

Water Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Summary of Minutes

Date: February 6, 2025

Time: 10:30 am – 1:00 pm

Location: Virtual meeting. The public was welcome to attend in person at the Conservation Conference Room CR-A238, San Antonio Water System Office, 2800 US Hwy 281 N., San Antonio, TX 78212

Meeting Chaired by: Karen Guz, Presiding Officer

Meeting Facilitator: Denise Livingston, Council Staff Support

<i>Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</i>	Leslie Patterson Vacant	<i>Institutional Water Users</i>	Bill Hoffman Eddy Trevino
<i>Texas Department of Agriculture</i>	David Villarreal Vacant	<i>Professional Organizations Focused on Water Conservation</i>	Sarah Schlessinger Colin McDonald
<i>Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i>	Marty Kelly Vanessa Chapman	<i>Higher Education</i>	Robert Mace Allen Berthold
<i>Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board</i>	John Foster Mitch Conine	<i>Agricultural Groups</i>	Charles Ring John Bender
<i>Texas Water Development Board</i>	Sam Marie Hermitte Erika Mancha	<i>Refining and Chemical Manufacturing</i>	Craig Elam Justin Newton
<i>Regional Water Planning Groups</i>	Aubrey Spear Wayne Wilson	<i>Electric Generation</i>	Greg Carter Ryan Bayle
<i>Federal Agencies</i>	Troy Hill Salvador Gandara	<i>Mining and Recovery of Minerals</i>	CJ Tredway Cory Pomeroy
<i>Municipalities</i>	Karen Guz, Chair Joyce Warren	<i>Landscape Irrigation and Horticulture</i>	Whitney Milberger Dean Minchillo
<i>Groundwater Conservation Districts</i>	Adam Foster Stephanie Keith	<i>Water Control and Improvement Districts</i>	Dustan Compton Linda Christie
<i>River Authorities</i>	Stacy Pandey Amy Muttoni	<i>Rural Water Users</i>	Kyle Eppler Mary Alice Boehm McKaughan
<i>Environmental Groups</i>	Jennifer Walker Marisa Bruno	<i>Municipal Utility Districts</i>	Donna Howe Earl Foster
<i>Irrigation Districts</i>	Wayne Halbert Tom McLemore		

Also present: Alicia Lee, Annika Schiller, Chris Loft, Christina Tieyah, Isabelle Martinez, Jacie Lewis, Jennifer Barr, Maria Vela, Natalie Houston, Paige Bain, Rene Perez, Rusty Smith, Shannon Hamilton, Suzanne Williams, Virginia Collier **TWDB Staff** –Antonio Delgado, Candice DeLello, Charlotte Gilbert, Denise Livingston, Jane Bullan, Jessica Paz, John Sutton, Karen Sanders, Mark Mathis, Marla Heger, Shae Luther, Taylor Nickell, Temple McKinnon, Yun Cho.

1. The meeting started at 10:31 am

Water Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Summary of Minutes

2. Roll call
 - A quorum of the Advisory Council was present at the meeting.
3. Review November 7, 2024, meeting minutes
 - No members voiced comments on the November meeting minutes. No action was taken on the minutes. Minutes will be approved at the next in-person meeting.
4. Public Comment
 - No public comments.
5. TWDB Update – Erika Mancha gave TWDB update on the following:
 - Water for Texas conference.
 - The water loss validation program officially started January 1. All utilities that have an active financial obligation or are applying for financial assistance from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) are required to have their annual water loss audits validated to improve the quality of the data. Water loss audit validation is a process that identifies uncertainty in the water loss audit and, as a result, provides more reliable data.
 - TWDB conservation webinars:
 - i. WLUC Water loss, use and conservation webinars. February 12 and March 11
 - ii. Agricultural Water Conservation Grants informational webinar. March 19
- 2022 annual water use estimates by water use and geographical boundary in Texas is now available on the TWDB website
<https://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/waterusesurvey/estimates/index.asp>
- Applications are currently being accepted for Agriculture water Conservation
- TWDB invites submissions for the intended use plans for the:
 - State revolving fund “general activities” program
 - Drinking water SRF
 - Clean water SRF
6. Legislative session
 - Discussion was held regarding the Council’s funding recommendations outlined in the 2024 Legislative Report
 - The Senate hearing on Natural Resource agencies is Tuesday, February 11. Jennifer Walker asked anyone that is willing and able (non-lobbying) to voice support of the agricultural water conservation fund and the TexMesonet.
 - A reminder was stated, to avoid the appearance of Council members lobbying, members should only refer to the Council’s legislative report as a resource and provide further clarification on the report if needed.
7. Workgroup Updates:
 - Karen requested each workgroup to report on 2025 activities being coordinated to fulfill goals for the 2026 legislative report.
 - i. Workgroup meetings
 - ii. Potential presentations
 - iii. Surveys -It was discussed that workgroups conduct any potential surveys for the next legislative report prior to March 31, 2026.
 - PACE -[Property Assessed Clean Energy](#). Proposed presentation for a combined workgroup meeting to be held in April timeframe. Bill will assist Denise in coordinating.

