

Agenda
Plateau Water Planning Group
REGULAR MEETING
Initiated and Chaired at
Guadalupe Basin Natural Resources Center (GBNRC)
125 Lehmann Drive - Auditorium
Kerrville, Texas
August 2, 2023
10:00 AM

Notice having been given, a Regular Meeting of the Plateau Water Planning Group (PWPG) was held on Wednesday, August 2, 2023, beginning at 10:00 A.M. The meeting was initiated and chaired at GBNRC, 125 Lehmann Drive, Ste. 100, Kerrville, Texas. **Present in person**: Jonathan Letz, Kerr County; Tara Bushnoe, Kerr County; Scott Loveland, Kerr County; Gene Williams, Kerr County; David Mauk, Bandera County; Brian Leiker, Real County; David Jeffery, Bandera County; Homer Stevens, Bandera County; Max Martin, Edward/Val Verde/Kinney County; Jerry Simpton, Val Verde County; Jess Erlund, Kerr County; Kenneth Reed, Edwards County; Tammy Thompson, UGRA; Lann Bookout, Texas Water Development Board; Tony Smith, Carollo Engineering; Matthew Wilkinson, UGRA (hosted the meeting); Jody Grinstead, Admin. Asst.; Gerry Wolf and Mike Mecke. **Present via Zoom**: Dell Dickinson, Val Verde County; Feather Wilson, Bandera County; Hayli Hernandez, Bandera County; Katie Dahlberg, TWDB, Temple McKinnon, TWDB; Jennifer Jackson (Herrera), WSP; Saheli Majumda, WSP; Juan Acevedo, WSP; Diane McMahan; Marisa Bruno; Sarah Robertson, Texas Parks and Wildlife; and Carol Faulkenberry, Texas Department of Agriculture.

I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Certification of Quorum in Compliance with Texas Open Meetings Law.

It was determined that a quorum was present and the meeting was called to order.

II. Public Comments.

No public comments were made.

III. Approval of minutes from the June 22, 2023 Regular Meeting.

Scott Loveland stated that he abstained from the vote taken to disapprove submitting Population and Municipal Water Demand Projection numbers to the TWDB. A correction was made to the minutes. Chairman Letz asked that in the future if members that want to abstain or vote against a motion to please waive their hand to get his attention. **Motion by Max Martin to approve the June 22, 2023 minutes as amended; second by David Jeffery. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.**

IV. Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to approve invoices.

Motion by Tara Bushnoe to approve the following invoices: JP Morgan (Transcripts paid to GMR for 6/22/23 meeting) - \$302.50 and WSP (6/3/23 to 6/30/23) - \$10,834.11; second by Jerry Simpton. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

V. TWDB Presentation.

Chairman Letz stated that data that was presented by WSP at the last meeting was in correct. He stated that despite the mistake he still has issues with the original numbers sent out by TWDB. He noted that the motion at the last meeting to not approve the population projections may have other negative implications, including the contract UGRA has with WSP.

Katie Dahlberg, Manager of the Projections and Socioeconomic Analysis Department with TWDB, presented information regarding the projections process. She addressed what was new to this planning cycle and looked at the comparisons of the last planning cycle to the 2020 census. She spoke about declining birth rates and changing demographics that are happening across the state and nation. She addressed county level data for each county in Region J and transient

