

Paso del Norte Watershed Council
Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes

Café Mayapan Conference Room
2000 Texas Avenue, El Paso, Texas 79901
August 16, 2002, 10:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Chair – Conrad G. Keyes, Jr.

Conrad Keyes called the meeting to order at 10:34 AM. Members present were: Sue Watts, Ed Fierro, Inga Groff, Marilyn Taylor, Keith Landreth, Kevin Bixby, Jim Stefanov, Zhuping Sheng, Bobby Creel, Raed Aldouri, Conrad Keyes, Joe Groff, Dan Santantonio, Mike Landis, Doug Echlin, Tina Mayagoitia, Valerie Provencio, and Glenn Brown.

- 1) July 1, 2002 Meeting Minutes Summary by Ed Kosak – Meeting Summary approved with no changes.
- 2) Ed Kosak provided a brief update on Program Coordinator's Work in Progress. A hard copy of the Work in Progress was distributed to the Executive Committee. The report outline is provided as a separate attachment.
- 3) The Executive Committee held a discussion of its upcoming Annual Meeting. The group referred to and reviewed the Council's Bylaws to ensure proper compliance during elections. A Nomination Committee (NC) was appointed. The NC will consist of Jim Stefanov, Ed Fierro (secretary), and Ed Kosak (chair). It was recommended that the NC begin its role by producing a ballot to be forwarded to the Executive Committee for consideration. Those Executive Committee members present at today's meeting agreeing to remain as members and/or officers of the Paso del Norte Watershed Council are: Sue Watts, Inga Groff, Keith Landreth, Bobby Creel, Conrad Keyes, Dan Santantonio, and Kevin Bixby. The remainder of the Executive Committee members will be contacted by Ed Kosak to determine each individual's interest in remaining in office. A deadline of August 30, 2002 was established for notification of each Executive Committee member's intention.

Kevin Bixby requested clarification of the Council's role in the upcoming Mission Possible 2002 (MP 2002) Annual Conference events. Ed Kosak stated that the Council is merely a co-sponsor of the MP 2002 6th Annual Conference along with several other organizations. During the MP 2002 Annual Conference, a two-hour adjournment has been scheduled to allow a brief meeting and election.

- 4) Ed Fierro provided an update of the Coordinated Database Agreement/Scope of Work. The El Paso Water Utilities Coordinated Database Cooperative Agreement has been signed by Conrad Keyes, Ari Michelsen, and Ed Archuleta. The document has been forwarded to Texas A&M's Contracts and Grants Office for their signature. Ed Kosak will add a copy the Scope of Work to the final version of today's minutes as a separate attachment.

Conrad Keyes commented on the work that is continuing to gain grant funding from the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Albuquerque District. He has been working with Kris Schafer, Ari

Michelsen, Ed Fierro, and John Burkstaller to acquire section 729 funds from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). A draft proposal was submitted and is in the process of review. A conference call was held August 5th. Conrad, Bobby, and Zhuping will be meeting with Gail Stockton on Thursday, August 22nd, to discuss other potential sources for USACE funding, and the transmission of data into the Upper Rio Grande Water Operations Model (URGWOM) system housed at the Corps. A copy of the finalized draft proposal completed by the project committee will be made available to the Executive Committee for review and comment.

- 5) Sue Watts, Inga Groff, and Ed Kosak provided a brochure update. Copies of the draft brochure were provided for review by Ed Kosak for the Executive Committee's review. Sue Watts began by requesting comments and suggestions especially on the content of the brochure. Ed Fierro and John Burkstaller provided their suggestions. Sue requested that the members of the Executive Committee forward additional comments to her, Inga Groff, or Ed Kosak by August 30th to allow for timely publication prior to the upcoming Mission Possible 2002 Annual Conference and our Annual Meeting. Preliminary logo ideas were circulated to the Executive Committee to allow an opportunity for comments.
- 6) An Educational/Outreach Committee (EOC) was established due to the volume of information beyond the medium provided by the informational brochure. Display boards are needed for the Annual Meeting and other future events. Also, there is a need to develop curriculum materials for school-aged audiences.
- 7) The committee will be providing input for educational programs at the Annual Meeting. Those forming the EOC will be a representative from UTEP (Globe Program), NMSU (WERC program), and members from the Executive Committee including Marilyn Taylor, Sue Watts, Bobby Creel, and Valerie Provencio who will all oversee work by the Texas Master Naturalists who are volunteers that provide education, outreach, and services dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources within their communities for the state of Texas.
- 8) Ed Kosak informed the Council that Brian Hanson has been detailed to Phoenix for the next three weeks. Therefore, the Letter of Interest from NMSU for their potential participation to join efforts with the Paso del Norte Watershed Council in a biological survey along the 180-mile reach of the Rio Grande was not available for distribution at today's meeting. Bobby Creel offered to attempt to provide further details regarding the Letter of Interest and forward Ed Kosak to be distributed to the Executive Committee.
- 9) Time did not permit the discussion of a Watershed Council Business Plan. This topic will be scheduled at a later date.
- 10) Ed Kosak informed the Council that Brian Hanson has been detailed to Phoenix for the next three weeks. Therefore, the Letter of Interest from NMSU for participating in a biological survey along the 180-mile reach of the Rio Grande was not available for distribution at today's meeting. Bobby Creel offered to obtain further details regarding the Letter of Interest and forward for distribution to the Executive Committee.
- 11) Conrad Keyes and Ed Fierro announced the date, time and location of the upcoming New Mexico – Texas Water Commission, Management Advisory Committee and Steering Committee. The meeting will be held 9:30 AM, September 10, 2002 at the Las Cruces City Council Chambers located at 200 N. Church Street.

12) In other business - Kevin Bixby provided comments about recent publications. Kevin began by stating that New Mexico State Parks has released a draft feasibility study for the proposed Mesilla Valley Bosque Park. It encompasses active wetlands in a construction project with the City of Las Cruces. The final review will take place in October 2002. Kevin went on to briefly discuss documents including Taking Charge of Water Destiny: a Water Management Policy for New Mexico. Also being circulated throughout federal and state agencies is the draft version of the Rio Grande Restoration Vision. It is currently out for internal review and should be released soon. This publication covers the reach of the Rio Grande from the Head Waters to Candelaria, Texas.

- Kevin informed the Executive Committee (Committee) about a conference being held for the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC). It was stated that the CEC was formed as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement. The conference will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, October 3rd and 4th. It is a public workshop on freshwater issues in North America.
- Kevin also informed the Committee that the Southwest Environmental Center (SWEC) has recently held a grand opening of its new facility located at the Las Cruces Downtown Mall. He also stated that the Rio Grande Native Fish Aquarium is now up and running, featuring shovelnose sturgeon, longnose gar and other current and former native fish of the desert Rio Grande.
- Sue Watts informed the Committee of Congressman Reyes's Water Summit. The Summit will be held August 28th at the UTEP Fox Fine Arts Center at 9:00 AM. Ed Hamlyn is organizing the event.
- Conrad Keyes provided information on upcoming water quality related meetings. Conrad stated that there will be a hearing on proposed changes to the New Mexico Stream Standards in Santa Fe on September 30, 2002. Conrad also remarked that on October 1st there will be a hearing for the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission. The hearing will be held in Santa Fe and will cover the New Mexico Water Quality Management Plan.

11) The next meeting of the Paso del Norte Watershed Council will be held September 28th from 2 PM to 4 PM at the Undergraduate Learning Center on the UTEP campus.

Meeting adjourned 1:02 PM