

# Minutes for Meeting of the Paso del Norte Watershed Council

October 19, 2001 @ 2:00 PM  
NMWRRRI Conference Room, Las Cruces, New Mexico  
Chaired by Jim Stefanov

Present were: Jim Stefanov, Christopher Brown, Conrad Keyes, Jr., Brian Hanson, Zhuping Sheng, Rosemary Staley, Gilbert Anaya, Dan Santantonio, Julie Maitland, John Burkstaller, Ari Michelsen, Mike Landis, Ed Fierro, Keith Landreth, Marilyn Taylor, Antonio Flores, Sonny Holguin, Doug Echlin, Sue Watts, Kevin Bixby, Inga Groff, Joe Groff, Kevin Oshima

## Agenda

### 1.) Executive Committee Membership

- a) Review of application for Executive Committee membership by Dr. Christopher Brown . Application accepted by Board. Chris will represent interests in New Mexico.
- b) Resignation from Executive Committee by John Sproul. John's resignation accepted. He will continue in his role as Councilor.

#### Additional items:

- c) Need for permanent chair especially in light of signature required for Cooperative agreement with EPWU. Conrad Keyes was nominated as Chair and motion was seconded by Julie Maitland. Motion carried. The Assistant Chair, Sue Watts, was also elected.
  - d) Need for language in bylaws for setting term limits and duties of Executive Committee officers. John Burkstaller, Ari Michelsen, and Jim Stefanov (Jim will chair) will recommend language for changes in by laws.
  - e) Secretary and treasurer to be appointed/elected at next meeting. Ed Fierro nominated as Secretary. Do we also need to designate a data storage facility/institution where records can be archived?
- 2.) EPWU / TAMU Cooperative Agreement for Coordinator Position. At the Oct 18, 2001 MAC meeting, the EPWU offered to provide funding that would support a coordinator half time. TAMU would be the fiscal agent. John Burkstaller moved that we accept the cooperative agreement and Julie Maitland seconded. The motion carried.
- 3.) Watershed Assistance Grant proposal status (Sue Watts). Our proposal has made it to the finals. The last hurdle is a check on the fiscal recipient of the funds. When the grant was submitted, Southwest Environmental Center was the designated fiscal agent; now it would be TAMU. A revised budget as well as a questionnaire from the fiscal agent must be submitted to River Network by Oct. 31, 2001. Sue Watts will coordinate with Lori Miller at TAMU.

- 4.) WWF Grant Proposal (Sue Watts). A proposal was submitted to World Wildlife Fund for funding that would support the development of Spanish language outreach materials. WWF was favorable to the proposal but would like clarification on the type of outreach materials to be developed and who the target audience would be. Revisions must be submitted by Nov 31, 2001. Sue Watts to follow up on this.
- 5.) Corps of Engineers potential funding (Tony Flores). Tony Flores reported that the Public Works Department of the City of El Paso will be working with the Corps of Engineers to develop a master plan for NW El Paso up to the state line. This will incorporate all arroyos and should also incorporate wetlands and river restoration. Costs will be shared 50:50 and the City will do the construction. This is envisioned as being a 5-10 year project. The Council may have opportunity to comment on/review/contribute to proposed master plan.
- 6.) Proposal for Coordinated Data Management within the PDN Watershed (Conrad Keyes) A need for coordinated data management is recognized, but may be premature to take any action on this at this time. The NM WRRRI will make a presentation on such to the Water Task Force on next Friday. Shall we make this a part of strategic plan?
- 7.) FOIA to DOJ on curtailment of extending URGWOM from Elephant Butte to Fort Quitman (Conrad Keyes) Legally, primary data held by IBWC, BoR, etc in this reach can not be used for URGWOM. Can others use this data? John Kennedy from WRRRI reported on mapping project for reach funded by Hewlett Foundation. Conrad Keyes will draft letter to Justice Department requesting release of data. Mike Landis will also talk to USBR attorneys as to status of lawsuit and availability of river data.
- 8.) Proposal to help Greg Thomas, etal with watershed modeling efforts from Elephant Butte to Presidio (Conrad Keyes). Some institutions have reservations about the NHI project. Will suggest they use FOIA to get data needed for their project.
- 9.) NM Water Quality Control Commission's decision at its 10/10 hearing in Las Cruces regarding the proposed primary contact use designation for the Rio Grande below Leasburg (Kevin Bixby). At that meeting no decision was made. The request was that the water-use designation be changed from secondary contact to primary contact. The City of Las Cruces supports the more stringent water quality standards but has reservations about encouraging people to swim in the river due to unknown hazards and potential liability issues. There is a proposal before the commission to keep the secondary contact designation, but with the primary contact coliform standard.
- 10.) Coordination with other groups doing similar work (Christopher Brown). Chris pointed out a need for 'official' coordination among regional groups. Current Council members need to report to us what other groups are doing and also report to those other groups what the Council is doing. We also need to recruit Councilors from un-represented organizations. 'Meet and greet' functions and webpage may be useful.
- 11.) Discussion on IBWC's Canalization Project EIS (Bixby/Stefanov) . To be discussed at next meeting.
- 12.) Other business.

- a) Brian Hanson (Chair), Mike Landis, Julie Maitland, and Doug Echlin will form a committee to begin the development of a strategic plan for the Council.
- b) The Officers of the Executive Committee along with Ari Michelsen will be the search committee for hiring the coordinator. All members to funnel comments about job description for coordinator to Sue Watts by Oct 26.
- c) Chris Brown to Chair/Coordinate Subcommittee as mentioned in item 10) and will draft some guidelines for such.

13.) Next Meeting Friday Nov 16, 9 AM at Burges Hall, Rm 411 at UTEP.

14) Meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm