

MINUTES

**Region H Water Planning Group
July 1, 2015
San Jacinto River Authority Office
1577 Dam Site Rd, Conroe, Texas 77304**

PUBLIC HEARING ON INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN

AGENDA

MEMBERS PRESENT: Gene Fisseler, Jace A. Houston, William Teer, John Howard, Art Henson, David Bailey, Ron Neighbors, Pudge Willcox, Mark Evans, Glenn Lord, Carl Masterson, Robert Bruner, Kathy Turner Jones, John Bartos, Jun Chang, David Collinsworth

DESIGNATED ALTERNATES: Mike Turco for Marvin Marcel, Jim Sims for Kevin Ward, Mike O'Connell for Bob Hebert

MEMBERS ABSENT: James Morrison, Jimmie Schindewolf, Robert Istre, James Comin, John Blount

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Sarah Backhouse for Lann Bookout

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

1. WELCOME

Mr. Evans welcomed everyone to the final public hearing on the Initially Prepared Plan.

2. RECEIVE PRESENTATION ON 2016 INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN FOR REGION H

Mr. Jason Afinowicz gave an overview of the processes related to the preparation of the 2016 Initially Prepared Plan ("IPP") for Region H. He explained that Texas is comprised of sixteen regions which are based on natural and political boundaries. He went on to explain the different aspects of the planning process stating that the different regions are comprised of volunteer planning groups of diverse interests which analyze data related to water demand versus water supply. The group identifies needs and strategies to obtain more water, selects and recommends Water Management Strategies, which then comprise the Initially Prepared Plan. He explained the process for public review and comment, and eventually, the recommendation for the final plan. Mr. Afinowicz went into detail in regards to the Region H 2016 Initially Prepared Plan stating that population growth is the key driver for the overall demand for the region, with municipal areas having the largest amount of growth. He went on to explain that in order to address these needs, the 2016 IPP currently recommends 70 Water Management Strategies (WMS), with a total of 705 projects included in the plan. Mr. Afinowicz briefly explained the categories of the projects including conservation projects, conveyance projects, groundwater development projects, groundwater reduction plans, reuse projects, surface water projects, treatment projects, and other project recommendations such as the Brazos Saltwater Barrier.

He briefly explained that the plan also includes recommendations regarding unique stream segments, reservoir sites, as well as administrative, legislative, and funding recommendations. Mr. Afinowicz stated that the Initially Prepared Plan can be found on the Region H Website and that the public comment period will end at 5:00 P.M on September 1, 2015.

3. RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENT ON 2016 INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN FOR REGION H

Mr. Evans opened the public hearing at 10:20 a.m. There were no comments during the public hearing. Mr. Evans announced that Region H received a resolution from Gause Independent School District and Milam County regarding the Little River Off-Channel Reservoir and that these will be entered into the record as public comments. Mr. Evans then closed the public hearing at 10:21 a.m.

**REGION H PUBLIC MEETING
AGENDA**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:22 a.m.

4. INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Evans stated that introductions were done at the beginning of the Public Hearing.

5. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF APRIL 8, 2015 MEETING

Mr. Henson made a motion to approve the minutes of April 8, 2015. The motion was seconded by Jun Chang and carried unanimously.

6. RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS 7 THROUGH 14

Scott Galloway from the Texas Water Development Board's Houston Office announced the implementation of their new marketing and outreach team.

7. RECEIVE PRESENTATION ON AND DISCUSS PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE 2011 REGION H REGIONAL WATER PLAN RELATED TO DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSED SURFACE WATER TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE BY THE CENTRAL HARRIS COUNTY REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY

Mr. Afinowicz explained that this amendment pertains to the previous 2011 Plan. He stated that the draft package was submitted to the Board and received confirmation that it will be treated as a minor amendment. Mr. Afinowicz explained that this proposal strictly relates to a change in the cost that is associated with a strategy.

8. CONSIDER ACTION TO AMEND THE 2011 REGION H REGIONAL WATER PLAN RELATED TO DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSED SURFACE WATER TRANSMISSION

Jun Chang made a motion to amend the 2011 Region H Regional Water Plan related to the development of proposed Surface Water Transmission. The motion was seconded by Jim Sims and carried unanimously.

9. RECEIVE PRESENTATION FROM AVERITT AND ASSOCIATES REGARDING YEAR TWO OF THE GOLDWATER STUDY ON WATER CONSERVATION IN REGION H

Senator Averitt, with Averitt and Associates, gave a brief update on the two-year study of water conservation within Region H. He explained that Montgomery County has made a considerable amount of progress towards water conservation and the county is currently on pace through 2023. Senator Averitt went on to explain the project objectives and how the utilities are utilized to track data. He introduced Steven Cortez who explained the quantifiable savings for this project through a water tracking tool that is being utilized. Mr. Cortez briefly explained the actual savings due to water conservation and the outcome with projected new growth through 2043.

10. RECEIVE UPDATE FROM CONSULTANT TEAM REGARDING THE SCHEDULE AND MILESTONES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2016 REGION H REGIONAL WATER PLAN

Mr. Afinowicz gave a brief overview of the schedule for the 2016 Region H Regional Water Plan, explaining the process related to the 60-day public comment period, the 90-day agency comment period, and the 120-day comment period for the Texas Water Development Board. Mr. Afinowicz briefly explained that based on uniform standards, a project sponsor request must be submitted in writing.

11. RECEIVE PRESENTATION FROM CONSULTANT TEAM REGARDING THE SUBMITTAL OF ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS OF THE 2016 INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN TO THE TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Mr. Afinowicz explained that electronic data was due on July 1, 2015, and that Region H has completed all data entry. Mr. Afinowicz stated that GIS data must also be included in the database.

12. CONSIDER AUTHORIZING THE SAN JACINTO RIVER AUTHORITY TO REQUEST STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS TO PREPARE THE 2021 REGION H REGIONAL WATER PLAN ON BEHALF OF THE REGION H WATER PLANNING GROUP

Mr. Jace Houston briefly explained the process of procuring new consultants for the 2021 planning cycle, as required by the Texas Water Development Board. Ron Neighbors made a motion to authorize the San Jacinto River Authority to request Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) to prepare the 2021 Region H Regional Water Plan on behalf of the Region H Water Planning Group. The motion was seconded by Carl Masterson and carried unanimously.

13. RECEIVE REPORT REGARDING RECENT AND UPCOMING ACTIVITIES RELATED TO COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF THE REGION H PLANNING GROUP

Mr. Afinowicz explained the upcoming presentation scheduled for July 8, 2015, at the Harris-Galveston Subsidence District related to Region H and general regional planning activities.

14. AGENCY COMMUNICATIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Ms. Backhouse with the Texas Water Development Board briefly stated that SWIFT applications will be presented at the July 23, 2015, Texas Water Development Board Meeting. Ms. Backhouse also stated that on July 23, 2015, a public hearing is scheduled related to Interregional Conflicts and that public comments will be accepted until August 4, 2015. Ms. Backhouse explained that the Texas Water Development Board has completed their review of the Region H Initially Prepared Plan.

Mr. Houston explained that the submittal of the 2021 grant application has been approved and that the planning grant contract has been received and will be executed this month.

15. RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Jill Savory relayed her opinion regarding the funding of projects through TWDB. She went on to say that she gave a presentation to the Harris-Galveston and Fort Bend Subsidence Districts in response to the USGS groundwater report. Ms. Savory stated that she challenges the need for such aggressive maneuvers to fund this many projects.

16. NEXT MEETING

Mr. Evans announced that the next regular meeting will be held on October 7, 2015.

17. ADJOURN

Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 11:06 a.m.