

**RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY (RGRWA)
9:00 A.M. - TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2006
MCALLEN MILLER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - EAST CONFERENCE ROOM
2500 SOUTH BICENTENNIAL - MCALLEN, TEXAS**

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, March 21, 2006 in the East Conference Room, McAllen International Airport, McAllen, Texas. In attendance were:

<u>Board Members</u>	<u>Others</u>
President: Mr. Jim Darling, Hidalgo Co.	Neil Haman
Vice-President: Ms. Sonia Kaniger, San Benito	Blanca Villalpando, E. Lucio
Secretary-Treasurer: Mr. Joe Barrera, Brownsville	Charlie Rankin
Mr. Eduardo Guerra, Zapata Co.	Carlos Rubenstein, TCEQ Watermaster
Mr. Wayne Halbert, Harlingen	Glenn Jarvis, RGRWPG
Mr. Tomas Rodriguez, Webb Co.	Rep. Kika De La Garza
Mr. Jimmie Steidinger, Donna	Dr. Joe Coulter
Mr. Frank Torres, Willacy Co.	Chuck Browning
Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez, Starr Co.	Jake White, NRS
Ms. Kathleen Reavis	Jared Hokema,
Mr. Glenn Wilde	Ken Jones, LRGVDC
	Debby Morales, LRGVDC

President Jim Darling, Chairman, called the meeting to order, and asked Mr. Ken Jones to call roll. Upon completion of the roll call, it was ascertained that a quorum of voting members was present. The Chairman then moved to agenda item 2. - Consider Approval of January 17, 2006 Meeting Minutes. As there were no changes to these minutes, **Mr. Joe Barrera made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Jimmie Steidinger seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

The President then moved to agenda item 3. - Recognition of Immediate Past President. President Jim Darling recognized Past President Ricardo Gutierrez as the first president of the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority. President Darling thanked Past President Gutierrez for his service and presented him with a commemorative plaque. Past President Gutierrez accepted the plaque and thanked the Board for their support.

The President moved to agenda item 4. - Public Comment. As there were no public comments the President moved to Agenda item 5. - Discussion and Possible Action, RE: RGRWA Legislation. Ms. Blanca Villalpando of Senator Lucio's office reported that they were waiting to hear from Senator Hinojosa's office, but were not at liberty to share any changes on the legislation at this time. Ms.

Villalpando encouraged the board to contact Senator Hinojosa's office to encourage another Legislative Committee Workshop.

Following discussion on the Legislation, President Darling moved to agenda item 6. - Consider Comments RE: Draft Rules on House Bill 2250 78th Legislative Session. Mr. Carlos Rubenstein updated the Board stating that the draft rules should be ready by Friday, March 24th and would be proposed for Public Comment on the TCEQ Agenda on the April 12th. No Action was taken.

The President then proceeded to agenda item 7. - Discussion and Possible Action RE: Development of 5, 10, and 15-Year Water Capital Improvement Plans, and Determination of Formula to Solicit Local Matching funds Prior to Submission of Application to TWDB. Mr. Jake White, NRS gave the Board a summary speaking specifically about the Water 2025: Fiscal Year 2006 Challenge Grant Program. Mr. White informed the Board that there are only one million dollars available for 2006, so any project over \$100,000 would not be awarded until 2007. Mr. White stated that there is a May 5, 2006 application deadline for any projects to be considered for funding in 2007. Mr. Ken Jones suggested a proposal to send in the application for funding to the Water 2025: Bureau of Reclamation be put on the Agenda for the April RGRWA meeting, and also suggested that this project be part of the RGRWA Fund Raiser in November. No action was taken.

With regard to item 8. - Consider Appointment of El Morillo Drain Subcommittee. Dr. Joe Coulter Addressed the Board stating that five of the eleven directors of the Lower Rio Grande Water Committee were in attendance today: Glenn Jarvis, Kika De La Garza, Charles Rankin, Chuck Browning and himself, Dr. Joe Coulter. Dr. Coulter gave a brief history of the El Morillo Drain stating that it has worked well over the years. Mr. Kika De La Garza referenced the difficulty the Lower Rio Grande Water Committee had in persuading Mexico to build the canal. Mr. Charlie Rankin expressed interest in seeing statistics regarding how much economic impact El Morillo has created. Mr. Carlos Rubenstein reiterated the need of an entity to provide oversight to El Morillo. Mr. Glenn Jarvis added that maintenance of the El Morillo drain has been one of the biggest issues of keeping it functioning properly. President Darling inquired of Dr. Coulter if there was a formal agreement with Mexico. Mr. Jarvis stated there was a minute order, and minutes from the Commissioners Courts of Hidalgo County and Willacy County pledging a local match. Mr. Joe Barrera asked Dr. Coulter if he could provide copies of the agreements and the minutes to the RGRWA. **Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez made a motion to appoint a three person El Morillo Drain Subcommittee. Ms. Sonia Kaniger seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion passed unanimously. The Subcommittee will consist of Mr. Joe Barrera, Mr. Wayne Halbert, and Mr. Jim Darling.** President Darling suggested that the newly formed Subcommittee meet with the present members of the Lower Rio Grande Water Committee.

