

Minutes of the October 14, 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 Room 221-B of the Student Union Building at Texas A&M University - Kingsville, 1050 West Santa Gertrudis Avenue, Kingsville, Texas 78363. The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Judge Josephine Miller at 1:52 p.m.

Members of the RWPG in attendance included: Judge Josephine Miller, Dr. Patrick Hubert, Mr. Bernie DeLaune, Mr. Robert Kunkel, Mr. Fausto Yturria, Ms. Carola Serrato, Mr. Ben Figueroa, Mr. Scott Bledsoe, Mr. Robert Flores, Mr. Vincente Guerra, Mr. Jim Tolan, and Mr. Con Mims.

Also in attendance were Mr. Greg Carter (for Mr. Scott Murray), Mr. Jack Hunt, Mr. Gary Bushell (for Mr. Jerry Kane), Judge Linda Lee Henry of McMullen County, Judge Allen May, Mr. Ricardo Guzman, Mr. Larry Land, and Mr. Robert Schwin (for Mr. Dexter Svetlik).

Judge Josephine Miller began the meeting by expressing her gratitude for the attendees' interest in water issues concerning the Coastal Bend. She then asked for a roll call. Mr. James Dodson stated that a visual roll call had been noted. Judge Miller announced that Mr. Kane, Dr. Prouty, and Mr. Dick had been previously excused from the meeting.

Minutes from the August 12, 1999 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. Mr. Fausto Yturria made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Scott Bledsoe seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Judge Miller introduced the next item on the Agenda, Item IV: Approval to Submit, in Draft, Sections 1 and 2 of the Regional Water Management plan to the Texas Water Development Board for Review. She asked Mr. Dodson to explain this Action Item.

Mr. Dodson stated that the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) has asked that the Regional Water Planning Groups formally approve the submittal of draft sections of the Regional Water Plan. He also stated, between the August 12th meeting and the October 14th, several comments were received regarding the Coastal Bend RWPG's draft sections 1 and 2. Mr. Dodson informed the members that those comments were being incorporated into the sections that will be formally sent to the TWDB.

Mr. Yturria made a motion to approve the submittal of Sections 1 and 2, in Draft, of the Coastal Bend Regional Water Management Plan to the TWDB, if appropriate amendments regarding incorporated comments are included in the submitted drafts. Mr. Bernie DeLaune seconded the motion. Judge Miller asked Mr. Dodson to read the comments received regarding Sections 1 and 2.

Mr. Dodson informed the members that copies of the comments were included within the Agenda

Packet. He stated that comments concerning Section 1 had been received from Mr. Jim Tolan and Ms. Carola Serrato. Mr. Dodson then read each comment. He also informed the members that comments concerning Section 2 had just been received from Mr. Greg Carter. Mr. Dodson then asked Mr. Carter to explain his concerns regarding Section 2. Finally, Mr. Dodson reassured the members that all comments would be reflected in the draft submitted to the TWDB.

Judge Miller next asked Mr. Robert Flores to explain TWDB's review process for the drafts. Mr. Flores explained how the TWDB staff was doing the review process. He noted that two types of comments would be submitted to the Regional Water Planning Groups. First, the review team will make sure that the submitted chapters meet the contractual terms. Secondly, the team will address technical issues. Next, Mr. Flores explained to the members that the review team will offer additional comments such as technical and grammatical suggestions. He stated that these additional comments would only be available if requested from the members. Mr. Flores asked for formal approval from the members to receive these additional comments. Mr. Flores also stated that the estimated turn around time for the review process is 30 days, however the process is still being fine-tuned. Mr. Yturria asked if many other regions have submitted chapters and whether or not the Coastal Bend RWPG was on track with the timeline. Mr. Flores expressed that the Coastal Bend RWPG is, for the most part, on schedule.

Judge Miller asked for any more questions regarding Mr. Flores' comments. There were no comments. She then introduced Mr. Gary Bushell, Mr. Greg Carter, Judge Linda Lee Henry, and Judge Allen May. Judge Miller also thanked the South Texas Water Authority for the food that was provided for the meeting.

Judge Miller then asked for additional comments concerning Agenda Item IV. Mr. Robert Flores reiterated that he would like some action on whether or not the members would like to receive the additional comments. Judge Miller asked for comments. Dr. Patrick Hubert stated that he would like to see the additional comments. Judge Miller expressed to Mr. Flores that the members would like to see the additional comments. Judge Miller then asked for a voice vote on the motion to approve Agenda Item IV. The motion carried.

Next, Judge Miller introduced Agenda Item V: Possible Discussion and Action on Allocation of Local Administrative Costs. Mr. Dodson asked for comments or concerns regarding the method of allocation and the costs to entities. There were no comments. Judge Miller asked if any money from local entities had been received. Mr. Dodson stated that the letters regarding the allocated costs have not been sent out yet, but that the City of Corpus Christi has been paying their share of the administrative costs. Mr. Yturria asked if the allocation costs were based on the calculated \$0.39 over 30 years that was previously presented. Mr. Dodson confirmed. He then stated that if there were no other comments or concerns, the letters requesting payment would be prepared and sent to those entities.

Mr. Dodson then introduced Mr. Ricardo Guzman, Director of Public Works for the City of Kingsville. Mr. Guzman explained the groundwater well operations in Kingsville. Mr. Guzman then invited the members to join him following the meeting for a tour of one of the City of Kingsville's wells.

Next, Mr. Dodson introduced Mr. Larry Land of HDR, Engineering. Mr. Dodson explained that Mr. Land is working on the groundwater resource aspect of the Scope of Work. Mr. Dodson also introduced Mr. Rick Hay of the Center for Water Supply Studies, who is working with Mr. Land. Mr. Dodson reiterated the importance of understanding groundwater availability as a planning tool and commended the efforts to investigate the groundwater resources within the Coastal Bend.

