

*** Meeting minutes should be considered DRAFT until approved at the next council meeting. ***

Summary of Minutes

Water Conservation Advisory Council Meeting

Date: September 25, 2019

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Location: LCRA Redbud Center – 3601 Lake Austin Blvd. Austin, TX 78703

Meeting chaired by: Karen Guz, Presiding Officer

Meeting Facilitators: Josh Sendejar, Council Staff Support

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| <i>Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</i> | Jennifer Allis | <i>Institutional Water Users</i> | Bill Hoffman |
| <i>Texas Department of Agriculture</i> | Alternate David Villareal | <i>Professional Organizations Focused on Water Conservation</i> | Sarah Schlessinger |
| <i>Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i> | Alternate Kimberly Hordeski | <i>Higher Education</i> | Tim Loftus |
| <i>Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board</i> | -- | <i>Agricultural Groups</i> | Charles Ring |
| <i>Texas Water Development Board</i> | Alternate Sam Hermitte | <i>Refining and Chemical Manufacturing</i> | Craig Elam |
| <i>Regional Water Planning Groups</i> | Aubrey Spear | <i>Electric Generation</i> | Alternate Greg Carter |
| <i>Federal Agencies</i> | -- | <i>Mining and Recovery of Minerals</i> | CJ Tredway |
| <i>Municipalities</i> | Karen Guz | <i>Landscape Irrigation and Horticulture</i> | Anai Padilla |
| <i>Groundwater Conservation Districts</i> | Leah Martinsson | <i>Water Control and Improvement Districts</i> | -- |
| <i>River Authorities</i> | Valerie Miller | <i>Rural Water Users</i> | Celia Eaves |
| <i>Environmental Groups</i> | Ken Kramer | <i>Municipal Utility Districts</i> | Donna Howe |
| <i>Irrigation Districts</i> | Wayne Halbert | | |

Also present: Alternates – Eddy Trevino, Whitney Milberger, Jessica Woods, Karen Magid; Interested Parties – Doug Christensen, Carole Baker, Dan Strub, Chris Charles, Isabel Martinez, Claire Boyer, Emily Morales, Sarah Gorton, Scott Swanson, Ryan Skrobarczyk, Heather Rose, James Schiele; TWDB Staff – John Sutton, Shae Luther, Travis Brice.

** Documents can be found at: <http://www.savetexaswater.org/meeting/council-meetings.asp>**

1. Introduction

The meeting began at 10:31 a.m.

2. Presentation: Bill Christiansen, Alliance for Water Efficiency: Hiding on Rooftops. Cooling Towers and the Enormous Savings Potential.

Presentation slides can be found at: <https://savetexaswater.org/meeting/doc/2019-09-25-Cooling-Tech-WCAC-Christiansen.pdf>

3. Approval of minutes from the August 8, 2019 meeting

Minutes were approved with minor changes

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- Under agenda item 1. Introduction, meeting listed as beginning at 10:30 p.m., rather than a.m.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Update from Texas Water Development Board

Two Municipal BMPs are currently being reviewed by leadership at TWDB (Enforcement of Irrigation Standards and System Water Audit & Water Loss).

TWDB has begun planning 23 workshops focusing on water loss and water conservation for the Spring of 2020.

Josh introduced the new/re-appointed members to the Council, these include:

- John Foster, representing the Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board
- Leah Martinsson, representing Groundwater Conservation Districts
- Wayne Halbert, representing Irrigation Districts
- Bill Hoffman, representing Institutional Water Users
- Sarah Schlessinger, representing Professional Organizations Focused on Water Conservation
- Charles Ring, representing Agricultural Groups
- CJ Tredway, representing Mining and Recovery of Minerals
- Dustan Compton, representing Water Control and Improvement Districts

6. Reports from Workgroups

*Reports integrated into Agenda Item 7.

7. Discussion on Potential Legislative Recommendations for the 2020 Legislative Report.

Karen Guz began the conversation by stating that at the end of the August WCAC meeting, she asked the Workgroup Chairs to hold meetings and begin to consider legislative recommendations and content for the legislative report.

Agriculture: With Mr. Charles Ring just being appointed to the Council, the Agricultural workgroup has not had the opportunity to meet to determine leadership and begin discussion on legislative recommendations and/or content for the report.

Mr. Ring expressed his eagerness for beginning to work with the workgroup and stated that with his work with the Texas Corn Producers a great deal of resources are put into water efficiency.

Commercial & Institutional: Mr. Bill Hoffman stated that the Water Audit Guidance for Commercial Buildings document has been released.

Karen Guz asked If there are many utilities who are attempting to get a handle on their CI accounts.

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Mr. Hoffman noted that there is some movement in that direction, and he will be delivering a presentation on that topic at Water Smart Innovations next week.

Municipal: Karen Guz noted that the Municipal workgroup had a meeting on September 24th and began discussion topics for legislative recommendations. The first topic revolved around the need for clarification regarding HB 2439.

Mr. Ken Kramer asked if there had been any discussion on seeking clarification from the Attorney General.

KGuz noted that there had been discussion that asking the AG for clarification could yield an unsatisfactory answer if not asked the correct way. The idea was brought up to visit with the bill authors first and then see if a clarification could be proposed to the legislature.

KKramer noted that it would be wise to discuss the issue with the bill authors first. However, rather than go through the legislative process again with the clarification, asking the AG for clarification with the intent of the bill authors noted might be an easier route.

Another topic of discussion was a Water Conservation Education/Training Program.

Jessica Woods mentioned that as Mike Howe discussed at the last WCAC meeting, TAWWA is looking to begin a program to provide a baseline of training for water conservation professionals. The effort has just started, and the first phase of the program will hopefully be complete by next year.

