

*** Meeting minutes should be considered DRAFT until approved at the next council meeting. ***

Summary of Minutes

Water Conservation Advisory Council Meeting

Date: Tuesday January 14, 2020

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Location: TPWD Airport Commerce Office (1340 Airport Commerce Dr. Austin, TX 78741)

Meeting chaired by: Karen Guz, Presiding Officer

Meeting Facilitators: Josh Sendejar, Council Staff Support

<i>Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</i>	Jennifer Allis	<i>Institutional Water Users</i>	Bill Hoffman
<i>Texas Department of Agriculture</i>	Alternate David Villarreal	<i>Professional Organizations Focused on Water Conservation</i>	Sarah Schelssinger
<i>Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i>	Cindy Loeffler	<i>Higher Education</i>	Tim Loftus
<i>Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board</i>	---	<i>Agricultural Groups</i>	Alternate John Bender
<i>Texas Water Development Board</i>	Kevin Kluge	<i>Refining and Chemical Manufacturing</i>	Craig Elam
<i>Regional Water Planning Groups</i>	Aubrey Spear*	<i>Electric Generation</i>	Greg Carter
<i>Federal Agencies</i>	Maria Martinez	<i>Mining and Recovery of Minerals</i>	CJ Tredway
<i>Municipalities</i>	Karen Guz	<i>Landscape Irrigation and Horticulture</i>	Anai Padilla
<i>Groundwater Conservation Districts</i>	Leah Martinsson	<i>Water Control and Improvement Districts</i>	Dustan Compton
<i>River Authorities</i>	Valerie Miller	<i>Rural Water Users</i>	Celia Eaves
<i>Environmental Groups</i>	Ken Kramer	<i>Municipal Utility Districts</i>	Donna Howe
<i>Irrigation Districts</i>	Wayne Halbert		

Also present: Alternates – Eddy Trevino, Jason Knoblock, Jessica Woods*, Jennifer Walker, Denise Hickey, Karen Magid, Tom McLemore; Interested Parties – Ryan Skrobarczyk, Mike Howe, Perry Fowler, Dan Strub, Chris Charles, Allen Berthold, Sarah Gorton, Isabel Martinez; TWDB Staff – John Sutton, Cameron Turner, Shae Luther, Daniel Rice.

* Indicates participation by phone.

** Documents can be found at: <http://www.savetexaswater.org/meeting/council-meetings.asp>**

1. Introduction
The meeting began at 10:33 a.m.
2. Approval of Minutes from the November 19, 2019 meeting
The minutes were accepted as written
3. Public Comment
Mike Howe of Texas AWWA gave a brief update on the Water Conservation Training effort. The effort has been initiated and completion is expected by the end of the year.

TAWWA will plan on incorporating Water Loss Validation in the second round of the training and will be monitoring what transpires with the Council's report and in the subsequent legislative session.

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4. Update from the Texas Water Development Board

Mr. Greg Carter was confirmed to the Council to represent Electric Generation at the December 19th TWDB Board Meeting.

TWDB's Total Water Loss Control Program workshops begin today (January 14th). As of now, 5 workshops have filled to capacity.

TWDB has \$127,860 available to conduct a study to further water conservation through quantification and measurement. TWDB is interested in using these funds for a water loss audit validation study. TWDB will post an RFQ for a contractor to conduct a data validation of water utilities of varying sizes (<10,000; 10,000 – 50,000; and 50,000 – 100,000 population). TWDB hopes to have this project completed by the end of the year, and are interested in the Council's feedback by the end of the week.

5. Reports from Workgroups

Reports from Workgroups have been incorporated with the Agenda Item 6.

6. Discussion on Potential Legislative Recommendations for the 2020 Legislative Report

K. Guz began discussion by stating the Council may be able to finalize some legislative recommendations with today's meeting, but many will require additional research, development. The Council will most likely require a February meeting.

The next meeting date was set for Tuesday, February 11th at 10:30 a.m. and will be held at the TPWD – Airport Commerce Office.

Agricultural:

The Agricultural workgroup held a conference call last week. Much of the discussion was centered on the ET Network recommendation.