Mr. Land then gave a presentation regarding the assessment of groundwater availability. Mr. Land explained that in order to determine groundwater availability a mathematical model of the Gulf Coast Aquifer was developed. This groundwater model is a representation of where the water comes from, where it goes, and through what types of formations the water travels. Mr. Land explained that change does occur to the groundwater resource once development begins. He stated that constraints must be set in order to determine how much change the Coastal Bend Region is willing to accept. Next, Mr. Land stated that different constraints and associated trial pumping scenarios are incorporated into the groundwater model along with aquifer properties. Then the mathematical aspects of the model provide information regarding each scenario. Mr. Land explained how and why this information is what will assist the Groundwater Advisory Panel (GAP), of the Coastal Bend RWPG, in making a recommendation to the members as to which constraint scenario should be targeted.

Mr. Land then presented the members with results from the different constraint scenarios that were tested. Following Mr. Land's presentation, Mr. Dodson asked the members of the GAP to provide the other members of the Coastal Bend RWPG with their thoughts concerning the recommendations given in the presentation.

Ms. Carola Serrato stated that the GAP did not actually develop any conclusion as to a recommendation of what constraints to use, rather they had more questions. She expressed the GAP's concern about interpretation of the groundwater availability. She explained that if the area chooses a set of criteria that results in higher groundwater availability, it might send the message that the area has significant amounts of ground water available, whereas, in reality, it does not. She also stated that if the area chooses constraints that yield lower groundwater availability, it might interpreted as though the Coastal Bend Region has no capacity for growth. She stated that the reality is that there are limited groundwater supplies and in order to acquire it, pumping might have to occur in rural areas. Ms. Serrato stated that although they did not reach a conclusion, the GAP does feel as though the recommended constraint scenario should lie on the conservative side.

Dr. Hubert expressed concern for the rural land owners that depend on their own wells and windmills and whether or not they would have water available to them after a well is put into place for commercial or municipal use. He reiterated that surface water should be the primary source for large water users and the ground water should be left for the rural areas. Mr. Carter expressed his concern of the public's perception. Mr. Scotty Bledsoe stated that the GAP feels the model is accurate, but he reiterated that the GAP is concerned with actually selecting a certain set of constraints. Mr. Robert Kunkel stated that because there is some ground water within the Coastal Bend he would like to see continued evaluation of what ground water is available. Judge Miller asked Mr. Bledsoe if he felt that some of the problem had to do with recharge rates. Mr. Bledsoe responded by saying that recharge was conservative. Mr. Land stated that the rate of recharge was balanced but that did not take into consideration dewatering or depressurizing. Mr. Dodson reiterated the comments made.

Mr. Land stated that he would provide results of ground water availability under the three sets of constraint scenarios to the county-level. Then, he feels the members could make a decision as to which constraint they would like to see used. Mr. Land asked to schedule another GAP meeting before the next Coastal Bend RWPG meeting, so that a recommendation could be presented to the Coastal Bend RWPG. Judge Miller thanked Mr. Land for his efforts and presentation.

Judge Miller then informed the Coastal Bend RWPG membership of Mr. Ken Choffel's operation and

asked that they keep him in their thoughts.

Next, Judge Miller introduced Agenda Item VII: Reports. First, Mr. Dodson stated that the TWDB has provided technical comments on our revised Scope of Work. In addition, he stated that the amendments concerning changes to the Scope of Work have been executed by the Nueces River Authority and the TWDB along with incorporated rule changes. Next, Mr. Dodson announced that 40% of the planning period has been completed. He also announced that the TWDB has made almost \$1.2 million available for contingency funding requests to Regional Water Planning Groups, however there are set criteria and guidelines that must be met in order to receive those funds. Mr. Dodson informed the members that in November the meeting will focus on concluding the groundwater issue as well as hearing about environmental criteria. He also stated that a presentation regarding desalinization will be made; particularly regarding siting considerations and economics.

Judge Miller then introduced Mr. Flores for an update on Regional Water Planning issues and activities in Austin. Mr. Flores stated that an All-Chairs Conference Call would take place on October 28, 1999. Mr. Flores stated that Regions M and E have met and discussed what type of data they will share, he then suggested that the Coastal Bend RWPG and Region M should meet as well. Next, Mr. Flores introduced two TWDB colleagues: Robert Maze and Rima Petrossian. Mr. Flores explained that Ms. Petrossian is Region M's aquifer project manager. He then asked her to speak to the group concerning Region M and their Gulf Coast Aquifer research efforts. She stated that remote sensing using magnetic attraction was being used to determine the salinities within the aquifer in selected portions of Region M. She stated that this data will be incorporated with water well and geophysical data so that information about groundwater availability in rural areas will be enhanced.

Mr. Con Mims reported to the Coastal Bend RWPG on the activities of the South-Central RWPG. Mr. Mims informed the members that South-Central is working towards gaining more public involvement, especially since the area and its water use is so controversial. He also stated that the South-Central RWPG is choosing six plans, then slowly narrowing the choices to one plan. Mr. Mims stated that more meetings will be held in outlying areas so that the public in the entire area may have the opportunity to become involved in this decision-making process.

Finally, Judge Miller opened the floor Agenda Item VII: General Public Comment. No public comments were made.

Mr. Dodson recommended the next meeting date for November 11, 1999.

Judge Miller adjourned the meeting at 3:20 p.m.

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

Minutes Submitted by: _____

Dr. Patrick Hubert, Secretary Date

Coastal Bend RWPG