

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

## Summary of Minutes

### Water Conservation Advisory Council Meeting

Date:

Time:

Location:

Meeting chaired by:

Meeting Facilitators:

<i>Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</i>	Jennifer Allis*	<i>Institutional Water Users</i>	Bill Hoffman*
<i>Texas Department of Agriculture</i>	Alternate David Villarreal*	<i>Professional Organizations Focused on Water Conservation</i>	Sarah Schlessinger*
<i>Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i>	---	<i>Higher Education</i>	Robert Mace*
<i>Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board</i>	Alternate Mitch Conine	<i>Agricultural Groups</i>	Charles Ring
<i>Texas Water Development Board</i>	Alternate Erika Mancha*	<i>Refining and Chemical Manufacturing</i>	Craig Elam
<i>Regional Water Planning Groups</i>	Aubrey Spear	<i>Electric Generation</i>	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>	---
<i>Groundwater Conservation Districts</i>	Leah Martinsson*	<i>Water Control and Improvement Districts</i>	Dustan Compton
<i>River Authorities</i>	Valerie Miller*	<i>Rural Water Users</i>	Kyle Eppler*
<i>Environmental Groups</i>	Jennifer Walker*	<i>Municipal Utility Districts</i>	Donna Howe*
<i>Irrigation Districts</i>	---		

Also present: Alternates – John Bender; Interested Parties – Natalie Houston, Chris Loft, Kevin Kluge, Jennifer Nations, Tony S., Joyce W.; TWDB Staff – Temple McKinnon, John Sutton, Katie Dahlberg, Elizabeth McCoy, Ron Ellis, Daniel Rice, Mark Mathis, Shae Luther, Travis Brice.

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

#### 1. Introduction

The meeting began at 10:33 a.m.

#### 2. Approval of minutes from the March 2, 2022 meeting

David Villarreal motioned to accept the minutes as written  
Jennifer Walker seconded the motion

The minutes were accepted as written.

#### 3. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

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#### 4. TWDB Update

- LUC, the on-line reporting application has opened for submission of 2021 reports, due May 1, 2022.
  - Water Loss Audits – 223 of 740 entities have submitted an audit as of 4/4/2022.
  - Annual Conservation Reports – 151 of 855 entities have submitted a report as of 4/4/2022.
- Last Water Loss, Use & Conservation webinar for the spring will be held on Tuesday, April 12, and currently has 33 registrants.
- Staff presented an enhanced water loss program proposal at last week's board work session. Board showed support for staff to continue to work on details. Final program approval will be part of the SRF IUP public comment and board approval process later this year.
- Staff will be making recommendations to the board for \$1.2 million in Agriculture Water Conservation Grants in May.
- Katie Dahlberg has been presenting to Regional Water Planning Groups on the projections methodologies used in the 2026 Regional Water Plans, with focus on the draft projections for livestock, manufacturing, and steam-electric power. The data is available online:  
<https://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/data/projections/2027/projections.asp>
- Historical 2010-2020 population, net use, and draft gallons per capita daily by utility-based Water User Group was shared with Regional Water Planning Groups for their review and potential revision. An interactive dashboard with utility boundaries is available online:  
<https://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/data/projections/2027/municipal.asp>
- TWDB is currently conducting a mining water use study with UT Bureau of Economic Geology. The draft technical report was submitted on March 15, 2022 and is currently under review. The final technical report will be submitted June 15, 2022. More information is available online:  
<https://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/data/projections/MiningStudy/index.asp>

#### 5. Workgroup Updates and Discussion of 2022 Legislative Recommendations:

##### a. Agricultural:

Charles Ring began the workgroup update by stating the workgroup has met twice since the last council meeting. Legislative recommendations have been the key topic of discussion.

John Bender noted that the workgroup is working with the Wholesale workgroup regarding ET data and a reliable statewide network. In addition, the workgroup would like to include a recommendation that would replenish the Agricultural Conservation Fund utilized for TWDB's Ag Conservation Grants program, as well as the Ag Loan program.

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The Ag Grant program is the main mechanism for funding ag water conservation projects. Current projections indicate the fund will not be able to fund projects at its current level by 2025. Action will need to be taken soon in order to ensure no lapse in program activities. It was also noted that in addition to funds being a limiting factor for the program, staffing to support the implementation and management of associated contracts is also a factor. John B. noted he hopes for a strong recommendation from the council, and hopefully a council recommendation would echo a recommendation from TWDB.

Sarah Schlessinger asked if there were any data on the recipients of the program's funding as it relates to rural communities. Given recent findings regarding rural communities receiving state funds, data showing the Ag Grants programs provides significant funding to those communities may help justify the recommendation.

Jennifer Walker noted that the table included in the 2020 WCAC Report should be updated to reflect current conditions of the fund, and associated water savings.

Karen Guz asked if the workgroup would support a recommendation regarding statewide ET data. Both Charles Ring and John Bender noted yes, the workgroup supports that effort.

**b. Commercial & Institutional**

Bill Hoffman noted that the Alliance for Water Efficiency (AWE) has published their study on cooling towers is now available to members of AWE.

In addition, new versions of several plumbing codes are being released. These updates include significant updates for commercial/institutional facilities as well as alternative water supplies.

Training on Commercial Water Auditing is still going on in New Mexico, and a few other states. Mr. Hoffman noted that while there is no national organization administering the certification, this effort could be suitable for a legislative recommendation.

Mr. Hoffman also noted that he gave two presentations at the 2022 Texas Water Conference, he will send PDF copies of the presentations to Josh for anyone interested.

