

MINUTES

**RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY (RGRWA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
9:00 A.M. – WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 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, September 1, 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 Districts
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. Jo Jo White, Irrigation Districts
Mr. Bobby Sparks, Irrigation Districts
Mr. Sonny Hinojosa, Irrigation Districts
Mr. Brian Macmanus, Water Supply Corporations
Mr. D.V. Guerra, Public

Others

Ms. Marcie Oviedo, LRGVDC
Ms. Ludy Saenz, LRGVDC
Ms. Robyn Hadley, Water PR
Mr. Rodolfo Montero, US-IBWC
Mr. Juan Trevino, TDA

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

President Jim Darling called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and announced that a quorum of the Board was present.

2. Consider Approval of August 4, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Mr. D.V. Guerra made a motion for approval of the minutes as presented. Mr. Paul Heller 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 recognized Mr. Erasmo Yarrito. Mr. Yarrito provided an update on the collection of photos of the flooding from Hurricane Alex and informed the Board that he had made contact with over 20 individuals from the Border Patrol, the Department of Public Safety and other state and federal agencies. Mr. Yarrito was pleased with the response and was waiting for the photos to come in. He requested that the photos be documented with their location, but not all responses were confident on the ability to provide that information.

President Darling stated he was considering authorizing \$2,500 to pay for the photo archiving and expressed concern that the further away from the date of the event, the more difficult it will be to have accurate documentation of the photos.

5. Status Reports

A. Report from TCEQ Watermaster

Mr. Erasmo Yarrito was recognized and stated that he had provided the water rights information for the assessment billing for 2011 to Mr. Joe Barrera. Mr. Yarrito then provided the statistical information on the Mexican reservoirs from August 30. Mr. Yarrito informed the Board that he has been in discussion with the IBWC regarding scheduling a tour of El Morillo Drain and asked if they had been in touch with Mr. Sonny Hinojosa, Chair of RGRWA's El Morillo Drain Committee. Mr. Hinojosa stated that President Darling had sent a letter to Mr. Carlos Peña, Principal Engineer for US IBWC, presenting the proposal and schematics for a SCADA system. Mr. Yarrito stated that the information he has received is that the Mexican side does like the idea of installing a SCADA system, but one question they have is where the hardware will be housed. Mr. Hinojosa stated that logically the site should be Pier IV because most of the time it would be in the line of site, which would prevent obstruction of the radio signal; and Pier IV, which is the middle pier at Anzalduas Dam, has an office that is located right on the border with half the building in the United States and half in Mexico, additionally it is not very far from El Morillo Drain. Mr. Yarrito stated that TCEQ and IBWC were coordinating a meeting to discuss this proposed project.

B. Report from IBWC

Mr. Rodolfo Montero was recognized and was pleased to report that IBWC was no longer putting water in the floodway as the water levels have subsided. Mr. Montero also confirmed that the Mexican Section of IBWC is interested in the SCADA system the RGRWA is proposing and are moving on the Board's request.

C. Report from Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group

Mr. Glenn Jarvis was not present to give the report; President Darling is also the Vice Chair of the RGRWPG (Region M) and reported that the Executive Committee had a conference call with TWDB related to Region M's filing of the updated plan. Staff from TWDB is asking for more information on water allocation/reallocation during times of drought. The Region M Group was allowed a 30 day extension to October 1st to supply the requested information.

D. Regional Water Supply Study

Mr. Roy Rodriguez was not available and no report had been provided.

E. Texas Irrigation Expo 2010

Mr. Wayne Halbert was recognized and informed the Board that plans for the Expo are coming along very well.

F. Report on Middle Pecos County GCD Pending Permit Application Submitted by Fort Stockton Holdings

There was no new information to report at this time.

6. Committee Reports

A. Community Outreach

There was no new information to report.

B. Finance and Planning

1. Financial Report

No financial report was available as the August books had not yet closed.

2. Status of Assessments

Mr. Joe Barrera reported that a total of \$97,347.81 has been received from the 2010 Assessment fees and staff has begun to prepare the 2011 billing with assistance from Mr. Erasmo Yarrito, TCEQ

C. Personnel and Professional Services

Mr. Robyn Hadley was recognized and stated that the WaterPR staff was in the process of creating a "Picasa web album" to archive photos from Hurricane Alex. The web album would be a link on the Board's website, rgrwa.org. Ms. Hadley stated that if the Board agrees the WaterPR staff would be able to sort and categorize the photos at the contracted hourly rate of \$75.00 per hour.

D. Legislation

President Darling informed the Board that Senator Mario Gallegos is currently the Chair of the Senate Subcommittee on Flooding & Evacuation, and drainage was brought up in one of their recent meetings. At the last RGRWA meeting the Board formed a Drainage Committee; the Committee recently met to discuss using the RGRWA as a Drainage Authority and approaching the legislature to request ad valorem tax capabilities. The suggestion of approaching the legislature to request ad valorem tax capabilities was not well received by the Committee and they did not make a recommendation to offer the RGRWA for that purpose. However, what the Drainage Committee did discuss from a regional approach, was that using portable pumps made more sense than stationary pumps on the floodway. President Darling stated that Mr. Wayne Halbert pointed out that a federal grant required stationary pumps. President Darling stated that he met with the Chair of the Hidalgo County Drainage Committee and they are going forward with a plan to build cement pads and discharge lines for portable pumps to have that infrastructure in place when needed. The County Drainage Committee will keep the RGRWA informed of their progress on this project and potential coordination opportunities.

Mr. Halbert informed the Board that he recently spoke with Mr. Sean Abbott from Senator Mario Gallegos' office on this issue and advised Mr. Abbot that instead of forming a new authority that they ought to consider utilizing the RGRWA. Mr. Halbert did not think the Committee made a decision on this one way or the other, but cautioned the Board that if the RGRWA does not take some initiative on this issue a drainage authority will be formed that does not represent individuals that are knowledgeable in water issues, which could potentially cause problems down the line.

E. El Morillo Drain

Mr. Hinojosa was recognized and informed the Board that in the Board folders was an updated estimate for the SCADA Project. El Morillo Drain has three pumps and one spare pump. After due consideration a decision was made to include the spare pump in the SCADA proposal, so the estimate amount increased to \$32,498.00.

F. Ad Hoc Groundwater Committee

President Darling called the Board's attention to information in the Board folders from Groundwater Management Area 16 (GMA 16) which includes minutes from their August 10th meeting and Resolution R2010-001 to Adopt Desired Future Conditions

for Aquifer(s) in Groundwater Management Area 16. The President stated that members from GMA 16 contacted him during this meeting to verify groundwater usage for Hidalgo County; the figure they had was 50,000 acre feet per year. President Darling advised them that that figure was a little high. The President stated that the RGRWA is on GMA 16's mailing lists and recommends the RGRWA stay informed as to the actions and projects of GMA 16.

G. Scholarship Committee

Ms. Marcie Oviedo was recognized and reported that the paperwork to send the first \$5,000 to Texas A&M Kingsville has been processed.

7. Discussion and Possible Action RE: Meeting Schedule

It was the consensus of the Board to not meet in October and scheduled the next meeting for November 3, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 10:13 a.m.

Jim Darling, President, RGRWA

ATTEST:

Joe Barrera, Secretary-Treasurer, RGRWA