

# MINUTES

**RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY (RGRWA)  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
9:00 A.M. – WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 2010  
LRGVDC TRANSPORTATION CENTER BOARD ROOM  
510 S. PLEASANTVIEW DRIVE, WESLACO, TX**

**PRESIDING: JIM DARLING, PRESIDENT**

The Rio Grande Regional Water Authority (RGRWA) Board of Directors held a meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, June 2, 2010 at the LRGVDC Transportation Center Board Room in Weslaco, Texas. In attendance were:

RGRWA Board Members

President Jim Darling, Hidalgo County  
Vice President Sonia Lambert, Irrigation Dist.  
Secretary-Treasurer Joe Barrera, Irrigation Dist.  
Ms. Karran Westerman, Zapata County  
Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez, Starr County  
Mr. Fitzgerald Sanchez, Webb County  
Mr. John Bruciak, Cameron County  
Mr. Wayne Halbert, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Paul Heller, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Jimmie Steidinger, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Frank "Jo Jo" White, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Sonny Hinojosa, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Roel Rodriguez, Municipal  
Mr. D.V. Guerra, Public

Others

Ms. Marcie Oviedo, LRGVDC  
Mr. Jaime Flores, TWRI  
Mr. Fred Serrato, Willacy Co.  
Mr. Jake White, NRS  
Ms. Robyn Hadley, Water PR  
Ms. Ludy Saenz, LRGVDC  
Mr. Larry B. Thomas, USGS  
Mr. George Ozuna, USGS  
Mr. David Salina, COE  
Mr. Dennis Goldsberry, NAWSC  
Mr. Robert Fulbright, RGRWPG  
Mr. Rodolfo Montero, US-IBWC

**1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

President Jim Darling called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and announced that a quorum of the Board was present.

**2. Consider Approval of May 5, 2010 Meeting Minutes**

***Mr. D.V. Guerra made a motion for approval minutes as presented. Mr. Jimmie Steidinger seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

**3 Public Comment**

No Public Comments were received.

**4. Discussion RE: Future Projects**

President Darling noted this item will be discussed later in the agenda.

**5. Status Reports**

**A. Report from TCEQ Watermaster**

Mr. Erasmo Yarrito was unable to attend; Mr. Herman Settemeyer gave the report in his stead. Mr. Settemeyer gave the reservoir level report, then informed the board that TCEQ staff had a meeting in Mexico City with staff from CONAGUA and CILA regarding El Morillo Drain. CONAGUA is in the process of transferring control of El Morillo Drain to CILA. With

this transfer comes \$2,000,000 pesos to operate El Morillo Drain. CILA envisions replacing one non-operational pump this year and the other non-operational pump next year. For TCEQ's part staff is in the process of installing three additional salinity monitors to help staff interact when the drain is non-operational. Mr. Settemeyer added that it is important to understand that Luis Leon is essentially full, which is a positive step for Mexico to catch up on their treaty deliveries. TCEQ staff met with the Director General of CONAGUA, who indicated he understood that Mexico has a treaty obligation and was obligated to comply with the treaty; this is a very positive step.

Mr. Sttemeyer added that Senate Bill 3 regarding the Environmental Flows Allocation Process is going to begin on the Rio Grande this year. Mr. Sonny Hinojosa asked if there was a discussion on a SCADA system at the El Morillo Drain plant; this Board has talked about the possibility of a SCADA system at the plant so the U.S. can monitor if the pumps are running or not. Mr. Settemeyer speculated that installing a SCADA or similar system might be a part of the transfer process. Mr. Joe Barrera stated that his concern is that the RGRWA has talked about installing a SCADA system for a couple of years and with the change of agencies in Mexico there is a possibility that it would be dropped again. Mr. Barrera suggested that as a River Authority the Board might consider taking a strong stance and even think about providing funding for the system. Mr. Jones asked Mr. Settemeyer to take the lead in terms of cost estimates to try to leverage with IBWC in order to move this project forward, and asked if it would be eligible through the Watermaster Fund. Mr. Settemeyer stated he would check on it and is optimistic that with the transfer of responsibility to CILA there will be better interaction between CILA and IBWC, and that will help with this endeavor.

**B. Report from IBWC**

No representative from IBWC was in attendance and no report was available at this time.

