

Summary of Minutes

Water Conservation Advisory Council Meeting

Date: Wednesday July 23, 2008
Time: 10:08am - 12:35 pm
Location: REJ Building 1500 North Congress Ave. Austin, TX

Meeting called by: C.E. Williams, Presiding Officer
Meeting Facilitators: TWDB support staff

Council Members in attendance are listed below:

Scott Swanson	Comer Tuck	Greg Carter	Ken Kramer	Gene Montgomery	Jim Parks
C. E. Williams	Kelly Hall	H. W. Bill Hoffman	Steven Bednarz	Richard Egg	
Carole Baker	Karl Fennessey	Cindy Loeffler	Karen Guz	Gary Walker	

Alternates in place of Council Members:

Phillip Johnson sitting in for Vivien Allen John Chisholm sitting in for Donna Howe
Linda Christie sitting in for Jim Oliver

At 10:08 am the Council meeting was called to order by the Presiding Officer C.E. Williams. The presiding officer welcomed the Water Conservation Advisory Council (Council), the alternates, and the audience. The first item in the agenda was the approval of the previous council meeting minutes. The previous minutes were approved. The floor was opened for public comment for which there was none.

The floor was turned over to Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) staff for an update on the current status of project efforts. It was reported that:

- www.savetexaswater.org website ~ Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD) had developed several logos and the workgroup voted on a favorite one. This logo was proposed to the whole Council and a motion was carried to implement this logo for the website (Appendix A).
- Council's "Conservation Activities Survey" ~ TWDB staff is working on drafting up some questions for sections II & II of the online survey. Those drafted questions will be referred to the respective workgroup for further discussion before the next Council meeting.
- TWDB's Public Awareness Program ~ TWDB staff has developed a Water IQ user agreements and usage guidelines, which were provided in the Council's packets (Appendix B). The documents were developed to provide guidelines for the use of the Water IQ logo and to formally show support for the Water IQ program. There is no cost associated with this agreement. It was stated that if an entity has a link to Water IQ on their website, then they are encouraged to fill out a user agreement. If an entity already has a local awareness program and they also support Water IQ then they are also asked to fill out a user agreement. The user agreement should not be a limiting contractual agreement. It is

intended to provide information to the TWDB on how the entity plans to use Water IQ. These documents will be available on the website.

A question was asked about the relationship between the Water IQ website and the Save Texas Water website. The Water IQ website will be more like a TWDB agency website to provide campaign information, resources and it will house the zip code search. The Save Texas Water website will house all the Council information and provide more information on other policy oriented topics. Save Texas Water would be a possible option for housing the Online Research Library. Both websites will have a link to the other website, both will be owned by the TWDB, and both will be managed by TWDB staff.

The next item on the agenda was a report on the presiding chair's letter to the Regional Water Planning Groups (RWPG). Based on a motion from Workgroup 3 ~ Regional Plan Implementation, the Council's presiding chair prepared a letter asking each RWPG to provide information on their water conservation strategy implementation. So far, three response letters have been received and shared with the Council (Appendix C). It was suggested that one of the next steps of the Council could be to use these response letters as a key finding and legislative recommendation. There is a limited amount of resources that the Council has available to refer to and the Council would like to recommend an approach to have that data collected.

It was stated that there are several approaches that could be proposed. The best proposed option would be for the RWPGs to collect this data themselves if they were funded in such a way that they could accomplish the data collection. Another option would be for the RWPGs to collect the information through hired consultants. Another option would be for the TWDB to collect the data if they had funding and support staff to do so.

In the past, planning groups have had to acquire information as part of their duties. The planning groups would need to be given a set of uniform tools to acquire this information. One of the first steps is to find out if the individual Water User Groups are actually implementing the strategies identified for them in the regional plans. The second step is to measure to what level they are implementing and how much water is being saved by each strategy.

From these response letters we can gather the RWPGs don't have enough financial resources to do the things they are being asked to do now. Any additional requests of them would build a greater need for more funding and resources to accomplish all their tasks.

A comment was made that as the Council writes a recommendation, they should include more details as to what the RWPGs can do now, what they can not do, and emphasize that if the data collection ability is to go any further there will need to be more funding and resources.

The spokespersons for each workgroup gave updates on each of the workgroup's activities and went over the status of their draft legislative reports. Overall the

spokespersons mentioned that they are working on refining the wording of their legislative recommendations. Most of the workgroups plan on incorporating supporting material or documents they have developed. Karen Guz gave a brief visual demonstration of the effort that the Metrics & Trends workgroup is working on. The Council spent some time discussing the rewording of key findings and recommendations. A comment was made that as the workgroup reports become merged together, the Council will need to focus on prioritization of their recommendations. It was suggested that as the workgroups are able to finalize the wording of their reports the TWDB staff will make the first effort of combining the reports and bringing some uniform organization to the document. After that it might be a good idea for the spokespersons and possibly others to decide on the prioritization of the recommendations and key findings.

There was a break in the meeting for a 40 minute lunch.

It was suggested that in October 2008 or November 2008, that the presiding chair and spokespersons arrange for a meeting with the Texas Senate and House Natural Resources Committee Chairs to brief them on the content of the Legislative Report. The Council felt that this would be an important opportunity to profile the activity of the Council and the efforts of the state.

The floor was then open to member discussion of other topics. Gene Montgomery suggested that there might be some opportunity to collaborate with the energy sector on public awareness messaging. State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) solicits project ideas for conservation annually. TWDB Staff member shared with the Council that there may be a contact that might be willing to do a presentation at one of the future Council meetings about SECO and their program.

The Council discussed the scheduling of conference calls and the next steps for finalizing the legislative report.

Council meeting was adjourned at 12:35 pm.