Dustan Compton (chair of the Wholesale Workgroup) stated that the Wholesale Workgroup was also interested in this recommendation, and he has had some discussions with Dr. Fipps, TWDB staff, and others since the last meeting and was present for the conference call of the Ag workgroup.

D. Compton stated that TWDB released a Feasibility Study in 2017 outlining how a statewide network could best be built ([Feasibility Study for Development of Statewide Evapotranspiration Network](#)). Currently, there are many water providers who use the information for various reasons. A potential recommendation may require one lead agency or could be a collaborative effort.

K. Guz asked the Council if there was enough interest in this recommendation to continue efforts to refine it.

Denise Hickey commented that with some many entities using the data, she would find it hard to believe that a university would simply shut down a program should Dr. Fipps retire. Additionally, D. Hickey stated that there are more uses for the data than irrigation applications,

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both landscape and agricultural, including storm water modeling, waste water inflows, and others that are used in her region.

A motion was introduced and seconded to continue working on a recommendation focused on ET Networks. There were none opposed.

The next topic discussed on the conference call was the re-introduction of the recommendation to re-establish funding for the Texas Ag Water Efficiency Education & Demonstration Project. The workgroup was interested in re-introducing this recommendation in the 2020 WCAC Report. Mr. Wayne Halbert has provided some information to refine and update the figures for the recommendation.

Commercial & Institutional:

Mr. Bill Hoffman began the update for the CI Workgroup by stating his CI auditor certification workshops in California will be starting soon.

In regards to the Enhanced Data Collection and Availability recommendation from the previous report, Mr. Hoffman stated that so much data is being collected through state agencies and others, so the question is how can this data be mined and used for analysis? There should be a means to coordinate data for modeling purposes, and potentially come up with a schedule for this analysis, to include factors like seasonality. Additionally, the coding of CII accounts and benchmarking these accounts should also be considered.

K. Guz commented that this may be more of a research proposal rather than a recommendation for funding.

K. Kramer asked if this would still be seen as a legislative recommendation or something to include within the body of the report. Mr. Kramer also brought up that perhaps TWDB would not be the primary agency for this recommendation, that others may be better suited for the research/data aspects. It was also brought up that we may need to prioritize our recommendations. Another comment noted was that the Council should consider the total amount of funding it is recommending in its legislative recommendations.

G. Carter asked if any of the data in question is currently being captured in the Regional Water Planning process? K. Guz commented that to her knowledge, it is not.

Municipal:

Gold Star Recognition Program:

K. Guz began with an update on the Gold Star Recognition Program. The workgroup has drafted an application for the program. At a workgroup meeting held last week, the workgroup refined the drafted application, decided that a committee, who would meet on a quarterly basis, would be used for reviewing?. In regards to promotion, TWDB will provide the emails of conservation coordinators who provided a work-related email address for the Council to contact regarding the Gold Star Recognition Program.

There are seven criteria for the recognition program. Initial discussions from the workgroup discussed the possibility of having a majority of the criteria being met would allow an entity to receive the recognition, however after further discussion it was decided that this was a

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recognition program for entities who went above and beyond the minimum requirements, and therefore should meet all criteria for recognition. It was also mentioned that should an entity be missing a minor portion of a criteria, they could update their plan, resubmit to the appropriate agency, and be considered for the program.

V. Miller asked if wholesale providers were eligible? As a Wholesale Service Provider, water loss is not assessed as they do not distribute potable water.

The question was then asked if wholesale providers should be included as well as industrial or agricultural entities?

The Council decided to begin with municipal entities with the possibility of expanding participation in the future.

T. Loftus asked if the use of the Municipal Water Conservation Planning Tool was considered in determination of Gold Star consideration?

K. Guz stated that she would not exclude an entity from recognition because they did not use the tool.

D. Howe motioned to begin taking applications for the Gold Star Recognition Program.

V. Miller seconded the motion.

The Council approved the motion to begin taking applications.

J. Walker commented that the Council had discussed adding the information to the Council's website as well as adding a link to the Water Conservation Plan page on the TWDB website.

TWDB staff commented that could be done.

K. Guz asked the Council if there were any others who have not been identified as being willing to participate in the review committee.

