

MINUTES
REGION H WATER PLANNING GROUP
APRIL 08, 2015
SAN JACINTO RIVER AUTHORITY
GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
1577 DAM SITE ROAD
CONROE, TEXAS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pudge Willcox, Gene Fisseler, James Comin, Glenn Lord, John Blount, John R. Bartos, Jace A. Houston, Mark Evans, David Bailey, Robert Bruner, Art Henson, David Collinsworth, Ronald J. Neighbors, Bob Hebert, and Kathy Turner Jones.

DESIGNATED ALTERNATES: Lisa Lattu for Jun Chang, Abby Paben for Zach Holland, Jim Sims for Kevin Ward, Ken Kramer for Carl Masterson, Paul Nelson for Jimmy Schindewolf, Marvin Marcell for Michael Turco, Ivan Langford for Robert Istre, and Tom Michel for William Teer.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Sarah Backhouse for Lann Bookout.

CALL TO ORDER

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

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Evans welcomed Sarah Backhouse from the Texas Water Development Board as well as alternate voting members present.

2. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2015 MEETING.

Mr. Bartos made a motion to approve the minutes of March 11, 2015. The motion was seconded by Mr. Blount and carried unanimously.

3. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF APRIL 1, 2015 MEETING.

Mr. Lord made a motion to approve the minutes of April 1, 2015. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fisseler and carried unanimously.

4. RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS 5 THROUGH 12. (PUBLIC COMMENTS LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES PER SPEAKER)

Emily Seldomridge, Water Policy and Outreach Specialist with the Galveston Bay Foundation, gave a brief overview of the Foundation. Ms. Seldomridge stated that the estimated costs in the Initially Prepared Plan are much higher than several of the key infrastructure projects. Although this was addressed in the previous meeting, Ms. Seldomridge wanted to make sure it was stated again since water conservation helps stretch supplies, keeps treatment costs down, as well as minimizes energy usage. Ms. Seldomridge stated that there needs to be a reflection of the true costs of water conservation in the plan because the current numbers will be a problem for regional planning, and when it is rolled into the state plan, the cost will inflate what the overall implementation is.

Ms. Seldomridge also asked for clarity on how certain projects are prioritized in the Initially Prepared Plan. Mr. Evans stated that this will be discussed during agenda item 8 and 13.

5. RECEIVE PRESENTATION FROM CONSULTANT TEAM REGARDING THE PROPOSED APPLICATION BY CENTRAL HARRIS COUNTY REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY TO AMEND THE 2011 REGION H REGIONAL WATER PLAN AND CONSIDER APPROVING THE SUBMITTAL OF THE APPLICATION PACKAGE TO TWDB FOR THE DETERMINATION OF MINOR AMENDMENT STATUS.

Mr. Afinowicz explained that this will be the proposed fourth amendment for the 2011 Plan stating that there is a need to add a cost into the plan for the projects that were already represented volume-wise in the Plan that were not previously presented. He also explained that if it is determined to be a minor amendment, a notice will need to be sent fourteen days prior to the public hearing to be held on July 1st with a fourteen day comment period following the meeting if the amendment is adopted. A motion was made by Mr. Bruner to approve submitting the application package to the Texas Water Development Board to determine minor amendment status. The motion was seconded by Mr. Neighbors and carried unanimously.

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

Mr. Afinowicz explained that there is a final submittal date of the draft Initially Prepared Plan of May 1st, 2015, to the Texas Water Development Board. He also explained that there is a public hearing date of July 1st, 2015, for any public comments on the draft Initially Prepared Plan. Mr. Evans clarified that there is a five month period to make and submit comments to the planning group with three opportunities to make public comments. Ms. Backhouse clarified that there is a thirty day posting notice prior to the public hearing with a sixty day comment period after the public hearing for public comments and a ninety day comment period for State and Federal agencies. Mr. Afinowicz explained that database entry and data deliverables are key parts due by July 1, 2015. Mr. Afinowicz also stated that requests for inclusion in the Regional Water Plan should be made in writing.

7. RECEIVE UPDATE FROM CONSULTANT TEAM REGARDING THE SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS RELATED TO THE 2016 REGION H INITIALLY PREPARED REGIONAL WATER PLAN.

Mr. Afinowicz stated that the public hearing dates are tentative for June 16, 2015, at the Sam Houston Memorial Museum, June 23, 2015, at the Houston-Galveston Area Council, and July 1, 2015, at the San Jacinto River Authority.

8. REVIEW COMMENTS RECEIVED AND REVISIONS MADE TO THE DRAFT INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN.

Mr. Afinowicz briefly explained that there have been a number of comments received specifically related to revisions to recommended projects such as long-term Montgomery County supplies, Catahoula brackish groundwater and increased indirect reuse, Montgomery County MUDs 8 and 9 indirect reuse project from the 2011 Regional Water Plan, San Jacinto River Authority impacts to regional return flow reuse, and adding blended sources from the GCWA reuse from COH and Brazos River (Allens Creek) supplies. He stated that all comments will be incorporated into the Initially Prepared Plan.

9. CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE CONSULTANT TEAM TO PREPARE FINAL COPIES OF THE REVISED INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN AND SUBMIT TO TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD NO LATER THAN MAY 1, 2015.

Mr. Houston made a motion to adopt the Initially Prepared Plan, certify the Initially Prepared Plan achieves the long term goals of Region H, as well as, the requirements of the applicable statutes, rules and our Texas Water Development Board contract, that we direct the consultant team to document this motion in a cover letter and submit the letter and Initially Prepared Plan to the Texas Water Development Board prior to May 1, 2015, and

make the Initially Prepared Plan available for public review and comment as required by statute. The motion was seconded by Mr. Henson. Ms. Backhouse stated that a motion needed to be made approving posting notices for public hearings. Mr. Houston amended his motion by adding that the consultant team shall post the statutorily required notices for the public hearings and comment periods. The amended motion was seconded by Mr. Henson and carried unanimously.

10. CONSIDER AUTHORIZING THE REQUEST OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE STUDY OF WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FROM THE TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD.

Mr. Afinowicz explained that funding has been allocated by the Texas Water Development Board based on a methodology including a certain amount of funding that has been allocated just for the purpose related to evaluating and working with the application of Water Management Strategies that came in two different bienniums of funding. A motion was made by Mr. Hebert to request additional funding for the study of Water Management Strategies from the Texas Water Development Board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Houston and carried unanimously.

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

Mr. Afinowicz gave a brief update regarding upcoming presentations at the Association of Water Board Directors and the Rotary Club of Brazos County.

12. AGENCY COMMUNICATIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION.

Sarah Backhouse with the Texas Water Development Board stated that on April 10th, an item will go before their Board to receive authorization to execute contracts for the fifth cycle which need to be executed by both parties by the end of August 2015. Ms. Backhouse also stated that draft contracts are planned to be sent to political subdivisions by May 1, 2015. Ms. Backhouse briefly explained that at the April 29th TWDB meeting, the State Water Plan Amendment Number Three, including the most recent major and minor amendments for the 2011 Region H Plan, will go before the Board, and a public hearing for the amendment will be held on April 27, 2015. Mr. Kramer gave a brief discussion about outside water restrictions and the success it has on savings.

13. RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS.

Keith Koutach, representing Save Water Co., spoke in regards to the company's strategies on eliminating water loss and the projected impact it has on the Houston/Metro residential area. Mr. Evans stated that Mr. Koutach would be available to answer questions after the meeting.

14. NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting will be July 1, 2015.

15. ADJOURN

Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.