

# **Minutes of the June 11, 1998 Meeting of the Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group for the Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region "N"**

This meeting of the Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group (Coastal Bend RWPG) was held in the "TTVN" Classroom at the TAMU Research and Extension Center, 10345 Agnes Street, Corpus Christi, Texas 78406. The meeting was called to order by Judge Josephine Miller at 1:32 p.m. A roll call began the meeting.

Members of the RWPG in attendance were: Judge Miller, Dr. McNichols, Mr. Kunkel, Mr. Nedbalek, Mr. Yturria, Dr. Prouty, Dr. Hubert, Mr. Delaune, Mr. Sandoval, Mr. Bledsoe, Ms. Serrato, Mr. Paulson, Mr. Flores, and Mr. Tolan. Members absent included: Mr. Figueroa, Mayor Cantu, Mr. Kane, Mr. Garcia, and Mr. Mims.

Others attending the meeting included: Mr. Byron Wooldridge, Mr. John Hartley, Mr. George Clower, Mr. Carl Crull (City of Corpus Christi), Mr. Joe O'Brien (Tax Payers Association), Ms. Pat Suter, Mr. John Freeman (USDA-NRCS), Mr. Billy Dick (City of Rockport), Ms. Jo Ella Wagner (STWA), Dr. Peggy Glass (Alan Plummer Associates), Mr. Jack Hunt (TWDB), Mr. Carlos Lerma (City of Kingsville), Mr. James Dodson (NRA Coastal Bend Division), and Mr. Bill Kopecky (Coastal Bend Sun).

Minutes from the May 14, 1998 meeting of the Regional Water Planning Group for the Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region "N" were reviewed. Mr. Yturria moved that the minutes be approved as written and Mr. Bledsoe seconded; there was a unanimous voice vote approving the motion.

Mr. James Dodson began the discussion on the approval/appointment of non-voting members. He pointed out that there are several proposals to add non-voting members to the RWPG. He laid out some of the issues involved and noted how there are provisions in the rules whereby an adjacent group may appoint a liaison to another group. The liaison for Region "L" is Mr. Con Mims; no action of approval is required for this appointment.

A letter was also received from Mr. Dexter Svetlik, with the Natural Resources Conservation Services, requesting to be appointed as a non-voting member. The rules provide that the RWPG may add, at their discretion, certain non-voting members like members representing state or federal agencies. The action today is the consideration of that request, from Mr. Svetlik, to be appointed as a non-voting member.

Mr. Dodson continued with the discussion informing the group how the RWPG was required to go through a process of soliciting nominations for non-voting membership under 31 TAC§357, which essentially applies for interest outside of the region that have a water supply position in the region. The required notices were published and we received neither response to that notice nor any other nominations in that regard so there is no action required there. However, the RWPG did receive a letter from the Lower Colorado River RWPG, which indicated that they have appointed a liaison to this region. The

Lower Colorado River RWPG is not adjacent to this region so the provisions do not apply in this particular case. This group does have a choice to (1) accept the membership, (2) form a voluntary association that involves a mutual exchange of non-voting liaisons, or (3) deny the appointment.

Lastly, a letter from The Texas Association of Nurserymen requested an appointment for consideration of several individuals as voting members. Today there is no action required; however, there may be some discussion as to where there should be additional voting members.

Mr. Dodson offered to respond to questions. A question was brought up on who the adjacent planning groups were in this region. Mr. Dodson explained that the only two adjacent planning groups are Region "L" (the South-Central Texas RWPG) and Region "M" in the Valley.

Judge Miller suggested that the RWPG form a subcommittee to review the TWDB rules for voting and non-voting members. This subcommittee would recommend whether or not to accept new members and if so, a process for accepting and reviewing nominations and making appointments.

Mr. Yturria moved that the RWPG form a subcommittee as recommended by Judge Miller and Mr. Paulson seconded; the motion carried. Judge Miller asked for volunteers to serve on this subcommittee and five members were appointed. The members are as follows: Mr. Bernard Paulson-Chair, Dr. Patrick Hubert, Mr. Gonzalo Sandoval, Dr. Jennifer Prouty, and Mr. Bernie DeLaune.