Sarah Schlessinger asked if there would be any interest in a legislative recommendation requiring larger CI facility to have rainwater harvesting or other reclamation technologies.

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Discussion then highlighted Austin for having a requirement for larger facilities to have a certain amount of rainwater harvesting and/or reclamation technologies. This measure will become mandatory in December 2023. Others brought up examples of facilities with impressive/exemplary reclamation efforts, including the Credit Human in San Antonio, and the Central Library in Austin.

Greg Carter then asked based on the discussion, where to draw the line between Commercial/Institutional and Industrial facilities. Mr. Carter also noted there are concerns for either type regarding maintenance, cost-benefit, and staffing of managing those portions of large facilities.

Karen Guz noted there is a need to discuss barriers to implementation.

#### c. Industrial

Craig Elam gave the workgroup update stating that the workgroup is not considering any legislative recommendations and are beginning conversations to update their portion of the legislative report.

Karen Guz noted that any information that can be provided at the next meeting regarding trends of usage would be useful in discussing the legislative report.

#### d. Municipal

Karen Guz gave the workgroup update noting the workgroup did discuss several topics at their last meeting.

One topic being discussed is the 140 GPCD target initially included in the 2004 report from the Water Conservation Implementation Task Force. The workgroup acknowledged that there are complexities in having one target for everyone, however, it was determined to be worthwhile to have a discussion on updating that target given advancements in conservation. The workgroup plans to invite consultants active in the regional water planning process to their next meeting to get their input in updating the target. While this is not going to be considered a legislative recommendation, it would be beneficial to highlight within the report.

Another topic the workgroup has discussed is Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). AMI was included as an emerging technology in the 2020 report and has continued to grow and develop over the last two years. While this can be an effective technology, there are additional steps needed to ensure a utility can receive the most benefit from it.

It was noted that AMI can be a great tool for both municipal conservation and water loss management, as well as end-use reduction.

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Outdoor water conservation also has been discussed. Managing outdoor water use will be crucial for conservation, with automatic irrigation systems playing a big role.

Jennifer Walker noted that anecdotally, she is seeing irrigation systems being installed in neighborhoods where it was not commonplace as those areas are being renovated or redeveloped.

Greg Carter noted that regarding GPCD, utilizing Residential GPCD will be highly localized to the individual supplier or municipality.

Robert Mace noted he supports revisiting the 140 GPCD target. A new target could be a statewide target, with room for local variability.

#### e. Public Awareness

Sarah Schlessinger noted that the workgroup has not met since the last council meeting.

Relating to the workgroup, the Texas Water Foundation is interested in analyzing data they've received to established behavior change trends.

In addition, it was also noted that TWF would appreciate a legislative recommendation in support of a statewide awareness campaign as has been included in previous reports.

#### f. Water Loss

Jennifer Walker gave an update on the workgroup's activities by providing a recap of the last workgroup meeting. Topics discussed included water loss metrics, AMI, and development of a new Best Management Practice regarding AMI and its benefits relating to water loss.

Jennifer W. also noted that she was able to attend a TWDB Board work-session at the end of March in which TWDB Conservation Staff presented a proposal for an enhanced Water Loss Audit program. The proposal included additional staffing to implement a Level 1 Validation program, which would target entities receiving financial assistance. In addition, a developer would be brought on to update TWDB's water loss audit form to align more closely with AWWA's version 6 form.

The workgroup also discussed including a primer in the body of the legislative report pertaining to water loss metrics.

Further discussion on these topics will be the focus of the next workgroup meeting.

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g. Wholesale and Regional Water Authorities

Dustan Compton noted that the Wholesale Workgroup has not met since the last council meeting, however the Evapotranspiration (ET) Stakeholder Group met on March 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss the results of the ET Data Survey sent out on February 16<sup>th</sup>. 112 responses were received for the survey and the stakeholder group concluded there was enough support for a statewide ET effort to develop a legislative recommendation. An additional meeting was held with key stakeholders from the ET Stakeholder Group and staff from TWDB's TexMesonet program on March 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss some details and challenge with merging TexMesonet and other data sources. Read the full ET Stakeholder Group Update [here](#).

Bill Hoffman noted this data would be beneficial for not only a multitude of stakeholders but also for historical ET calculations.

David Villarreal noted that the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee has historically supported a statewide ET effort, and would likely echo a recommendation from the WCAC regarding statewide ET.

Dustan C. also noted there may be a second recommendation from the group regarding support for the TexMesonet program and refining its statutory authority.

Karen Guz noted that location was brought up as being an issue for TexMesonet with ET not currently being considered in their siting criteria. A recommendation could include language that would require ET consideration in TexMesonet siting requirements. Water Stakeholders (utilities, GCDs, etc.) could also be great assets for providing sites for installation of stations.

Karen G. also noted that there seems to be a great deal of support for a statewide ET network with many different uses. However, the current arrangement is fragile and a statewide effort needs to be reliable for it to be trusted.

6. Discussion: 2022 WCAC Legislative Report

Karen Guz noted that the workgroup updates provided a sense of what recommendations were being considered.

In looking at the timeline for the report, the council is a little behind compared to previous reporting years. Karen G. asked that all those intending to draft recommendations have a draft ready for the next WCAC meeting (May 4, 2022).

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#### 7. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

#### 8. Announcement of Conferences and Events

May 10 -11: [Emerging Water Technologies](#) – San Antonio, TX

May 10-11: [TCEQ Trade Fair](#) – Austin, TX

June 12-15: [ACE](#) – San Antonio, TX

#### 9. Future Meeting Dates and Locations

- May 4, 2022 at LCRA Headquarters (10:30 a.m. start time)

#### 10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:41 p.m.