

MINUTES

**RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY (RGRWA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
9:00 A.M. – TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2007
PALM VIEW COMMUNITY CENTER
3401 JORDAN – MCALLEN, TX**

PRESIDING: JIM DARLING, PRESIDENT

The Rio Grande Regional Water Authority (RGRWA) Board of Directors held a regular meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at the Palm View Community Center in McAllen, Texas. In attendance were:

Board Members

President: Mr. Jim Darling, Hidalgo County
Vice-President: Ms. Sonia Kaniger
Secretary-Treasurer: Mr. Joe Barrera
Mr. Eduardo Guerra, Zapata County
Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez, Starr County
Mr. Tomas Rodriguez, Webb County
Mr. Frank Torres, Willacy County
Mr. John Bruciak, Cameron County
Mr. Wayne Halbert
Ms. Kathleen Reavis
Mr. Glenn Wilde

Others

Mr. Charlie Rankin, El Morillo Drain
Mr. Rick Reyes, IBWC
Mr. Mike Cabello, Webb County
Mr. Mario Santos III, Webb County
Ms. Jennifer Berghom, The Monitor
Mr. Ed Vela, TCEQ – RIS
Mr. Randy Rolando, RGV Sugar Growers
Mr. Carlos Rubinstein, TCEQ
Mr. Bill Norris, NRS
Mr. Ken Jones, LRGVDC
Ms. Debby Morales, LRGVDC

President Jim Darling called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m. and announced that a quorum of Board members was present. The President then moved to agenda item 2. – Consider approval of March 20, 2007 Meeting Minutes. ***Mr. Joe Barrera made a motion to accept the minutes with as presented. Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

The President then moved to agenda item 3. – Public Comment. President Darling stated that no one had signed up for Public Comment; however he gave the floor to Mr. Tomas Rodriguez. Mr. Rodriguez announced that he had recently changed jobs from the Webb County Engineering Department to the Utilities Director for the City of Laredo and stated he would encourage the city's elected officials to join the RGRWA. Mr. Rodriguez then introduced two engineers from Webb County, Mr. Mike Cabello and Mr. Mario Santos.

President Darling then moved to item 4. – Report from TCEQ Watermaster, and recognized Mr. Carlos Rubinstein. Mr. Rubinstein informed the Board that the reservoir levels were down by approximately 12% from this time last year and reserves were starting to become depleted due to the current peak irrigation season and low rainfall. Mexico had all but depleted their reserves in Falcon Reservoir and is actually transferring water from Amistad Reservoir to Falcon Reservoir. On a status of water debt, Mexico now has a water deficit of 396,000 acre feet. Mr. Rubenstein added that Falcon Reservoir Staff was managing their water usage very well.

Upon conclusion of the Watermaster's report, President Darling moved to item 5. – Status Reports.

Regarding item 5.A. – Local Fund Contribution there were no new contributions to report.

Regarding item 5.B. – Financial Report, President Darling recognized Mr. Ken Jones, who went over the Administrative Expenses for March and April and stated that these expenses required Board approval for disbursement. **Mr. Joe Barrera made a motion to approve disbursement of the Administrative Expenses as presented. Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Regarding item 5.C. – Report from Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group (RGRWPG) Mr. Glenn Jarvis, Chairman of Region M, was unable to attend, thus Mr. Jones was recognized and reported that in the Board folders was the finalized Scope of Work the Region M Group submitted to the TWDB requesting a total of \$458,500 to complete the projects listed. However, TWDB only funded \$174,398. Mr. Jones then turned the floor over to Mr. Bill Norris, NRS Consulting Engineers. Mr. Norris reviewed the tasks listed in the Scope of Work, and also informed the Board that in April the RGRWA received a letter from the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation that stated FY 2007 funds had become available and inquired if the Board was still interested in pursuing this proposed project. Mr. Norris explained that this funding would be able to offset some of the funding the Region M Group was requesting from the TWDB. With the Executive Committee's approval, Mr. Jones signed and returned the letter to the Bureau of Reclamation in the affirmative. President Darling then requested a **motion to ratify the letter from United States Department of the interior opting to continue with the 2025 Challenge Grant Program for Fiscal Year 2006. Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez so moved. Ms. Kathy Reavis seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Regarding item 5.D. – Report from the First Rio Grande Regional Water Authority Economic Development Corporation (FRGRWAEDC), President Darling suggested for consideration of action by the FRGRWAEDC Board of Directors at their next meeting that the \$25,000 fee it received from the RGV Sugar Growers expansion project be allocated as a separate fund for the RGRWA to be used for special projects to be sponsored by the RGRWA Board of Directors.

Regarding item 5.E. – Update on 2025 Application Submitted to U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. This item was covered under discussion and action in item 5.C.

Regarding item 5.F. – RGRWA Legislation – Mr. Wayne Halbert stated the SB 707 should be fast tracked to be passed without opposition.

Upon conclusion of discussion and action on Status Reports, the President then moved to item 6. – Committee Reports.

Regarding item 6.A. – Community Outreach, there was nothing new to report.

Regarding item 6.B. – Finance and Planning, there was nothing new to report.

Regarding item 6.C. – Personnel and Professional Services, there was nothing new to report.

Regarding item 6.D. – Legislation, this topic was covered under item 5.F.

Regarding item 6.E. – El Morillo Drain, Mr. Charlie Rankin was recognized and informed the Board that the El Morillo Drain was operating without incident at this time, and that an educational exhibit had been placed at the Old Hidalgo Pump House to be dedicated in June or July.

President Darling then moved to item 7. – New or Old Business. President Darling announced that a meeting of the RGRWA and the FRGRWAEDC Boards was not necessary in the month of June as there were no anticipated items to act on. The President asked Mr. John Bruciak if he could provide a status report on the Brownsville Desalination Plant and that item be added to the July Agenda. Mr. Bruciak answered in the affirmative. There being no New or Old Business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

Jim Darling, President, RGRWA

ATTEST:

Joe Barrera, Secretary-Treasurer, RGRWA