

# MINUTES

## RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY (RGRWA) SPECIAL MEETING

9:00 A.M. – WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2011  
LRGVDC TRANSPORTATION CENTER  
510 PLEASANTVIEW DRIVE, WESLACO, TX

**PRESIDING: JIM DARLING, PRESIDENT**

The Rio Grande Regional Water Authority (RGRWA) Board of Directors held a special meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, November 2, 2011 at the LRGVDC Transportation Center in Weslaco, Texas. In attendance were:

### RGRWA Board Members

President Jim Darling, Hidalgo County  
Vice President Sonia Lambert, Irrigation Districts  
Secretary/Treasurer Joe Barrera, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Jimmy Riggan, Willacy County  
Mr. Wayne Halbert, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Paul Heller, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Jimmie Steidinger, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Joe Pennington, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Jo Jo White, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Bobby Sparks, Irrigation Districts  
Mr. Brian Macmanus, Water Supply Corporations  
Mr. Roy Rodriguez, Municipal

### Others

Mr. Victor Morales, LRGVDC  
Mr. Bill Lewis, Half Associates  
Mr. Bill Moriarti, Kinl  
Mr. Wayne Hunter, Espey Consultants  
Mr. David Harkins, Espey Consultants  
Mr. Hugo Perez, Texas A&M University  
Mr. Juan Enciso, Texas A&M University  
Mr. Stefan Schuster, PBS&A  
Mr. Ken Carothers, Cardro Entrix  
Mr. Paul Leonard, Cardro Entrix  
Ms. Anne Whitro, Ambiotec  
Ms. Marcie Oviedo, LRGVDC  
Mr. Troy Allen, Delta Lake ID  
Mr. Bill Norris, NRS  
Mr. Dave Anderson, Black & Veatch  
Ms. Kim Wahl, U.S. Fish & Wildlife  
Mr. Mario T. Garcia, LRGVDC EDD

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

President Jim Darling called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and announced that a quorum of the Board was present. The President then introduced newly appointed Willacy County representative Mr. Jimmy Riggan and welcomed him to the RGRWA.

### **2 Public Comment**

No Public Comments were received.

### **3. Presentations from SOQ Respondents**

President Darling drew names to determine the order the presentations would be given. Presenting first, NRS; second, Daniel B. Stephens & Associates, Inc. (DBS&A); and presenting third, Espey Consultants, Inc. (Espey). Mr. Victor Morales, LRGVDC Procurement Director, was recognized and briefed the Board on the scoring method noting that the RGRWA Board members were to rank on items 1-9, and item 10 was for Mr. Jeff Gerber, BOR, to rank the presentations. Upon conclusion of discussion of the ranking method the presentations began. Upon conclusion of the presentations the Board began the ranking process and President Darling noted that the final decision will be based on how the Board ranks the firms.

#### **4. Consider Selection of Consultant Firm(s) for the Lower Rio Grande Valley Basin and Regional Water Supply Feasibility Study**

Upon conclusion of the presentations Mr. Morales and staff calculated the ranking sheets. The results were as follows: DBS&A was ranked #1, NRS was ranked #2 and Espy was ranked #3. President Darling called for a motion. **Mr. Joe Pennington made a motion to award the contract to DBS&A based on the results of the ranking. Mr. Wayne Halbert seconded the motion; upon conclusion of a vote the motion carried 7-4; Mr. Jimmy Riggan abstained.**

Mr. Jones made a staff recommendation to authorize the Executive Committee to execute the contract with DBS&A in order to begin the process with BOR prior to the next meeting. **Mr. Wayne Halbert made a motion to authorize the Executive Committee to execute the contract with DBS&A. Mr. Brian Macmanus seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

#### **5. Presentation RE: Pulling Together Initiative (PTI)**

Ms. Kim Wahl, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, was recognized and gave a presentation on the Rio Grande Valley Riparian Reestablishment Project. Ms. Wahl stated that this project was in response to the flooding that occurred last summer (2010). After the flood waters receded staff noticed a lot of salt cedar was coming up along the river. The flooding provided perfect dispersal and germination conditions for the salt cedar. Currently staff was seeing salt cedar establishing in all areas that were affected by the flooding, including irrigation canals. The trees are coming up in densities of several thousand per acre and have already grown 10 feet in just one year. The problems with this plant are that it has long tap roots that intercept deep water tables and interfere with natural aquatic system, it also disrupts the structure and stability of native plants and is a heavy water consumer. A single large plant can absorb 200 gallons of water per day, and its dense roots can slow down river flows. It is very hearty and resistant to drought and flood. U.S. Fish and Wildlife would like the Board to consider becoming a cooperator in support of this project and possibly to provide technical expertise. In addition, Ms. Wahl requested a resolution of support for this project.

Upon conclusion of the presentation President Darling stated that this presentation was given to the Region M Group at their October meeting and they adopted a resolution in support of this project. The President asked if the Board would like to support the project. **Mr. Wayne Halbert made a motion to provide a resolution of support for the Pulling Together Initiative. Ms. Sonia Lambert seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

#### **6. Consider Formation of Aquatic Weed Ad Hoc Committee**

President Darling stated that for the last couple of years there have been several groups working on different water related projects. The approach of the Bi-national Aquatic Weed Task Force (BAWTF) has been reactive as opposed to proactive. The President stated that he would like to see the BAWTF become more proactive and to pull all the similar groups together to see what common ground there was amongst them. President Darling stated he would like the RGRWA to establish an Aquatic Weed Ad Hoc Committee to take on these tasks and reactivate the BAWTF under the auspices of the RGRWA to help organize it and concentrate more on river issues. There are efforts to explore alternate water sources, but the Rio Grande is this regions primary water source and should be top priority. President Darling then called for a motion. **Mr. Paul Heller made a motion to create the Aquatic Weed Ad Hoc Committee and for Mr. Jo Jo White and Mr. Sonny Hinojosa to Co-Chair.** Members of the Committee will include: Mr. Jo Jo White and Mr. Sonny Hinojosa as Co-Chairs, Mr. Roy Rodriguez, Mr. Joe Barrera, and Mr. Erasmo Yarrito (TCEQ) and members to represent the IBWC and municipalities.

President Darling instructed the newly appointed committee to develop a budget and conduct a meeting before the end of the year. The President also recommended Mr. Roy Rodriguez coordinate a meeting of the Ad Hoc Groundwater Management Committee with Mr. Armando Vela, GWCD #16 as Mr. Vela related pertinent information to the Region M Group that could benefit the RGRWA..

**7. Consider Approval RE: Resolution in Support of USDA-ARS Facility in Weslaco**

***Mr. Joe Barrera made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Ms. Sonia Lambert seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

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

***Mr. Jimmie Steidinger made a motion to schedule the next meeting for January 4, 2012. Mr. Bobby Sparks seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Mr. Jones brought to the Board's attention a sponsorship opportunity for a water conservation workshop scheduled for December 1, 2011 with the University of Pan American's Office of Sustainability. Staff was requesting sponsorship in \$500.00 increments. ***Mr. Joe Barrera made a motion to approve a \$500.00 sponsorship of the water conservation workshop as presented. Mr. Brian Macmanus seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

**9. Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

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Jim Darling, President, RGRWA

ATTEST:

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Joe Barrera, Secretary-Treasurer, RGRWA