Dr. Prouty asked for specific criteria to select these new members. The criteria were discussed and it was recommended to select liaison members based on mutual interests and to maintain a universal appeal. The non-voting members' criteria should be based on their technical assistance, while the voting members must have the same criteria as when the original members were selected.

A motion was made by Mr. Yturria to table the actions of Item III under this agenda to the selected subcommittee until they can report back to the RWPG, Dr. Hubert seconded it; the motion carried.

Mr. Bledsoe presented the recommendation of the Subcommittee on Procuring Professional Services and described the process of selection. This included some of the issues that still needed to be addressed in terms of the level of participation the RWPG desires in the planning process and the type of public participation efforts that should be incorporated into the process.

A motion to approve the subcommittee's recommendation was made by Mr. Bledsoe and Mr. Yturria seconded it. Judge Miller asked for discussion and comment.

Mr. Tom Brown spoke briefly on behalf of the HDR/NEI (HDR/Naismith) team and Dr. Peggy Glass spoke briefly on behalf of the APAI (Alan Plummer Associates Incorporation) team.

Several members of the public provided comments as follows:

Mr. John Hartley, a private citizen, began his discussion by stressing that the RWPG has the responsibility for 11 counties. He would like there to be a "no bias" provision placed in the contract with HDR/NEI.

Mr. Byron Wooldridge, President of South Texas Research Foundation (STRF), but representing himself, objected to utilizing HDR/NEI as consultants any further for this region. He stated several reasons for this objection.

Mr. Bill Kopecky of the Coastal Bend Sun pointed out that there needs to be a new approach from HDR/NEI as consultants from previous works.

Mr. George Clower mentioned his concern of the number of pages that were required of the consultant companies. There was a statement verifying that the two firms selected for their presentations met all requirements.

Judge Miller called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The subcommittee will meet within the next two weeks.

The discussion then focused on identifying areas where it would be advisable to develop informational subareas with other regions. It was agreed that this is probably advisable in regard to the Lavaca RWPG because of the Lake Texan water supply issues.

A motion was made by Dr. Hubert and seconded by Mr. Kunkel directing staff to respond affirmatively to the request by the Lavaca Regional Water Planning Group and to initiate activities that will result in the formation of an informational subarea in either one or both regional water planning areas. Additionally, directing staff to prepare and submit to all other regional water planning areas a request for their consideration in establishing informational subareas in conjunction with the Coastal Bend RWPG.

Discussion of a methodology to allocate the required 25% of local cost share for the funding of the Regional Water Management Plan began and it was decided that an action item is needed for next week.

Mr. Robert Flores began the discussion on the Regional Water Planning Program issues by updating the RWPG on Austin activities. There was a WAM meeting in Austin and Mr. Dodson reported on several issues that were discussed at that meeting.

Mr. Flores then discussed the status of TWDB's request for an AG ruling on the issue of director liability and the legal status of the RWPG. He expects it will take four or more months to get an answer from the AG's office.

Mr. Flores stated that he was transmitting the TWDB/NRA contract on the scope of work grant monies to Mr. Dodson for execution. This initiated a broad round of discussion and comment on the process and policies for approving and signing contracts of this nature on behalf of the RWPG. Ultimately it was decided on the following: (1) An attorney for NRA should review the contract. (2) The NRA Executive Committee should consider the contract and give approval for the Executive Director or Mr. Dodson to sign on behalf of NRA. The NRA should also draft an MOU to present to the RWPG defining the respective roles, responsibilities, and authorities of the NRA and the RWPG as the NRA represents the RWPG in these matters. (3) The full NRA Board should ratify Executive Committee action at the next posted meeting, including the MOU.

Judge Miller opened the floor for any public comment; there was none.

The next meeting will be held on July 16<sup>th</sup> with a follow up meeting on July 30<sup>th</sup>. The RWPG will go back to their regularly scheduled meetings on August 13<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Ms. Melida (Meli) Sugarek and Mr. James Dodson.

Minutes Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Patrick Hubert, Secretary Date

Coastal Bend RWPG