

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

Summary of Minutes

Water Conservation Advisory Council Meeting

Date: October 26, 2023

Time: 10:30 am

Location: 1700 N. Congress, Austin, TX 78701

Meeting chaired by: Karen Guz, Presiding Officer

Meeting Facilitators: Denise Livingston, Council Staff Support, TWDB

	Voting Member Alternate	<i>Irrigation Districts</i>	Wayne Halbert
<i>Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</i>	Leslie Patterson Jennifer Allis	<i>Institutional Water Users</i>	Bill Hoffman Eddy Trevino
<i>Texas Department of Agriculture</i>	David Villarreal	<i>Professional Organizations Focused on Water Conservation</i>	Sarah Schlessinger Colin McDonald
<i>Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i>	Marty Kelly Vanessa Chapman	<i>Higher Education</i>	Robert Mace
<i>Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board</i>	John Foster Mitch Conine	<i>Agricultural Groups</i>	John Bender
<i>Texas Water Development Board</i>	Sam Marie Hermitte Erika Mancha	<i>Refining and Chemical Manufacturing</i>	Craig Elam
<i>Regional Water Planning Groups</i>	Aubrey Spear	<i>Electric Generation</i>	Greg Carter Ryan Bayle
<i>Federal Agencies</i>	Troy Hill	<i>Mining and Recovery of Minerals</i>	CJ Tredway
<i>Municipalities</i>	Karen Guz Joyce Warren	<i>Landscape Irrigation and Horticulture</i>	Whitney Milberger
<i>Groundwater Conservation Districts</i>	Leah Martinsson	<i>Water Control and Improvement Districts</i>	Dustan Compton
<i>River Authorities</i>	Stacy Pandey	<i>Rural Water Users</i>	
<i>Environmental Groups</i>		<i>Municipal Utility Districts</i>	Donna Howe Earl Foster

Also present: Shae Luther, John Sutton, Temple McKinnon, Ted Pick, Paula Szymanski, Patrick Shriver, Mitch Conine, Marilyn Gated, Loren Whitman, Kathy Fonville, Jessica Woods, Isabel Martinez, Natalie Houston, Chris Loft, Alyssa Pantuso

1. Introduction:

Presiding Officer Karen Guz called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

Roll call was taken, and it was determined that a quorum was present.

Chairwoman Paup made a guest appearance and briefly addressed the committee.

Karen welcomed and introduced the newly appointed council members:

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Stacy Pandey – River Authorities
Whitney Milberger – Landscape, Irrigation & Horticulture
Troy Hill – Federal Agencies
Leslie Patterson - TCEQ

2. Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

3. Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) Update

Sam Hermitte gave the following TWDB update:

- a. Proposition 6 on the ballot is the measure associated with Senate Bill 28 that was passed last legislative session.

The two parts of the Bill that impact the council:

- The Public Awareness program is to consider the difference in water needs of various geographic regions of the state and will be designed to complement and support existing local and regional water education or awareness programs.
 - Water Loss Audit technical assistance program expands services provided by the Technical Assistance in Water Loss Control (TAWLC) program, currently in development, where TWDB staff will work with utilities one-on-one and conduct water loss data validation to improve the accuracy of their water loss data.
- b. Proposed rule changes regarding water loss audits were approved by the Board in September and are currently posted for public comment. The comment period ends October 30. The rules are scheduled to be approved at the November 9th meeting.
 - c. TWDB solicited stakeholder ideas to support agricultural water conservation with the aim of having a more thorough understanding of projects or programs that could benefit our stakeholders and their needs for data and technical assistance. The deadline was October 24. We received 26 submittals.
 - d. TWDB will be requesting applications for Fiscal Year 2024 agricultural water conservation grants in December 2023 and award up to \$1.5 million in grants from the Agricultural Water Conservation Fund.
 - e. TWDB anticipates taking the population, municipal demand, and non-municipal demand projections for use in the 2027 State Water Plan to our Board in November and will have the data on our website immediately following. Draft projections are on the website <https://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/data/projections/index.asp> Currently, revision requests are being reviewed and the site will be updated with the revisions 11/9/23

