

MINUTES

**RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY (RGRWA)
9:00 A.M. – TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 2006
MCALLEN MILLER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT – EAST CONFERENCE ROOM
2500 SOUTH BICENTENNIAL – MCALLEN, TX**

PRESIDING: JIM DARLING, PRESIDENT

The Rio Grande Regional Water Authority (RGRWA) Board of Directors held a regular meeting at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, April 18, 2006 in the East Conference Room, McAllen International Airport, McAllen, Texas. In attendance were:

Board Members

President: Mr. Jim Darling, Hidalgo Co.
Vice-President: Ms. Sonia Kaniger, San Benito
Secretary-Treasurer: Mr. Joe Barrera, Brownsville
Mr. Eduardo Guerra, Zapata Co.
Mr. Wayne Halbert, Harlingen
Mr. Tomas Rodriguez, Webb Co.
Mr. Jimmie Steidinger, Donna
Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez, Starr Co.
Ms. Kathleen Reavis
Mr. Glenn Wilde

Others

Jo Jo White, HCCID #9
Carlos Rubenstein, TCEQ
Steve Bearden RGV Sugar
Bill Norris, NRS
Jake White, NRS
Neil Hamman, TWDB
Linda Fernandez, Fernandez Group, Inc.

President Jim Darling, 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. President Darling then moved to agenda item 2. – Consider approval of March 21, 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 Chairman then moved to agenda item 3. – Public Comment. Mr. Ken Jones informed the chairman that there were no requests for Public Comment.

The Chairman then moved to Agenda item 4. – Discussion and Possible Action, RE: RGRWA Legislation. Chairman Darling informed the Board that he and several members of the Board had received an unofficial copy of the Legislative Update that increased the Governor's appointments, left the County appointments the same, with the Governor being able to choose appointees from a pool based on the Conference. Mr. Darling stated that the Authority does have a standing committee of former LRGA Board Members that should meet with the current RGRWA. After discussion it was agreed that the Legislative Committee of just RGRWA and LRGA members would meet during the first week of May to discuss the new version of legislation.

Chairman Darling then moved to item 5 – Consider Comments RE: Draft Rules on House Bill 2250, 78th Legislative Session. Mr. Carlos Rubenstein reported that the Commission has adopted the proposed staff recommendation and that the Rules are out for public comment. Mr. Rubenstein stated that they will be published in the Texas Register from April 28, 2006, and that the commentary period will be from April 28 through the end of May. After discussion **Mr. Joe Barrera made a motion for the RGRWA to write a letter of support for the Rules the way they are currently written. Mr. Jimmie Steidinger seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion passed unanimously.**

At the conclusion of action regarding the Draft Rules, the Chairman moved to item 6. – Discussion and Possible Action RE: Development of 5, 10, and 15 – Year Water Capital Improvement Plans, and Determination for Formula to Solicit Local Matching Funds Prior to Submission of Application to TWDB. Chairman Darling asked Mr. Jake White to address item 6.A. – Consider Application Submission RE: Water 2025 Challenge Grant Program U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Mr. White explained that an application to the Bureau of Reclamation for funds in the amount of \$229,250 needs to be submitted by May 5, 2006. Mr. White added that there is a stipulation that the application not exceed 50% of the federal grant for the project. At the conclusion of discussion, **Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez made a motion to authorize NRS Consulting Engineers to submit the Water 2025 Challenge Grant Program application signed by Board President Mr. Jim Darling. Mr. Tomas Rodriguez seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion passed unanimously.**

The Chairman then moved to item 7. – Consider Creation of Industrial Development Corporation for Purposes of Issuing Debt for Projects under Provisions of Article 5190.6 Vernon's Texas Civil Status and File Articles of Incorporation. Chairman Darling informed the Board that this project could potentially generate revenue for the Authority. The Chairman asked Mr. Chuey Ramirez to address the Board. Mr. Ramirez stated that an Authority for the District could not be found but that the RGRWA could create a corporation that could issue bonds. Mr. Ramirez assured the Board that the Authority would have no responsibility for any debt or legal obligation of the corporation which issued the bond or of the private user, in this case the Sugar Mill. **Mr. Jimmie Steidinger made a motion to approve submission of the articles of incorporation and the by-laws the First Rio Grande Regional Water Economic Development Corporation. Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion passed unanimously.**

Regarding item 8. – Consideration of Selection of Bond Council for Industrial Development Corporation. This item was deferred to the Corporation; no action was taken.

With no action needed on item 8., the Chairman moved to item 9 – Status reports. Mr. Ken Jones reported on item 9.A. – Local Funds Contribution had increased \$1,700 more since the last meeting giving the Authority a little over \$15,000.

Regarding item 9.B. – Financial Report, Mr. Jones detailed the administrative expenses, the statement from the Fernandez Group for the Authority's web site and the dues for the Authority's membership to the Texas Water Conservation Association. ***Mr. Jimmie Steidinger made a motion to approve payment of those items. Mr. Glenn Wilde seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion passed unanimously.***

Regarding item 9.C. – Report from Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group (RGRWP), Mr. Jones informed the Board that Mr. Glenn Jarvis was not able to attend, but that a summary of the Regional Water Plan was in the Board binders; and added that Region M was one of the first of five groups to have their water plan approved by the state.

Regarding item 9.D. – Correspondence, Mr. Jones informed the Board that a letter to Cameron County Judge Gilbert Hinojosa asking for consideration of appointment to the vacant Cameron County seat on the Authority Board was sent at the beginning of April.

The Chairman then moved to item 10. - Committee Reports, and asked Ms. Linda Fernandez to report on item 10.A.1. – Website. Ms. Fernandez informed the board that the RGRWA website was up and running. Ms. Fernandez gave the Board a video presentation of the new RGRWA website, and asked for feedback from the Board. Ms. Fernandez stated that the Public Outreach Committee had met before the Board meeting and discussed adding the Water Market information to the web site. The Chairman asked that this item be put on the agenda for the May Board meeting.

Regarding item 10.A.2. - Education Forum & Fund Raiser, Ms. Fernandez distributed to the Board Members a brochure she created with information about the RGRWA. Ms. Fernandez also informed the Board that Senator Eddie Lucio Jr. was confirmed to attend the RGRWA Fund Raiser in November.

With action previously taken on item 10.B. – Finance and Planning the Chairman moved to item 10.C. – Personnel and Professional Services, Mr. Joe Barrera stated that there was nothing significant to report.

Regarding item 10.D. – Legislation, the Chairman stated that it was previously discussed that the Legislative Committee would meet regarding the new legislative draft from Senator Eddie Lucio's office on Wednesday, May 3, 2006.

Regarding item 10. 3. – El Morillo Drain, the Chairman stated that the original articles from 1965 were in the Board binders. The Chairman added that the RGRWA El Morillo Drain Committee and the Lower Rio Grande Water Committee would be meeting tomorrow, April 19, 2006.

Regarding item 11.A. - Reservoir Levels, Mr. Carlos Rubenstein advised the Board that Mexico had made a mistake by over releasing to Falcon a substantial amount. Mr. Rubenstein added that we were loosing a lot of water to evaporation.

There being no further business the Chairman adjourned the meeting.

Jim Darling, President, RGRWA

ATTEST:

Joe Barrera, Secretary-Treasurer, RGRWA