

**REGION H WATER PLANNING GROUP
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 4, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

David Bailey, John Bartos, Arthur Bredehoft, Brad Brunett, Jun Chang, Mark Evans, Jace Houston, Ivan Langford, Alisa Max, and Byron Ryder. Cynthia Wagener joined the group following action taken on item 5b.

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Ekaterina Fitos for Yvonne Forrest, Paul Nelson for Ken Kramer, Jason Garrard for Glenn Lord, Susan Santos for Loyd Smith, Veronica Osegueda for Mike Turco, and Jake Hollingsworth for Brandon Wade.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gary Ashmore, W.R. Baker, Carl Burch, Caleb Cooper, Robert Istre, Marvin Marcell, Mike O'Connell, Danny Pierce, and Kevin Ward.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

There were no introductions.

3. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 1, 2023 MEETING.

Mr. Evans made a correction to item 7b., by replacing "Regional Planning Council" with "Inter-Regional Planning Council". Mr. Bredehoft made a motion to approve the minutes with the stated correction. The motion was seconded by Mr. Houston and carried unanimously.

4. RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS 5 THROUGH 7.

There were no comments.

5. PLANNING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

a. Consider and take action to extend the term of existing Region H voting members for an additional five-year term.

Mr. Evans explained the need to extend the term of existing Region H voting members for an additional five-year term. Mr. Langford inquired about the level of interest in the voting members retaining their current positions. Mr. Bartos stated that if there were any issues, they would be reported to the members. Additional discussion ensued. Mr. Langford made a motion to extend the term of existing Region H voting members for an additional five-year term. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bredehoft and carried unanimously.

- b. Receive Nominating Committee report and consider taking action to approve members to fill vacancies on the Region H Water Planning Group (“RHWPG”).**

Mr. Chang explained that the Nominating Committee met and considered the nomination of Cynthia Wagener to the Region H Water Planning Group. He stated that Ms. Wagener expressed a desire to serve as a member representing industries. Mr. Chang stated that the Committee recommended her appointment. Mr. Chang made a motion to accept the Nominating Committee’s recommendation to appoint Ms. Cynthia Wagener to the Region H Water Planning Group representing industries. The motion was seconded by Mr. Houston and carried unanimously.

6. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

- a. Receive update from Consultant Team regarding water demand projections for the 2026 Region H Regional Water Plan (RWP).**

Mr. Taucer provided an update on the water demand projections for the 2026 Region H Regional Water Plan (RWP) stating that the projections are the foundation of the plan. He provided further details related to water demand projections and the proposed adjustments for irrigation, livestock, manufacturing, mining, steam electric power, and municipal.

- b. Receive update from Consultant Team regarding draft surface water and reuse supply availability analyses.**

Mr. Taucer provided a recap of the methodology used and a status update of the draft surface water and reuse supply availability analyses. He stated that the team is currently drafting the supply analyses and identification of exceptions. Further, Mr. Taucer provided information related to surface water evaluations of reservoirs and Run-of-River supplies.

- c. Receive update from Consultant Team and Groundwater Supply Committee regarding supply availability and Modeled Available Groundwater (“MAG”) Peak Factors.**

Mr. Taucer provided a recap of the Groundwater Supply Committee’s review of supply and MAG availabilities for the counties within Region H that are inside and outside of the Subsidence District. Mr. Taucer explained the committee’s recommendations: coordinate with GCDs on interest; provide GMAs with an initial overview of the process; confirm compatibility of factors; and where applicable, proceed with formal approval process.

- d. Receive update from Consultant Team and Groundwater Supply Committee regarding non-MAG groundwater supply availability estimates and consider taking action to approve supply estimates.**

Mr. Taucer explained that there are smaller, less productive formations in the region that the Groundwater Management Areas (“GMAs”), for purposes of establishing their MAG, deem non-relevant for that particular process, however, are still there and productive and are supply sources for more rural, agricultural users. Further, he stated that the Texas Water Development Board (“TWDB”) allows the regional groups considerable latitude for setting the availability the non-relevant formations. Mr. Taucer explained that the Groundwater Supply Committee met and reviewed the current data sources and recommended that the data be updated with more recent data of increased

quality; provide additional RWP information on potential uncertainty; and summarize relative magnitude of supply for context. Mr. Bartos made a motion to approve the methodology used for the supply estimates as recommended by the Groundwater Supply Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bailey. Discussion ensued. The motion carried with all present voting aye.

- e. **Receive report from the Consultant Team regarding the process for addressing potentially infeasible Water Management Strategies (WMS) and WMS Projects and information for the 2021 Region H RWP.**

Mr. Taucer provided information related to new task (4B) for the 2026 RWPs referencing Senate Bill 1511 of the most recent legislative session. He explained that the Water Management Strategies Committee will meet and discuss this issue in detail. Further, Mr. Taucer stated that the legislation requires planning groups to identify any strategies that are now considered infeasible and amend the plan to either remove, adjust, or move them back to a time step that is more feasible. He explained that in the event a project is taking any affirmative step toward implementation, then it is open in terms of permitting, securing funding, etc., therefore it is considered feasible. Mr. Taucer went on to explain potentially infeasible WMS and concluded that there were some reuse projects that could be considered infeasible in Montgomery County.

7. GENERAL UPDATED AND OUTREACH

- a. **Receive update regarding schedule and milestones for the development of the 2026 Region H RWP.**

Mr. Taucer provided an update on various scheduled events and tasks related to the 2026 Region H Regional Water Plan.

- b. **Receive updates from liaisons to other planning groups.**

There were no updates.

- c. **Receive report regarding recent and upcoming activities related to communications and outreach efforts on behalf of the RHWPG.**

Mr. Taucer stated that presentations were made in August at the Texas Groundwater Summit and to the Bayou Preservation Association in September. He also mentioned an upcoming presentation at the Gulf Coast Water Conservation Symposium in February 2024.

- d. **Receive update from TWDB.**

Ms. Rose provided information related to various information on their website, due dates for specific milestones, and items of interest from the legislative session.

- e. **Other agency communications and general information.**

There were no updates.

8. RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS.

There were no public comments.

9. NEXT MEETING.

It was announced that the next Region H Water Planning Group meeting is scheduled for February 7, 2024, with the possibility of a December 6, 2023, meeting.

10. ADJOURN.

Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m.