Water Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Summary of Minutes

- Agriculture – John Bender - No meeting planned at this time and probably will not schedule a meeting until after the legislative session. Agriculture partners are working to gain support for the agriculture loan and grant program. Texas Agriculture Council, groundwater districts, irrigation districts, and higher education institutions.
- Commercial and Institution
 - i. The first national certification training for CI auditors was held in Ontario California in January.
 - ii. Currently, Bill is coordinating the next CI Auditor training to be held in Austin.
 - iii. TAWWA Conservation and Reuse division has created an ICI work group with Kevin Kluge as the lead.
 - iv. Discussion held on commercial, institutional, and industrial categories that may be used by municipalities.
 - v. Discussion on the impacts of outlawing cooling towers. The use of other methods may be more water conservative but not as energy efficient. In addition, the use of ammonia and other refrigerants increase costs and can also pose potential fire risk.
- E-LaWN – The Efficient Landscape and Watering Nexus has held two meetings since last November.
 - i. November 21, 2024, Chris Maxwell-Gaines, Innovative Water Solutions, presented on rainwater harvesting and non-potable landscape irrigation. Discussion on clear definitions of non-potable, requirements for back-flow prevention, rebate programs, and the advancement of rainwater harvesting.
 - ii. January 9, 2025, the City of Frisco's irrigation inspectors discussed a boots on the ground look at their irrigation inspection program. A follow-up meeting will be held Feb. 13, 2025, to continue the discussion.
 - iii. TCEQ will coordinate staff representation from water supply, enforcement, and occupational licensing divisions at a future E-LaWN meeting to discuss potable water definitions, rules, and irrigation enforcement.
 - iv. An eighth-grade student reach out to the Council from Bob Lanier Middle School requesting assistance with conservation webinars for a class project. Whitney is working with him to host Zoom meeting to teach proper landscape watering practices and indoor water conservation.
- Industrial – No report
- Municipal
 - i. An ongoing discussion was held with TCEQ regarding the updating of the TCEQ drought contingency plan template. A meeting will be scheduled after the legislative session.
- Water Loss
 - i. TAWWA water loss committee has had a couple of meetings.
 - ii. Water loss is now a separate strategy in the regional water plans.
 - iii. The water loss group will be reviewing the progress of implemented water loss programs, including validation, over the next biennium to include in the next legislative report.

Water Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Summary of Minutes

- iv. Discussion was held on increased infrastructure failure due to drought conditions. Workgroup meeting discussion item to determine the focus and outcome of asset management in a time of drought.
- Public Awareness
 - i. The 2024 Blue Legacy Awards were a success at the Water for Texas conference. The slide presentation will be posted on the Save Texas Water website.
 - ii. The BLA committee will have a follow-up meeting to discuss successes and how to improve application and process.
- Wholesale/Rural Water
 - i. The wholesale work group will have a meeting Feb. 27 at 10:00 am
 - ii. Two BMPs are being developed.
 - Financial incentives directly to customer end user – Stacy Pandey lead.
 - Wholesale Water Conservation education and public awareness – Dustan Compton lead
- 8. Announcement of Conferences and Events
 - [Central Texas Water Conservation Symposium](#)
 - [Gulf Coast Water Conservation Symposium](#)
- 9. Future Meetings:
 - TBD
- 10. Adjourn – Meeting was adjourned at 12:23 pm

Information mentioned in the meeting:

[TWDB Dashboard](#)

[Texas PACE Authority](#)

[TWDB Legislative Appropriations Requests](#)

[TWDB Legislative Priorities](#)

[Central Texas Water Conservation Symposium](#)

[Gulf Coast Water Conservation Symposium](#)