

Minutes of the July 8, 1999 Meeting of the Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group for the Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning for Region "N"

This meeting of the Coastal Bend Regional Water Planning Group (Coastal Bend RWPG) was held in the auditorium at the TAMU Research and Extension Center, 10345 Agnes Street, Corpus Christi, Texas 78406. The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Judge Josephine Miller at 1:45 p.m.

Members of the RWPG in attendance included: Judge Josephine Miller, Dr. David McNichols, Mr. Bobby Nedbalek, Dr. Jennifer Prouty, Dr. Patrick Hubert, Mr. Bernie DeLaune, Mr. Scott Murray, Mr. Ariel Garcia, Mr. Bernard Paulson, Mr. Robert Flores, Mr. James Gill, Mr. Dexter Svetlik, Mr. Vincente Guerra, and Mr. Cole Rowland.

Also in attendance were Mr. Jon Day (for Mr. Robert Kunkel), Ms. Jo Ella Wagner (for Ms. Carola Serrato), Mr. Ken Choffel, Mr. Jay Reining, Ms. Sandra Koenning, and Mr. Mike Mahaffey.

Judge Josephine Miller began the meeting by comparing the scarcity of water resources to the once-endured fear of having not enough whale oil for light or the fear of running out of salt. She stated that, as with light and salt, she believes that we will eventually have the technology to create water. However, Judge Miller did stress the notion that water resources will always need to be managed.

Minutes from the May 13, 1998 meeting of the Regional Water Planning Group for the Senate Bill 1 Regional Water Planning Program for Region "N" were reviewed. There were no requested additions or modifications to the minutes. Dr. Jennifer Prouty made a motion to approve the minutes and Dr. David McNichols seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Judge Miller asked for a motion on Item IV, Consideration of an Amendment to the "Resolution Requesting the Texas Water Development Board to Review and Revise Population Projections" as Approved by the Coastal Bend RWPG on March 11, 1999. Dr. Prouty moved that Item IV be adopted and Dr. Patrick Hubert seconded the motion. Judge Miller asked for comments from Mr. Robert Flores. He stated that Mr. James Dodson would be the regular contact between the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) and the Coastal Bend RWPG. Mr. Dodson stated that along with concerns of population projections for Portland, Rockport, Orange Grove, and per capita projections for Falfurrias, it was discovered that other communities within San Patricio County and Aransas County had some issues with the population projections as well. Mr. Dodson stated that the San Patricio Municipal Water District's 1995 regional planning study was used as a basis for new population projections for Ingleside, Aransas Pass, and "Aransas County Other". He then stated that, with the approval of those communities, some additional population projections were recommended. Mr. Dodson explained that the new projections were provided within the packet sent to the members and it also included an amended resolution, which included the new recommendations. Mr. Flores stated that the final conclusion from the TWDB decision concerning the recommended population projections will be reported back to the Coastal Bend RWPG. Mr. Dodson confirmed that the Coastal Bend RWPG will receive a copy of the new recommendations

and those numbers will be what is used as the Region's official projections. Dr. Jennifer Prouty asked if the 1996 population projections were moot. Mr. Dodson explained that they were more of a reference point to compare to the revised census projections, which were higher than the original 1990 census population projections. Dr. Prouty then asked about the time scale for the population projections. Mr. Dodson responded by saying the projections were in ten-year increments through the year 2050.

Judge Miller asked if for any other comments concerning Item IV. The Item was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Next, Judge Miller asked for discussion concerning the Definition of a "Major Water Provider." Mr. Dodson clarified that besides naming the City of Corpus Christi as a Major Water Provider, there was some discussion in the previous meeting to name the South Texas Water Authority (STWA) and the San Patricio Municipal Water District (SPMWD) as Major Water Providers as well. Mr. Dodson stated that because both STWA and SPMWD purchase water from the City of Corpus Christi there would be repetitive information submitted. The concerns are that, although the deadline for plan submittal to the TWDB has been extended, the planning budget has not been increased. Therefore, the question remains whether or not to name more than the City of Corpus Christi as a Major Water Provider. Judge Miller asked about the more rural areas. Her concerns were about those systems not associated within the City of Corpus Christi. Mr. Choffel responded by saying that generally a Major Water Provider is a system that provides only a significant quantity of water for municipal and industrial use within the Region, not necessarily all water providers. However, Mr. Choffel pointed out that if those smaller rural areas provide water to multiple entities then they should be considered as a Major Water Provider. Mr. Choffel stated that because SPMWD and STWA get their water from the City of Corpus Christi, it would not be beneficial to designate them as separate Major Water Providers. However, Mr. Choffel suggested that a summary of STWA and SPMWD operations should be provided in the report.