4. Workgroup Updates:

- Municipal – Karen Guz provided an overview of a drought survey project started by the municipal group in August. The survey is being designed in cooperation with TAWWA and will be sent to all the conservation coordinators. The survey is to identify successful and unsuccessful drought planning strategies, and changes utilities are considering making to their drought plans. There is an added intent to build a resource to assist entities with drought planning and drought planning strategies.
The survey will be coming out within the next few days.
- Water loss – no report
- Commercial/Institution – Bill updated the Council on a work group meeting that was held October 12.
 - a. The C&I group will look at revising plumbing codes for commercial/intuitional and what plumbing codes need to be added into state statute.
 - b. ICI BMPs will be out by the end of the year.
 - c. Working with IAPMO and other to get National certification to become a licensed commercial-institutional water conservation auditor.
 - d. Metering cooling towers and landscape irrigation.
 - a. International Green Construction Code (IGCC) requires landscape irrigation meters.
 - e. Bill and Robert Mace discussed inviting Dr. Soe Myint, Chief Conservation Officer & Meadows Endowed Chair in Water Conservation, Department of Geography to attend and present at a future WCAC meeting. Dr. Myint studies the environmental impacts of tree cover changes.
 - f. Robert Mace mentioned Texas + Water website. Think + Water is his article that provides non-technical summaries on papers of potential WCAC interest. The website is <https://texaspluswater.wp.txstate.edu/>
 - g. Mid-sized cooling towers may be going away per an analysis done by SAWS when trying to estimate cooling tower usage. Possible partnership with TAWWA to create webinar to discuss trends.
- Public Awareness – Sarah discussed one of the charges of the Council is the Blue Legacy Awards that had been awarded during Water Day at the Capitol and more recently in conjunction with Texas American Works Association. The Blue Legacy Awards require a significant amount of time and dedication. Sarah asked if other committee members were willing to chair the committee of take on the Blue Legacy awards. The work group chair does not have to be a WCAC member.
 - a. Texas Water Foundation has made an effort to establish a statewide water awareness campaign that will improve behavior or better action. The Foundation is working with behavioral change scientists to figure out how to link data to action and

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behavioral change. With Senate Bill 28/Proposition 6 – there may be funding through TWDB for a state-wide awareness campaign via RFQ process or contract.

- Agriculture – No report. John mentioned needing to set up a meeting prior to the next WCAC meeting in January.
 - Industrial – No report
 - Wholesale/Rural water – Wholesale work group will be meeting on December 5.
5. Presiding Officer(s) Election
- (Greg, Jennifer, Donna) The nominating committee presented Karen Guz as their recommendation of presiding officer.
 - Karen asked for additional nominations from the floor. There were no additional nominations. Due to the bylaws stating elections will be held by ballot, a vote was still required. Karen Guz was re-elected to serve as presiding officer.
6. Discussion: 2024 WCAC Legislative Report – Karen discussed the timeline to complete the report. The Council needs to have the report completed by October 1 for TWDB to finalize the report for the legislature.
- Legislation recommendations need to be processed through the work groups and then brought to the Council as early as February.
 - Does the recommendation have stakeholder buy-in? Does it have meaningful investment returns?
 - Possibly add an irrigation work group. Irrigation, municipal and wholesale may find value in drought survey results.
 - Are there BMPs that need updating or no longer impactful?
 - Add Council meetings in February, March and August
7. Other Business –
- Discussion was held regarding the approval of meeting notes from July. Even though the meeting was not an in-person quorum, the Council would like to officially approve virtual meeting summaries for the record and documentation of the legislative report process.
 - Website information discussed in meeting- Texas Plus Water (<https://texaspluswater.wp.txstate.edu/>)
8. Announcement of Conferences and Events
- Alliance for Water Efficiency - Monday, October 30. Presentation on DOE's changes to residential clothes washer standards.
 - Texas Water 2024 – April 9-12 in Fort Worth. <https://www.txwater.org/about.cfm>
 - 17th Annual north Texas Regional Water Symposium – November 9, 2023. Contact Dustan for more information.
 - Robert Mace has a student presenting on rainwater harvesting systems and design systems that are highly drought proof.

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- Texas Water Conservation Association Fall conference. November 1 – 3
<https://www.twca.org/fallconference>
- 2024 Gulf Coast Water Conservation Symposium – February 22
<https://www.allianceforwaterefficiency.org/events/2024-gulf-coast-water-conservation-symposium>
- National River Symposium in McCallen– mid November. Please contact Sarah Schlessinger or Colin McDonald if you are interested in attending.
- Texas Water Foundation’s Texas water leader application for the 2024 class will open in December.
- Film Festival has been postponed until next spring with dates yet to be determined.
- Water in the Desert conference – Sul Ross State University Alpine, Tx January 18,2024

9. Future Meeting Dates and Locations

Jan. 18, April 18, July 18, Oct. 17, Nov. 7 - add a March (21) and August (15 or 22), in-person.

Possible meeting locations: LCRA-Red Bud Center, Austin’s Permit Center - Oscar Clara, Shield Ranch

10. Motion to adjourn made by CJ, seconded by Craig. Motion passed. Meeting ended 12:08pm