population. She noted that the 2016 and 2021 Plans were based of the 2010 census data and the current plan is based off the 2020 census data. She stated that the TWDB relied on county level projections developed by the Texas Demographic Center (TDC) – the state demographer’s office. She discussed each county in detail. Discussions ensued regarding issues the planning group members had with each of the county projections. Ms. Dahlberg stated that if the planning group disagreed with the numbers they would need to submit information to back up the numbers they are suggesting. Chairman Letz stated that there wasn’t enough money in the budget to do that, and TWDB should not expect the planning group members to spend their own money to prepare the information. Temple McKinnon (TWDB Water Supply Planning Director) stated that it is an eligible expense for the consultants. Jennifer Jackson stated that WSP has spent a great deal of time doing surveys and collecting data from the regions. Ms. Dalhberg continued reviewing slides for each county. She spoke briefly regarding transient population and water use. She stated that transient population is not part of the population estimates or projections, but water used by transient population is included in municipal demand. She agreed that it was more difficult to account for transient population not within a public water system. Chairman Letz suggested they get information from TCEQ and Ms. McKinnon assured the group that TWDB works with TCEQ to collect the data. Max Martin strongly disagreed with the projected numbers for Edwards County.

VI. Consider, discuss and take appropriate action on the revised draft population and municipal water demand projections for Region J presented by WSP.

Saheli Majumdar recapped what was discussed at the last meeting and reviewed the working schedule for the 6th planning cycle. She stated that the GPCD data that was provided during the June meeting was erroneous, and apologized for the error. She noted that the data that was presented during the April meeting was correct and is what will be used henceforth. That GPCD data has been updated to reflect input that has been received from the water use surveys.

Ms. Majumdar reviewed various handouts with GPCD values for each county. She noted that that one adjustment had been made for Kerr County. At the request of HGCD the number was revised from 84 to 150. She stated that was the only change that has happened since the meeting in April

Mr. Letz questioned where the original numbers came from and stated they are unreasonable numbers that are far too low. Ms. Majumdar stated they came from TWDB. Tony Smith (Carollo Engineers) stated they are provided by TWDB and come from water use survey data from 2015 through 2020. Ms. McKinnon stated they are based upon reported use to the water use survey. She reiterated that non-system groundwater use is challenging therefore a lot of the numbers are estimated use based upon best available numbers. Ms. Dahlberg noted that the baseline GPCD’s are drafted based on what was used in the last planning cycle. A brief discussion ensued regarding the numbers presented and the method used to arrive at those numbers.

Ms. Majumdar discussed municipal water demand projections which are based on the recommended GPCD values that have already been shared with the group. Mr. Tony Smith discussed how historical per capita data was used to arrive at the estimates. He noted that TWDB provides the draft starting point and the planning group has the opportunity to make modifications as long as there is evidence to support it and the guidelines set out by TWDB are met. He reviewed the various criteria (56 total) set out by TWDB. He noted that the consultants reviewed undercounted demographics, growth rates, population etc. and tried to round up whenever possible. A brief discussion ensued regarding growth in Kerr County and how the consultants can verify that growth, including growth created by the new wastewater line in Center Point. Mr. Smith stated that is the kind of data needed to help justify increasing the numbers.

Mr. Smith spoke briefly spoke about demand and stated that those demands need to be compared against supplies. Those are then compared to identify where there are needs or shortages. He stressed the need for documentation as evidence when shortages are predicted. He spoke about

planning for drought of record type conditions; trying to pick out what are those worst case scenarios with per capita usage with the intent to bump up the demand amount.

Mr. Smith spoke briefly about plumbing code savings. He said their recommendation is to take the observed worse and not assume any savings. Future assumed plumbing code savings would be used for estimating the future (2030, 2040, etc.) but the baseline would not be reduced. He stated that they are trying to get as much data from water providers as they can; some have plans and some do not. The goal of the water use surveys is to identify trends over the last 5 to 10 years.

Mr. Smith noted that we have moved from city limits to utility based planning during the last round of the regional planning process which has caused many people to say the numbers are off. He stated numbers are based off cumulative annual growth rates from water use surveys. He noted the challenge of convincing people of the importance of filling out the surveys. He briefly discussed the 0.5 and 1.0 migration scenarios and how they do not want to over project any declines in population. He spoke briefly regarding the census undercount and the impact it has on the WUGS in the region. Mr. Smith noted that a lot of time was spent on specific requests from WUG's and obtaining the documentation needed to justify for changing the numbers.

Ms. Majumdar spoke briefly regarding the responses and survey results that were received. With the help of UGRA, WSP surveyed all 11 water utility groups in Region J. 9 of the 11 WUGs responded and those responses were incorporated in their analysis. The main requests made were specific to population change and GPCD: CampWood requested population change; City of Bandera, City of Brackettville, Fort Clark Municipal Utility District, City of Kerrville, City of Rock Springs, and Kerrville South Water that is now owned by Aqua Texas Inc. approved the population projection that were submitted; and HGCD was the only one to respond regarding GPCD data and they requested that it be revised from 84 to 150.

Ms. Majumdar spoke briefly regarding the census undercount. She noted that they have accounted for the undercounted population in their current analysis.

Ms. Majumdar spoke briefly regarding the county basis draft population projections and water demand projections including the 2026 draft projections which are based on full and half migration scenarios. She then discussed each county individually. The planning group members voiced their concerns with the numbers stating the estimated population growth for each county was not high enough. Ms. Jackson assured the group that WSP is recommending the trend line that provides the largest population, which will in turn help with water demands as well. She also noted that population projections are assessed with each new plan so if the growth that is happening now is no consistent 40 or 50 years from now it will be accounted for accurately in future plans. Mr. Letz stated that he has a very hard time voting for a population projection that he doesn't believe is accurate; especially since these numbers go in the state water plan and the assumption is that the regional group has approved them. He noted that this has been an issue for the past 25 years and nothing has changed; the methodology TWDB is using is the problem. The consultants can do things to correct the numbers, but ultimately the methodology is flawed. Ms. McKinnon acknowledged the concerns and frustrations of the planning group and stated that TWDB recognizes the limitations of the methodology they utilize to project populations to get at demands. She agreed with Mr. Smith and suggested that the group focus on using the management supply factor to say they don't believe we are planning for enough water. Since it can't be addressed it on the population or demand side it can be addressed on the strategy side.

Ms. Majumdar reviewed her population projections by WUG, by county and by river basin handouts. She spoke briefly about each county.

Ms. Majumdar spoke about the total regional water demands in acre feet per year for each county. Ms. Jackson stated that the trend seen with population is the same as the trend with water demand as water demand is based on population and GPCD. The consultants recommend that the planning

group approve the water utility survey data (the gold line on the slide) and the undercount analysis (the green line on the slide) that has been applied to either the full or the half migration. Once approved, WSP will write a revision request letter with both data sets, give it to TWDB and let TWDB decide which of the two they will approve. Regardless of what gets approved, the group can put both sets of data in Chapter Two if that is their preference. Mr. Letz stated that he understood the importance of approving the numbers, but has a hard time approving numbers he does not agree with. He noted that Kerr County looks good, but Bandera County and Val Verde County are the most inaccurate. He acknowledged that the numbers need to be approved based on the contract situation with UGRA, but he is hesitant to do it because the planning group disagrees with the accuracy of the numbers. Ms. Jackson stated that if the planning group chooses to take no action on the revisions presented today then TWDB will default to their draft numbers which will omit all of the work that has been done thus far.

Mr. Letz noted that the transient population has not been accounted for in the numbers. Mr. Smith stated that while they are not reflected in the permanent population numbers, they are captured in the water usage data. A brief discussion ensued regarding transient population and exempt wells.

Mr. Mauk stated that the discussion regarding inaccurate population numbers cannot end here. Mr. Bookout stated that the planning groups' commentary about the issues they have with the numbers can be stated in the Plan. Mr. Letz noted that the group has had the same comments for the last five plans and nothing has changed. He stated that TWDB has not done one thing to address these issues in any of the previous Plans. **Mr. Simpton reiterated that the planning group is very concerned about the transient population that is impacting the areas but not be counted. Motion by Jerry Simpton to accept the recommendation of the consultants to accept the revised population and demand projections; second by Tara. The motion passed (Max Martin opposed).**