Dr. Hubert expressed some concerns about naming only one entity in this region as a Major Water Provider. He pointed out that by naming only one entity the region might be politically vulnerable. Kenneth Martin stated that in conjunction with Judge Miller's concerns about rural areas, Brooks County has some political concerns about not being named a Major Water Provider. He stated that Falfurrias provides 80% of the water in Brooks County. Dr. Hubert reiterated his concerns.

Mr. Dodson asked for Mr. Robert Flores' input concerning the discussion. Mr. Flores stated that some regions are naming up to twenty Major Water Providers due to the TWDB's broad definition whereas some regions feel that it can be addressed again at a later time. Dr. Hubert asked if the Coastal Bend RWPG could designate a Major Water Provider and then redesignate others later. Mr. Choffel stated that there is no deadline on designation, the requirement is that the tables, which describe the Major Water Providers, must be done at the end of the project. Mr. Dodson agreed and stated that the Coastal Bend RWPG should look into merely developing this information for later consideration.

Dr. Hubert stated that he would like to see smaller entities, such as the Falfurrias Utility Board, designated as a Major Water Provider. Mr. Dodson suggested that this item be tabled until more information can be provided. Dr. Hubert favored the suggestion. Judge Miller commented that Dr. Hubert's point was well made. Mr. Bernard Paulson commented that he would like to keep the designations of Major Water Providers simple, as he had some concerns about repetition. Judge Miller suggested gathering all information and separating the entities that receive no water from the City of Corpus Christi. Dr. Hubert and Judge Miller stated that there are small water suppliers in their portion of

the Coastal Bend that do not receive water from the City of Corpus Christi. Mr. Dodson explained that those are private water supply corporations and Mr. Choffel stated that those are included within the "County-Other" section of the plan. Judge Miller suggested that a list be provided to the Coastal Bend RWPG showing every water supplier and each one's number of connections within the Coastal Bend RWPG. Mr. Dodson then read the definition of a Major Water Provider as explained by the Texas Water Development Board.

Mr. Martin asked that in addition to listing all major water suppliers and connections, population being served inside city limits as well as outside city limits be gathered and provided for review.

Mr. Dodson responded by saying that the current population projections are based on municipalities and that there will be difficulty assigning residents outside of city limits to water providers. Mr. Choffel suggested that connection data be collected and develop a ratio between connection numbers and the TWDB's population numbers and then assign each to one of three categories: inside city, outside city, and county other. Mr. Martin commented that Falfurrias would be adding more service to their current operations. Mr. Dodson suggested that this item be kept alive. Judge Miller asked when the Coastal Bend RWPG can expect to see the Major Water Provider issue on the agenda again. Mr. Choffel suggested that in two months time more information should be available and the issue could be discussed at that time.

Judge Miller then introduced the next item on the agenda: Item VI, Discussion: Proposed Revisions to Scope of Work and Project Schedule. Mr. Dodson explained the revisions to the original Scope of Work. He then explained that the TWDB has awarded additional amounts to each region. He stated that as of June 16, 1999 the Coastal Bend RWPG was awarded an additional \$729,811.00, which consequently increased the overall budget to \$1,114,753.00. Mr. Dodson commented on the changes to phase 2b of the original Scope of Work. These changes include the two-way pipeline study, siting study for a desalinization facility (which may require more funding), industrial water quality study, study of the development of Stage 2 of the Lake Texana project which is an additional yield from the Lavaca River, and an extension of the budget time period. Mr. Dodson stated that the extension to the budget time period is only to modify the deadlines of interim reports. He suggested that draft sections of the report be submitted rather than spending the money to create a full-scale interim report. Mr. Choffel suggested that NEI Engineering's effort to study the sedimentation issues in Lake Corpus Christi should include a sampling effort to determine how the sediment can be used.