**C. Report from Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group**

Chairman Glenn Jarvis was unable to attend, however Mr. Jake White, NRS was available to provide a status report. Mr. White stated that The Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group (Region M) has held two public hearings for the Initially Prepared Plan (IPP) and the turnout was good. The Group is currently going through the process of discussing minor modifications to the IPP and is expecting final comments back from TWDB by the end of this month. The final Regional Water Plan is due September 1, 2010; from that point the State will combine all the Regional Water Plans into one master State Water Plan.

**D. Regional Water Supply Study**

Mr. White noted there were no updates to report. Mr. Ken Jones stated that he was informed by TWDB that State Funding for this project would have to go through the regular Region M funding process, which won't occur until next year. Therefore, if something is moved forward in advance of that, the RGRWA would need to find an alternative funding source.

**E. Report on Rescheduling of El Paso Tour of Desal Facilities**

There was no new information to discuss.

**F. Report on Scholarship Fund**

Mr. Paul Heller was recognized and stated that the scholarship committee met yesterday and are recommending guidelines that include a student from the RGRWA's region majoring in a civil engineering field that deals with water or an agricultural related field dealing in water, and to working with Texas A&M Kingsville. Additionally, Mr. Heller announced that Mr. and Mrs. Jimmie Steidinger have generously doubled the scholarship amount to make the total of the RGRWA scholarship fund \$10,000. Mr. and Mrs. Steidinger recommended naming the

scholarship in the memory of Mr. Charles Browning Jr; it was the consensus of the Board to so name the scholarship fund.

Mr. Heller then turned the floor over to Dr. Stephen H. Tallant, President of Texas A&M University – Kingsville. Dr. Tallant expressed his appreciation and delight at this new scholarship being made available to the students at the university. Dr. Tallant stated he would consult with his staff that work with scholarship funds and develop an MOU to carry out the wishes of the Board. Dr. Tallant also stated that the university offers several majors dealing with water and will create a list of said majors for the Board to review for selection of the scholarship award. Dr. Tallant recommended selecting one student in his/her junior year and offering them a \$2,500 scholarship. If that student does well they will be offered another \$2,500 in their senior year. Provided this plan of action works well, the Board can follow the same strategy for another student the following year; this will assist two students over a four year period, which Dr. Tallant stated is significant. ***Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez made a motion to authorize the Scholarship Committee to sign the MOU prior to the next scheduled meeting. Mr. Joe Barrera seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

#### **G. Texas Irrigation Expo 2010**

President Darling stated that the Board will have a booth at the Texas Irrigation Expo 2010 and some of the topics that should be discussed with visitors at the booth are El Morillo Drain, aquatic weed infestation and the scholarship fund. The President reminded the Board that volunteers will be needed to man the booth in shifts.

#### **H. Report on Middle Pecos County GCD Pending Permit Application Submitted by Fort Stockton Holdings**

President Darling stated that this Board adopted a resolution opposing the water permit for Fort Stockton Holdings and in Sunday's edition of The Monitor there was a letter to the editor stating the rule of capture is the rule of capture. The President with the Board's permission would like to write a letter back to the editor stating there is concern for everybody as it relates to how the rule of capture affects other watersheds and delivery systems. ***Mr. Jimmie Steidinger made a motion to write such a letter; Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

### **6. Committee Reports**

#### **A. Community Outreach**

There was no new information to report.

#### **B. Finance and Planning**

##### **1. Financial Report**

Ms. Debby Morales was recognized and stated that the current cash balance is \$278,649.73 and a total of \$674.14 in expenses was submitted for approval. ***Ms. Sonia Lambert made a motion for approval of payment of the current expenses as presented. Mr. Jimmie Steidinger seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Mr. Joe Barrera gave the financial report and noted that the 2010 budget balance is \$87,568.34.

##### **2. Status of Assessments**

Mr. Barrera informed the Board that 2010 assessments in the amount of \$96,720.78 had been received to date and \$996.64 was still owed.

**C. Personnel and Professional Services**

There was no new information to report at this time.

**D. Legislation**

There were no pertinent updates on legislation pertaining to the RGRWA.

**E. El Morillo Drain**

President Darling noted that this was covered under a previous item.

**F. Ad Hoc Groundwater Committee**

The President informed the Board that committee has not yet met to go over the contract.

**7. Discussion and Possible Action RE: Meeting Schedule**

*Mr. Jimmie Steidinger made a motion to not meet in July and schedule the next meeting for Wednesday, August 4, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. Mr. D.V. Guerra seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

**8. Adjourn**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

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Jim Darling, President, RGRWA

ATTEST:

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Joe Barrera, Secretary-Treasurer, RGRWA