

Water Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Summary of Minutes

Date: April 17

Time: 10:30 am – 1:00 pm

Location: Virtual

The public is welcome to attend in person at 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 Vacant	<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: Alex Flashing, Annika Schiller, Carly Rotzler, Chris Loft, Christina Tieyah, Christopher Perry, Curtis Smith, Daniel Nix, Dub Taylor, Jennifer Barr, Jennifer Nations, Juan Soulas, Julia Stanford, Kyle Wright, Lexlie Ramirez Garcia, Lindsey Elkins, Margo Watson, Mary Abercrombie, Moises Solis, Natalie Houston, Paige Bain, Patrick Shriver, Paula Szymanski, Rene

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Perez, Ruby Perez, Rusty Smith, Sarah Kinkle, Sarah Riggins, Trent Jennings **TWDB Staff** – Denise Livingston, Jessica Paz, John Sutton, Karen Sanders, Temple McKinnon, Yun Cho.

1. The meeting started at 10:32 am
2. Roll call- A quorum of the Advisory Council was present at the meeting.
 - Lindsey Elkin sat in for Marty Kelly, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Alternate Vanessa Chapman is no longer with the agency.
3. Review February 6, 2025, Meeting Minutes – There was no discussion or recommended changes to the February meeting minutes. Action on the minutes will take place at the next in-person meeting.
4. Public Comment – No public comments.
5. TWDB Update – Sam Hermitte
 - Staff are currently reviewing the draft regional water plans.
 - TWDB had kick-off meetings with University of Texas Austin Bureau of Economic Geology (BEG) for the Outdoor Water Use study and Exempt Groundwater Use; two of the three studies identified in Charge 6 (Monitor the implementation of water conservation strategies by water users included in the regional water plans) of the Council's legislative report. The following are the Council members representing WCAC in the studies stakeholder meetings.
 - i. *Assess Municipal Population and Water Demand Projections - Joyce Warren, Donna Howe, Earl Foster*
 - ii. *Outdoor Water Use Study - Robert Mace, Whitney Milberger, Dean Minchillo*
 - iii. *Assess Non-surveyed and Exempt Groundwater Use- Adam Foster*
 - Swift Program
 - i. Received 28 abridged applications
 - ii. Three applications were water loss projects
 - iii. 11 entities will require water loss validation
 - Required reporting
 - i. Water use survey – 74% submittal (Due March 1)
 - ii. Water loss audit – 40% submittal (Due May 1)
 - iii. Annual conservation report – 19% submittal (Due May 1)
 - iv. Water conservation plan – 1% submittal (Due May 1)
 - Water loss validations. – As of January 1, 2025. Any entity having a current financial obligation with TWDB or applying for financial assistance is required to have their water loss audit validated. Currently, TWDB has over 500 existing loan obligation entities and incoming loan applications.
 - TWDB will give a brief presentation of the Water loss Dashboard at the next Council meeting. The dashboard is located:
https://www.twdb.texas.gov/conservation/municipal/waterloss/index_waterloss.asp
6. Legislative recommendations – Discussion was held on the Council's legislative funding recommendations.
 - Continue funding for agricultural water conservation grant and loan programs (no less than \$15M) –

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- i. The House included funding \$6 million but no FTEs in their budget.
 - ii. The Senate included \$3 million but no FTEs.
 - iii. To voice support - Article 6 is the natural resources article of the budget.
 - Representative Armando Walle
 - Senator Robert Nichols
 - Dedicate financial resources to support a statewide ET network into the TexMesonet program
 - i. The House included funding in their budget.
 - ii. The Senate did not include any funding.
7. Work Group Assignments: Any workgroup meetings to coordinate for 2025?
- Agricultural – no report.
 - Commercial and Institutional – Bill Hoffman
 - i. Commercial and institutional auditors' planning. Tentative plans are as follows:
 - level 1 – early September in San Marcos
 - level 2 - October time frame in South Austin
 - ii. Upcoming workgroup meeting May 20 – Presentation by Dub Taylor on Property Assessed Clean Energy, PACE.
 - iii. TAWWA Business and Industrial Conservation Group kick-off meeting. Chair Kevin Kluge. Tuesday April 29, 2025, at 2:00 pm.
 - iv. EPA WaterSense has released their latest benchmarking study.
 - E-LaWN -BMPs or recommendation possibilities – Whitney Milberger/Dean Minchillo.
 - i. TCEQ presented at the last meeting on February 13, 2025.
 - Non-potable licensing and permitting.
 - Grey water usage for landscape irrigation.
 - Recommendations will be presented at the next E-Lawn meeting.
 - ii. Next meeting will start to focus enhancements and methodologies to make water conservation plans more impactful. Check on BMP Enforce TCEQ rules on licensing.
 - iii. Discussion was held on TCEQ's irrigation licensing program and irrigation committee.
 - Industrial – no report
 - Municipal
 - i. TCEQ DCP template update coordination efforts in progress for post legislative session. Current bills in session could impact updates.
 - ii. Discussion was held on creating a cooperative webinar focused on drought enforcement, drought educations and messaging.
 - Partnering with TAWWA and Alliance for Water Efficiency.
 - Discussion on DCP and WCP templates.
 - LCRA is working on DCPs for golf courses. USGA released water conservation guidance.
 - Public Awareness

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- i. Donna Howe and Collin McDonald gave a report on the Blue Legacy Awards committee meeting.
 - Lessons learned from the 2024 awards process
 - Changing format to four awards for entities to apply for with the “Best in Flow” to be judges choice.
 - Updates to the 2026 awards application.
 - Possible panel discussion of past recipients, “Where are they now,” lessons learned, etc.
 - Discussed the need to increase judging panel.
 - Water Loss – No report. Water loss and Municipal workgroup meeting will be coordinated after legislative session. Items for next meeting:
 - i. Asset management
 - ii. Proactive infrastructure investment
 - Wholesale/Rural Water – Dustan Compton and Stacy Pandey
 - i. Two workgroup meetings were held since the last Council meeting focusing on draft BMPs.
 - Wholesale water conservation education and public awareness. -Dustan Compton lead
 - Financial incentives directly to customer end users. -Stacy Pandey lead
 - ii. Working on a survey to wholesale providers to identify unique measures, successful enforcement methods, successes, and challenges from a wholesale perspective.
8. Other business
- Bill Hoffman mentioned needing to look at plumbing code changes and funding for funding classwork and research at the university level.
 - i. Water efficiency
 - ii. Conservation
9. Announcement of Conferences and Events
- [EarthX](#), Dallas, April 21-25
 - [One Water Summit](#), Corpus Christi, May 22, 2025
 - [Gulf Coast Water](#) Conservation symposium, Houston, May 21, 2025
 - Ag Water Sustainability Summit, Lubbock, TX October 14-15, 2025
 - [Groundwater Summit](#), San Antonio, August 19-21
10. Future Meetings:
- TBD
11. The meeting ended at 11:53 am

Links of interest shared in meeting:

USGA water conservation playbook: <https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/course-care/water-resource-center/usga-water-conservation-playbook.html>