Mr. Dodson commented that Task 1 is coming in under budget and therefore extra monies can be used for these additions to the Scope of Work. Mr. Choffel reiterated that the only extra monies being requested from the State are for the desalinization siting study. Mr. Dodson stated that a formal approval of these amendments to the Scope of Work would be needed. He also stated that a contract amendment must be done for TWDB approval of the additions. Mr. Choffel stated that the deadline for contract amendments is September 21, 1999. Mr. Dodson suggested that the revisions to the Scope of Work be an action item in August, so it may be sent to the TWDB for final approval.

Judge Miller asked where a desalinization facility would be placed. Mr. Choffel stated that the purpose of that addition to the Scope of Work is primarily to find a place for a desalinization facility. Mr. Paulson then asked what could be done with any sediment removed from Lake Corpus Christi. Mr. Choffel stated that the main question NEI Engineering is considering is for what purpose is the material suitable. Mr. Paulson suggested using the sediment for beach nourishment. Mr. Choffel also confirmed Dr. Prouty's assumption that a physical and chemical analysis would be done. It was also mentioned that standard

water quality and sedimentation analysis would be done. Mr. Dodson pointed out that the leachate from the sediments must meet water quality requirements.

Judge Miller reported on the All-Chairs Conference Call. She said she has concerns about the expensive cost of acquiring public input. She stated that a suggestion was made to look at the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and their idea to go "where the people are" in order to gather public input. Judge Miller stated that information concerning the MPO was sent to the TWDB. Mr. Flores thanked Judge Miller for providing the information.

Judge Miller introduced Mr. Choffel to give an update on the Scope of Work. Mr. Choffel stated that Section 1 had been submitted and sent back to the Nueces River Authority for corrections. He also commented that Section 2, being prepared by HDR, is also near completion. Finally, he mentioned that the groundwater committee met for the first time with good result.

Under general comments, Judge Miller asked the Coastal Bend RWPG to consider allowing a member from the City of Corpus Christi to appear on the next agenda. Mr. Jay Reining, a representative from the City of Corpus Christi, explained that the City would like to coordinate their efforts to revise their water conservation plan with the efforts of the Coastal Bend RWPG. The City of Corpus Christi requested that a representative from the City present the City's proposed Water Conservation Plan at the next meeting. Ms. Sandra Koenning, also a representative from the City of Corpus Christi, invited the members to the City of Corpus Christi's Water Conservation Committee meeting on July, 14 1999 at 2 p.m. in order to help review the draft of the City's new Water Conservation Plan. Mr. Robert Flores stressed the importance of the City's meeting.

Judge Miller mentioned that South-Central Texas RWPG had released a Scope of Work and she suggested that the Coastal Bend RWPG members review it. Mr. Dodson stated that two copies were currently available, however more copies can be acquired.

Mr. Tom Brown, of NEI Engineering, presented a report on "Strategies to Enhance Water Conservation in the Coastal Bend". He stated that overall per capita use in the Coastal Bend Region has shown a continued decrease. Mr. Brown explained that the decrease in water usage is directly related to increased public awareness, better response to leaks and maintenance issues, increased water efficiency during industrial cooling processes, and a higher standard of water efficiency within new development. He commented that price increases for water usage are useful during drought periods, however, Mr. Brown felt that sensitivity to price hikes decrease if they are utilized too long. He then commented on the requirements of a water conservation plan. He stressed the importance of record keeping for water utilities. Mr. Brown also outlined the required water conservation goals.

Next, Mr. Brown spoke about different water conservation strategies, both required strategies and additional strategies. He summarized supply-side conservation, demand-side conservation, and conservation rate structures. Finally, Mr. Brown stated that NEI Engineering has developed a format for water conservation plans. He stressed that because they have been in contact with communities throughout the region, many water issues that were expressed have been considered and addressed within the development of the plan format. Mr. Brown stated that a diskette containing the plan format would be sent to Mr. Dodson. There was a comment that it has been found that voluntary water conservation is more effective than mandatory water conservation.

Next on the Agenda, Judge Miller asked Mr. Robert Flores to comment on activities in Austin. Mr.