There being no further discussion regarding the El Morillo Drain Subcommittee, the Chairman moved to item 9. - Discussion and consider Action RE: Texas Water Conservation Association (TWCA) Membership. Chairman Darling gave a report that the TWCA participated in the Texas Water Day event. Although this is noted later on in the agenda, Mr. Darling stated that Ms. Sonia Kaniger, Mr. Wayne Halbert, Mr. Joe Barrera, Mr. Bill Norris, and Mr. Jim Darling were the Valley representatives for Texas Water Day. Mr. Darling stated that flow metering was the most important issue; but that Water Supply Corporation issues, hydrilla, salt cedar, water re-use, and flood control issues, were also discussed. Mr. Darling stated that the Valley group specifically addressed the need for levee improvement, and were able to meet with Representatives Lloyd Doggett and Solomon Ortiz. Mr. Darling stated that it is important for the Water Authority to participate in these events and to be a member of the TWCA. **Mr. Joe Barrera made a motion for the RGRWA to apply for membership of the TWCA. Ms. Kathy Reavis seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

There being no further discussion, the Chairman moved to Agenda item 10.A. Status Reports, Local

Fund Contribution. Mr. Ken Jones gave an update of funds received since the last meeting.

Regarding Agenda item 10.B - Financial Report. Mr. Chuck Browning asked if the Water Authority was going to solicit funds from Water Supply Corporations and Municipal Districts. **Upon conclusion of discussion Mr. Joe Barrera made a motion to authorize Mr. Ken Jones to solicit funds from water supply corporations and municipal districts. Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez seconded it and upon a vote the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Joe Barrera then made a motion to approve payment of Administrative Expenses as presented. Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion passed unanimously.**

Regarding Agenda Item 10.C. Report from Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group (RGRWPG), Mr. Glenn Jarvis gave a report. Mr. Jarvis stated that the Water Development Board was going to meet today to consider approval of the Regional Water Plan.

Regarding Agenda Item 10.D. - Texas Water Day Washington D.C. held March 15th and 16th. Mr. Wayne Halbert added to Mr. Darling's earlier report that there was a good turn out; that Sen. Kay Baily Hutchison, and Senator John Cornyn spoke as well as Congressman Silvestre Reyes. Mr. Joe Barrera stated that it was a good opportunity to speak to many of the key people who deal with water issues.

Upon conclusion of discussion of the Status Reports, the President moved to Agenda Item 11. Committee Reports. Mr. Ken Jones reported on Item 11.A.1. - Website stating that the Website Contract had been signed. Regarding Item 11.A.2. - Education Forum & Fund Raiser. Mr. Jones reported that the committee had a conference call and that the date of the event is slated for Thursday, November 30, 2006 at La Quinta Mazatlan at 4:00 p.m. **Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez made a motion to have the Fund Raiser Project on November 30, 2006 at the La Quinta Mazatlan in McAllen. Mr. Joe Barrera seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion passed unanimously**

Mr. Wayne Halbert asked to go back to Agenda Item 5. - Discussion and possible action, RE: RGRWA Legislation. Mr. Halbert stated that while in Washington D.C. our board members were informed by the House Committees that since they didn't have a sponsor they were assigned sponsorship as Harlingen Irrigation District. Mr. Halbert stated that the RGRWA should be the sponsoring entity for legislation. **Mr. Halbert made a motion to support RGRWA as Sponsors for this and future legislation and appropriations. Joe Barrera seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion passed unanimously.** Mr. Halbert will contact Larry Meyers in regards to this matter.

There being no further business, President Jim Darling adjourned the meeting.

Jim Darling, President, RGRWA

ATTEST:

Joe Barrera, Secretary-Treasurer, RGRWA