. Thomas Black, Daniel Bueno and John T. Kennedy were candidates for the Rural Economic Development position; **Jose Landeros** was the candidate for the Tourism position (El Paso County administration department for Capital Planning – to attract business and tourism to the region); **Raquel Onsurez** was the candidate for the Electric Generating Utilities position (El Paso Electric, plant chemistry supervisor for alternative energy generation to provide quality and quantity of water needed. Work as community and as a city moving into the future connection between power generation, water use/reuse and economic development. Jennifer Jackson mentioned that the El Paso Steam Electric contact needed to update this section in our plan. Raquel is can be the bridge to connect the group in areas that plan wants to represent the El Paso energy/water nexus accurately) and **Roberto Ransom**, who was unable to attend, was the sole candidate for the Urban Rural Development position. All candidates were enthusiastic about contributing their expertise to the Planning Group. The committee discussed the possibility of having two voting members from the same office (Jose Landeros and Roberto Ransom are both from the Economic Development Office in El Paso). They both have great skill sets and experience that are needed in the group (Mr. Landeros in urban planning and transportation, and Mr. Ransom has connection to Santa Teresa, NM authorities).

The group agreed to recommend at the General Meeting to fill the positions that had one candidate in the running with those applicants.

After much conversation with the three Rural Economic Development candidates:

1. **Daniel Bueno:** Anthony, Vinton, San Elizario and other colonias first-time water infrastructure and economic development – a critical addition to updating the colonia section in the regional plan.
2. **John T. Kennedy:** Has a background in land surveying, urban planning in DC, then in Alpine in public utilities, now in Presidio spearheading economic development initiatives, grant and planning funds for water infrastructure. Spoke with the committee about Ojinaga MX transmigrantes port and agricultural trade. Presidio needs to develop water infrastructure. Presidio County has secured EDAP funds to form utility boards in colonias. Rail connection, geothermal energy viability to build around agriculture processing, cold storage, rail and truck synergy, the port of entry being not as congested as others, Presidio has a lot of room for growth. Spoke about managing water storage, quality and groundwater and creating an infrastructure plan for wastewater and storm water for green infrastructure. Source is mostly groundwater but some from Rio Grande and Rio Conchos. Near- and long term planning from Presidio is needed. Jennifer Jackson suggested John reach out to the flood planning group to know more about water capture.
3. **Thomas Black:** Born in Ysleta, grew up in El Paso, graduated San Elizario high school and has been part of the area his entire life. Is on Clint City Council and is an engineer at Union Pacific.

The committee agreed to recommend at the General Meeting that John T. Kennedy fill the position. In light of the varied and valuable experience of the other two rural candidates, the group agreed to discuss at the General Meeting the process whereby two additional Rural Economic Development positions may be added to the board. In listening to the rural candidates, each has a different rural environment with needs that are valuable to be represented into the future. Dave Hall made a motion. Scott Reinert seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.

6. Report from Carollo on the schedule of Regional Water Planning

Since this item and the following items 7, 8, and 9 are to be addressed at the General Meeting this afternoon, Jennifer Jackson suggested she provide an overview of the process now and discuss in more detail at the General Meeting. Scott Reinert made the motion. Dave Hall seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.

Ms. Jackson told the committee that we are on schedule. Have submitted the Technical Memorandum and Task 5B Notice to Proceed, which allows for the group to dictate how the strategy fund is broken down and was approved by TWDB to proceed with our timeline. Jennifer directed the Committee's attention to the draft of Chapter 1 and provided an overview of the 13 sections that need input from the group. Jennifer mentioned that in order to develop Chapter 5 (Water Management, Strategy and Development), there will need to be a survey and questionnaire to develop water management and strategies from each entity. There will also need to be a water loss audit added to section 1.9 and a strategy developed under new AWWA water loss guidelines that Jennifer needs to review and present to our group. Jennifer asked for direct input be added. Chapter 2 is to be updated with revised population projections provided by Tom Fullerton at UTEP that lists growth and data to support that opinion. She also suggested that the contingency plan set forth in Chapter 7 (Drought) be dropped. When asked about the frequency of meetings, she suggested a quarterly cadence in general, but when planning and strategy portions are addressed, meetings should be more frequent. Telegraphing a schedule that will enable all feedback to be incorporated and closed out incrementally, Jennifer suggested asking TWDB at the General Meeting when the next meeting should be scheduled (possibly the second week in September), at which meeting Chapters 1 and 2 redlines will have been reviewed so they can be adopted and drafts of Chapters 3 (Water Supply) and 4 (Water Needs) can be reviewed and other survey work that comes in by then. Scott Reinert suggested adding Ft. Bliss updates (which would be for Chapter 3). There's been dramatic growth there. Jennifer will get more input from Gilbert Mesa. Elizabeth McCoy from TWDB can answer questions about water reuse at the general meeting this afternoon. Closing out incrementally will keep us on a good schedule to meet the deadline for the 2026 Region E Water Plan in March 2025. Dave Etzold suggested Jennifer explain how the process works to the new members. Jennifer already has a slide deck and suggested she make a virtual "101" presentation before the next general meeting so the new members can get up to speed.

7. Consideration and Discussion of material from Carollo regarding a draft Chapter 1 for the 2026 Region E Water Plan

See Item 6 above.

8. Consideration and Discussion of material from Carollo regarding a draft Chapter 2 for the 2026 Region E Water Plan

See Item 6 above.

9. **Report from Carollo on other regional planning efforts**

See Item 6 above.

10. **Consider and Discuss a date for the next regular meeting**

See Item 6 above.

11. **Adjourn**

David Etzold made the motion to adjourn. Dave Hall seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved. Meeting was adjourned at 12:15pm MDT.