Flores stated that the TWDB is preparing to begin reviewing submitted sections of reports. He also updated the Coastal RWPG on the appropriations approval as well as informed the RWPG about the \$1 million contingency funds, which can be used for such projects as the desalinization study. He stated that distribution on those funds would most likely be in two stages, after the RWPG's idea has been considered by the TWDB. Mr. Flores also informed the Coastal Bend RWPG that the SB1 Clean-Up bills had passed and that liability issues are dealt with now. He confirmed the new deadline dates for the SB1 process and submission of plans. Mr. Flores commented that the Department of Agriculture is an official Non-Voting member of the Coastal Bend RWPG and asked for the representative to stand. Finally, Mr. Flores informed the members that 13 temporary groundwater districts had been designated. Judge Miller asked that the members remember Lt. Governor Bob Bullock and his efforts to improve water resources management in Texas.

Judge Miller then asked Mr. Dodson to give the Coastal Bend RWPG an update on the progress of the South-Central RWPG. Mr. Dodson stated that a list of water resource alternatives, that the South-Central RWPG has developed, is available. Mr. Dodson commented that he had attended a staff workshop meeting with the South-Central RWPG and expressed their interest in feedback from surrounding regions. Mr. Dodson also suggested that the Coastal Bend RWPG take any opportunities to work with other regions on projects. He mentioned that ground water models are being developed and will be linked with Nueces River surface water models by the South-Central Texas RWPG, thus revealing that it is beneficial to work together and share information as well as technology. Mr. Dodson recognized Mr. Cole Rowland, liaison from the Lower Colorado RWPG. Mr. Rowland only stated that no alternatives for water resources have been identified for their region as of yet.

Judge Miller asked for the Financial Status Report from Mr. Dodson. He stated that current financial information was provided in the agenda packets. The information packet provided the quarterly and year-to-date expenditures based on the original schedule. Judge Miller excused herself from the meeting. Mr. Dodson explained that according to the original schedule the RWPG is 50% through that period and expenses are at 52% of the original budget. Mr. Dodson asked that consideration of an increase in the budget, which will correlate with the new deadlines, be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. He stated that an additional \$26,416.00 is needed, which would increase the overall budget to \$217,500.00. He reiterated that all administrative costs are to be paid by entities involved in the planning process, not the state. He reminded the members that it was decided that the entities would pay their portion of the administrative costs on per capita basis, thereby the City of Corpus Christi bears the bulk of the cost. However, Mr. Dodson pointed out that the remaining balance, from the possible new budget, of \$55,000.00 must be allocated to those entities outside the City of Corpus Christi's service area. Finally, Mr. Dodson stated that costs allocated to any portion of the region that is considered "County-Other" by the TWDB and does not receive water from an entity included in the planning program, will be billed to county governments.

Dr. Hubert asked for General Public Comment. Mr. Bill Kopecky asked if an elected official from the City of Corpus Christi should sit on the RWPG. Mr. Flores stated that the TWDB only requires adequate representation from the City. Mr. Kopecky expressed concern because Dr. McNichols did not stand for re-election, therefore the City does not have an elected official as a member of the Coastal Bend RWPG. Mr. Paulson stated that the members had redesignated Dr. McNichols but added that perhaps the City of Corpus Christi should decide whether or not they feel he can still represent them. Mr. Reining also expressed that he thought Dr. McNichols had been redesignated. Dr. Hubert expressed concern that if the Coastal Bend RWPG decides that an elected official must be designated from the City of Corpus Christi,

then other communities might feel they must have an elected official represented as well. Dr. Hubert also pointed out that the City suggested Dr. McNichols as a representative but not as an elected representative. Mr. Kopecky stated that he feels the City Council is going to want an elected official on the Coastal Bend RWPG. Mr. Flores commented that it is the RWPG's decision to determine if there is adequate representation. Mr. Dodson stated that he would visit with the City Manager and determine if the Mayor feels as though Dr. McNichols still represents the City of Corpus Christi.

Mr. Dodson recognized Mr. James Gill, the representative for Texas Association of Nurserymen.

Mr. Dodson recommended the next meeting date for August 12, 1999.

Dr. Hubert adjourned the meeting at 3:22 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Ms. Gabrielle Grunkemeyer and Mr. James Dodson

Minutes Submitted by: _____

Dr. Patrick Hubert, Secretary Date

Coastal Bend RWPG