

MINUTES

Paso del Norte Watershed Council

ANNUAL MEETING

11:30 am to 1:00 pm

Monday, November 22, 2004

Great American Land and Cattle Co.

Anthony, Texas



Attending:

Christopher Brown, New Mexico State University

Rafael Corral, Ft. Bliss, Directorate of the Environment

Susan Daniel, US IBWC

Tim Darden, NMDA

Mike Fahy, El Paso Water Utilities

Ed Fierro, El Paso Water Utilities

Alfredo Granados, Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez

Inga Groff, League of Women Voters

Joe Groff, Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue

Ed Hamlyn, University of Texas-EI Paso

Nancy Hanks, Program Coordinator

Brian Hanson, U.S. Fish & Wildlife

Woody Irving, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Conrad Keyes, Consultant

Jacob Massoud, Ysleta

Ari Michelsen, TAES-TAMU, Treasurer

Jennifer Montoya, World Wildlife Fund

Bernardino Olague, US IBWC

Valerie Provencio, EPWU, Secretary

Carlos Rincon, Environmental Defense

Lori Rivera, Ysleta

Zhuping Sheng, TAES-TAMU

Rosemary Staley, City of El Paso

Sue Watts, Chair

1. Convening the Annual Meeting and Welcome

Sue Watts convened the meeting at noon.

2. Introductions

Those attending introduced themselves.

3. Approval of minutes from the October 6, 2004

Berna moved and Ping seconded approval of minutes with changes. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report

Ari Michelsen provided the Treasurer's report.

5. State of the Council

Council Chair Sue Watts discussed the Coordinated Database/GIS, the Work/Business Plan, Bylaw revisions, and the Strategic Plan. She explained that the Council had formed working groups and efforts had been made to improve communication within the Council. She feels that the Council is maturing, morphing into a more tightly knit organization with own identity.

Ari mentioned other Council accomplishments, including EPWU's continuing support, the submission of grant proposals, and efforts to work on proposals with EPWU and the irrigation districts.

6. Election of Executive Committee members

Conrad asked about the change in term durations (from two to three years) for Executive Committee members, adding that right now there were no terms expiring in 2006. Sue suggested that one-third of the Executive Committee should come up for re-election each year, but added that the subject should be discussed at an upcoming Executive Committee meeting.

Sue noted that Rosemary Staley was retiring from the City of El Paso and chose not to run for re-election. Beatriz Vera and Miguel Flores had each resigned. There was a discussion of groups that are not currently but should be represented on the Council. These included the City of El Paso, the Community Development Department of the City of Las Cruces, Fort Bliss, New Mexico State Parks, New Mexico Game & Fish. Sue asked that Nancy follow up on inviting representatives of these groups to future meetings.

The following Executive Committee members' terms expired in 2004 and were proposed for re-election for the term 2004-2007: **Kevin Bixby, Christopher Brown, Inga Groff, Joe Groff, Ed Hamlyn, Brian Hanson, Berna Olague, Carlos Rincon, and Zhuping Sheng.** Ari asked that Sue announce which group (government, university, environment, etc.) each member represented, which she did. He proposed that the group of nine be re-elected as a slate, and it was approved unanimously.

7. New Business

▪ Good Water Neighbors

Ed Hamlyn informed the Council of the Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME), which has a membership from Jordan, Palestine, and Israel. The group receives funding from USAID and the EU. It is currently initiating a new regional project called Good Water Neighbors, which includes people from 11 different communities that share water resources. UTEP has set up an exchange program with the group, with funding from USAID, and would like to involve the Paso del Norte Watershed Council.

Ed discussed the problems with water quality and quantity in the Jordan-Palestine-Israel region, which are similar to problems we have here in the Paso del Norte Watershed. He would like to arrange a Watershed Council meeting at a time when delegates from the FoEME are here, which could be in February or March 2005. He also discussed the possibility of a charrette via video teleconference at the end of their visit.

▪ Water 2025 Challenge Grant Proposal

Mike Fahy presented information on the Water 2025 Bureau of Reclamation Challenge Grant proposal, which is due in January 2005. It is being initiated by EPWU and involves the Paso del Norte Watershed Council, the City of Las Cruces, and EBID. Ed Hamlyn moved to authorize the Council's participation and Christopher Brown seconded. Ari presented a friendly amendment for Sue to draft a letter of support in concept, circulate it, and then ask the Council for approval. Ed accepted this amendment. Jennifer Montoya asked for a summary of the proposal to be circulated prior to a vote.

Conrad asked what EPWU would do, regarding the Coordinated Database/GIS, if it doesn't get the Challenge Grant. Mike Fahy stated that he would like to get an interim agreement to extend the current EPWU funding of the Council so that its deadlines matched those of the USCOE. Ari suggested the Council look seriously and quickly for organizational support. Chris asked if there was an effort to put together some sort of fund-raising strategies, and Ari said no.

8. Other Business

Ari announced that the new Drought Watch press release came out today and that right now water for the Paso del Norte section of the Rio Grande is almost completely contingent on the snow pack. Ari also announced that the University Council on Water Resources had a Call for Papers with a deadline of December 1, 2004, but that deadline had been extended to early January. The theme is river and lake restoration.

Brian Hanson announced that he had attended a meeting in Albuquerque on salt cedar removal, and that \$1 million had been set aside for salt cedar removal for restoration. He said he would send information regarding the application process, and that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife will implement it.

Carlos Rincon announced that he has met with the CILA representative assigned to restoration, and that he would provide the Council with her name.

9. Date and Location of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next Executive Committee meeting would be on Friday, January 7, 2005, at 1:30 pm at the IBWC. Sue wants reports from each of the working groups on their work plans.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1pm.

Respectfully submitted by Nancy N. Hanks