KGuz stated that it would seem with the requirement to designate a conservation coordinator, this provides an audience for the education program.

The final point discussed was Municipal BMPs. With the two BMPs currently being reviewed by TWDB, that leaves the workgroup to think of: what's next? what's missing? and what needs updating?

Public Awareness: Karen Guz gave the update for the Public Awareness workgroup. The workgroup plans to continue the Blue Legacy Award recognition program.

Additionally, Sarah Schlessinger gave an update on the Public Awareness campaign. The Texas Water Foundation will be taking charge of efforts to further develop the campaign. Stakeholder research will be complete by the end of the year. A pilot program will begin in the spring of 2020.

SSchlessinger also gave an update on the topic of a resource library. One of the Council's charges is to develop a water resource library. Up until this point, the Council has partnered with AWE to keep a library resources available. However, AWE has recently changed their website, with many of its available resources now being held within a membership space. The Texas Water Foundation is in the process of updating their website as well, with plans to include its own resource library. The goal will be to house resources in 'buckets'

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pertaining to certain subjects, with water conservation being one of them, providing resources as well as a directory of who to turn to for further information.

SSchlessinger stated the Texas Water Foundation would be happy to partner with the Council on this effort, and potentially asking the Council to provide a sounding board for cultivating resources needing to be housed within the library.

Sam Hermitte commented that a policy should be developed as far as what resources will be included and how they would be evaluated. This policy should also be made publicly available to avoid any perception of endorsement for private or commercial vendors.

Water Loss: Jennifer Walker stated that the Water Loss workgroup is still considering the effort of a pilot study of data validation. The workgroup will look at activities from other states and consider a recommendation for funding for a pilot study for Level 1 validation.

JWalker also stated the workgroup is interested in looking at Water Loss Thresholds used in financial assistance and how the program is progressing.

Dan Strub commented that with water loss thresholds established, and water loss goals being discussed for certain regional water plans, water loss goals cannot truly be established without proper validation.

Wholesale: The workgroup met prior to the Council's August meeting. A follow up email has been sent out within the last week, reminding the participants to begin thinking about what water conservation efforts are being carried out throughout the state and sending that information to Dustan Compton, in preparation for the legislative report.

Valerie Miller added that the workgroup is also planning on updating the Wholesale Education & Outreach BMP.

8. Discussion and Potential Action regarding the Procedure & Timeline for Development of the 2020 Legislative Report

Karen Guz asked if the Council believed that the draft timeline Josh drafted was appropriate for the development of legislative recommendations and the legislative report.

(Draft Timeline can be found here <https://savetexaswater.org/meeting/doc/Draft-Timeline-for-2020-WCAC-Report.pdf>.)

Ken Kramer commented that the timeline looks good. However, the Council needs to be sure that it works with the development of state agencies' Legislative Appropriations Requests.

Sam Hermitte will check with TWDB representatives and report back to the Council.

Sarah Schelssinger commented that advocacy groups will begin convening in August, and it would be helpful to have those informative/educational materials in hand in an effort to collaborate with and inform those groups of the Council's recommendations.

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Aubrey Spear commented that the Regional Water Planning Groups' preliminary regional water plans will be due March 3rd. Some regions are already reviewing draft plans. It may be a good idea to work toward reaching out to the RWPGs in regard to the WCAC recommendations. KKramer suggested that perhaps a letter can be drafted to each of the RWPGs informing them of our efforts and inquiring what water conservation efforts each region is considering for inclusion in their regional water plan.

KKramer also commented that while initial plans are due in March, there will be a public comment period where additional changes can be made.

A motion was passed for the presiding officer, Karen Guz, to draft a letter for consideration to the Regional Water Planning Groups, advising them of the Council's report and potential recommendations.

KKramer raised a question regarding the process on developing recommendations not initiated within the workgroups.

KGuz stated that while recommendations would not be discounted for not starting within a workgroup, it would be ideal for the workgroups to discuss any and all recommendations pertaining to them to fully understand the needs and goals pertaining to those recommendations.

KKramer recommended that a timeframe be implemented for the submission of ideas for legislative recommendations.

KGuz agreed and asked the Council what timeframe would be appropriate. It was discussed and Friday, October 25th was determined to be the deadline to inform Josh of any potential legislative recommendations. Josh would then forward the information to the appropriate Workgroup Chair, who would bring it up in an upcoming workgroup meeting.

9. Other Business

Mr. Bill Hoffman mentioned that the Survey of University Programs focused on water conservation effort has begun, additional meeting will be taking place soon and progress will be reported to Council at upcoming meetings.

Mr. Hoffman also noted that SECO will be revising their water conservation standards within the coming months.

Karen Guz mentioned the One Water Summit which took place last week in Austin. The topic of water equity was prevalent in many of the sessions. The San Antonio delegation was very interested in the topic of affordability and a follow-up group will most likely meet to discuss the topic further. Anyone interested in the topic is invited to join.

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10. Announcement of Conferences and Events

October 2-3, 2019; Las Vegas, NV: Water Smart Innovations

<https://www.watersmartinnovations.com/>

November 7, 2019; Arlington, TX: North Texas Regional Water Conservation Symposium

<https://sustainability.uta.edu/event/13th-annual-regional-north-texas-water-conservation-symposium/>

December 3-5, 2019; Nashville, TN: North American Water Loss Conference

<https://www.awwa.org/Events-Education/Water-Loss>

11. Future Meeting Dates and Locations

Tuesday, November 19th

Location TBD

12. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.