T. Lofuts, D. Compton, and D. Hickey noted they would be willing to participate.

G. Carter asked if the Annual Conservation Reports were considered for recognition?

K. Guz noted that the annual reports were not considered at this time, as the Gold Star Recognition is meant to recognize the plan document itself, not necessarily how its implemented. There may be the possibility to expand the effort in the future or create a separate program for the Annual Reports.

Legislative Recommendations:

The first recommendation discussed for the workgroup was the recommendation brought up for the 2018 WCAC Report dealing with time of day watering restrictions for those entities seeking funding from TWDB. K. Kramer was asked how he felt refining this recommendation for inclusion in the 2020 WCAC Report. K. Kramer stated he would welcome feedback on developing and potentially reintroducing this recommendation from the Council.

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The second potential recommendation discussed was one dealing with water waste. K. Guz stated that an ordinance within the city of San Antonio has been greatly effective for SAWS and was wondering how others may feel. Several Council members stated while they were supportive of the notion, they were hesitant for it to become a recommendation. W. Halbert stated he has always held the belief that local control is better than mandated state oversight. It was also commented that the definition of 'beneficial use' would need to be clearly defined as it can become rather complex from a legal standpoint.

D. Howe noted that MUDs have used their rate structures to combat water waste.

Public Awareness:

There was no update from the workgroup.

K. Guz brought up there had been previous discussion of re-introducing the recommendation from the 2018 report regarding a statewide public awareness campaign. Now that the Texas Water Foundation has taken on the effort, language will need to be re-worked.

D. Hickey and S. Schlessinger will work to develop language for the recommendation.

Water Loss:

The workgroup did have a meeting/conference call last week. Much of the discussion focused on a potential legislative recommendation regarding Water Loss Validation. TWDB introduced the idea for their study at last week's workgroup meeting, and the workgroup discussed how that study could influence a potential legislative recommendation. There was a general idea to use the findings of the TWDB water loss audit validation study to guide a larger effort.

The workgroup developed two options for a potential recommendation:

Option 1 would make a state-funded Level 1 Validation mandatory for about 80 utilities with 3,300 connections who currently have financial obligations with TWDB.

Option 2 would create a voluntary state-funded study for approximately 80 utilities.

Both options would also call for TWDB to establish a methodology for conducting level 1 validations, and establish a training program to certify validators.

D. Strub stated this would put the state on a path that other states are already on.

This effort would ensure that the data the state receives, and bases its funding on, is good data.

K. Kluge noted that TWDB would not support a recommendation that puts additional requirements on certain entities seeking funding from the agency.

K. Guz noted that she would like to see a write-up with benefits other states have seen prior to a vote on this recommendation.

D. Howe asked what the reception after receiving a Level 1 Validation was?

K. Guz mentioned she has heard it receives mixed reviews.

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G. Carter noted that the recommendation needs to mention TWDB's effort within it.

J. Walker noted that in the spirit of K. Kramer's earlier point, the recommendation could be scaled down to minimize required funding.

K. Kluge noted that the recommendation should include the number of FTE's to do associated work.

C. Tredway noted that the legislature would be more accommodating of a voluntary effort.

C. Eaves stated that feedback may be more valuable from entities who are interested in the validation process, rather than a mandatory requirement.

K. Guz then asked the Council on feedback regarding the funding amount.

K. Kramer suggested reducing the number of utilities to reduce the cost associated with the recommendation.

Most of the Council supported the notion of a voluntary measure.

Wholesale:

No update.

Deadline for Write-Up on recommendations: January 31, 2020

Write-Ups should be sent to Council by: February 4, 2020

7. Other Business

None

8. Announcement of Conferences and Events

January 30th – 31st: [TAGD Business Meeting](#); Austin, TX

February 13th: [Central Texas Water Conservation Symposium](#); Austin, TX

March 31st – April 3rd: [Texas Water 2020](#); Fort Worth, TX

April 7th: [Texas Water Film Festival](#); Austin, TX

May 6th: [Texas Rainmaker Dinner](#); Austin, TX

September 1st – 3rd: [Texas Groundwater Summit](#); San Antonio, TX

9. Future Meeting Dates and Locations

Tuesday, February 11, 2020; 10:30 a.m.

TPWD – Airport Commerce Office

1340 Airport Commerce Dr. Austin, TX 78741

10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:48 p.m.