

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE NEW MEXICO/TEXAS WATER COMMISSION
MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC) AND
THE REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE WATER PROJECT
STEERING COMMITTEE (S)
ELEPHANT BUTTE IRRIGATION DISTRICT
530 S. MELENDRES
LAS CRUCES, NM 88005
November 29, 2001
9:00 am.

I. Review and Approval of Minutes from MAC/SC Meeting on October 18, 2001 (MAC/SC)

Ari Michelsen made the motion to accept the Minutes from the October 18, 2001 MACSC Meeting without revisions and Jerry Leyendecker seconded the motion. The Minutes were approved unanimously by the members of the MAC/SC who were present.

MAC/SC MEMBERS PRESENT

Michael Fahy - EPWU
Gary Esslinger - EBID
Jerry Leyendecker - Dona Ana County
Ari Michelsen - Texas A&M
Tony Tarquin - UTEP
Jorge Garcia - City of Las Cruces
Karl Wood - NMSU

A copy of the sign-in sheet is attached as Exhibit "A"

II. Update on the Activities of the Paso del Norte Watershed Council (Conrad Keyes).

Conrad Keyes reported that he is now the official chairperson of the Paso Del Norte Watershed Council (PDNWC), Sue Watts is the Assistant Chairman, and Ed Fierro is the Secretary. Ari Michelsen will be approved as the Treasurer, as soon as the bylaws are revised.

The last meeting of the PDNWC was held on November 16 at UTEP. The PDNWC is the recipient of a \$29,000 Watershed Assistance Grant (WAG) from EPA. The PDNWC is one of a total of eleven recipients for these grants out of a total of 180 applicants. Congratulations go to Sue Watts for her effort in preparing this application. EPWU has now formally approved the funding of approximately \$32,699.00 to support the position of the Watershed Council Coordinator, including expenses.

Members of the PDNWC Subcommittee on data management met at EPWU on November 30 to discuss the logistics of establishing a Web-based data management and retrieval system in a GIS format for the river and drain flows, along with some water quality data, for the Rio Grande Project area. This subcommittee includes two representatives each from UTEP, TAMU, NMSU and EPWU. Tony Tarquin suggested that Chris Brown of NMSU's Geography Department be included on the data management subcommittee, and Karl Wood mentioned that he would notify Conrad of the identity of two more professionals from NMSU that he recommends be invited to the next meeting.

The next meeting of the PDNWC is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on January 22, 2002, at the Utility office of the City of Las Cruces. The last hour of this meeting will include a special workshop on Strategic Planning for the Council.

III. Distribution and Summary of the Cooperative Agreement among the Paso del Norte Watershed Council, TAMU and EPWU to support the Watershed Program (TAMU)

Ari Michelsen announced that the PDNWC Coordinator position will be advertised within two weeks on the Rivernet-Network, so that interested individuals can respond with their applications. Funds are now available to staff this position at the 75% manpower level, and to provide for adequate office supplies and computer use. A copy of this agreement is attached as Exhibit "B".

IV. Discussion of Possible Opportunities for the Paso del Norte Water Task Force and the NM-TX Water Commission to Interact on Programs of Mutual Interest (Hector Gonzalez/Oscar Ibanez/SC).

Hector Gonzalez of EPWU related that he has been the official representative for EPWU at the Paso del Norte Water Task Force (PDNWTF) for a total of two years. This organization has utilized funds from the Hewlett Foundation and other sources to compile and publish a comprehensive summary of water resource and wastewater treatment plans for the El Paso, Las Cruces, and Juarez region, commonly referred to as the Paso del Norte area. The members of the PDNWTF are now individually reviewing potential options for EPWU to treat a portion of Mexico's surface water at EPWU water treatment plants, and then to supply the treated product to Mexico for M&I use in Juarez. CDM Consultants have prepared a very preliminary set of schematic drawings outlining several diversion, treatment and delivery location alternatives. The PDNWTF has not yet addressed the legal ramifications of such a unique program.

Hector encouraged the members of the MAC/SC to work together with the PDNWTF members to submit grant proposals for federal funds from both the USA and from Mexico to enhance the opportunity for receipt of grant monies to further the water resource development interests of both countries and the three major municipalities. Mike Fahy will request that CDM provide a

presentation of their Tri-Regional Water Feasibility Study at the next MAC/SC Meeting.

Oscar Ibanez of the University of Juarez then confirmed that he has worked for the PDNWTF for nearly three years, and that the overall goal of the organization is to encourage water agencies in the region to work together cooperatively for the mutual benefit of the entire two country, tri-city, area. Mr. Ibanez announced that the next meeting of the PDNWTF is scheduled for January 25, 2002 in Juarez, to be followed by a meeting in March in Las Cruces. It may be advantageous to schedule a MAC/SC meeting in March in Las Cruces to coincide with the PDNWTF meeting so that individuals from the respective organizations can attend both meetings.

V. Presentation on Bureau of Reclamation Funding Initiatives Targeted at California and Nevada. (Mike Landis)

Mike Landis of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec.) distributed 20 copies of his verbal presentation describing Title XVI congressionally-approved funds for water resource projects in California and Nevada. A copy of this documentation is attached as Exhibit "C". The bulk of the 313 million dollars worth of funds is targeted at Southern California water projects, due to the large population and resulting political pressure available within this area. However, in recent years, a large percentage of these federal funds have gone to the CALFED Project.

Mike recommended that the MAC/SC consider teaming with other Southwestern cities with similar water-related problems and approach our respective elected officials with joint proposals for funding. Topics of common interest to Southwestern cities would include desalination and brine storage, M&I transfers of water, beneficial reuse of treated wastewater, and so forth.

The BuRec. has limitations on the funds it can provide to a recipient. BuRec. can only provide funding for feasibility studies of a particular project. After that phase, it is up to Congress to determine which projects receive federal funds for design and construction. The BuRec. is able to fund up to a maximum of 50% of a major project.

Kevin Bixby asked whether the Title XVI money could be used for river restoration. Mike responded that he is not familiar with any particular case where this has occurred.

VI. Slide Presentation Describing EBID's SCADA System (EBID)

Phil King of NMSU, and EBID's consultant, provided a slide presentation describing EBID's SCADA monitoring and reporting system. He reported that this is a good time of the year to actually inspect the equipment in the field, because water levels are now very low and the monitoring and recording equipment is easy to access. Henry Magallanez of EBID's Engineering Section assisted in the presentation.

Gary Esslinger opened the topic by summarizing that EBID has been working on this project for several years and that the goal is to achieve continuous flow rate monitoring and reporting on a current, or real-time, basis. EBID has acquired approximately \$350,000.00 in external assistance to dedicate with their own funds to complete Phase One and Two. EBID is now able to monitor flow and some water quality continuously at five river stations and at several locations along the major canals and drains. The Third and Fourth Phases will include monitoring of agricultural wells along with more thorough water quality instrumentation and improved turnout discharge measurements. The program concentrates on thorough water accounting so that the water commodity can be accurately and efficiently managed. The importance of well production monitoring has been emphasized due to the current water rights adjudication process.

Lookout Software is used to post the information which can be accessed through EBID's Web Page at www.ebid.nm.org. The data is located in a text file that can be viewed "on-line" or downloaded into an Excel File.

VII. Other Business, Potential Topics for Next Meeting:

Ari agreed to provide an update/review of TAMU water modeling-related proposals at the next MAC/SC Meeting, and Conrad Keyes agreed to provide a summary of the new water quality standards for the Rio Grande Project area. In addition, Conrad will relate the progress of the PDNWC and Jerry Leyendecker will discuss the general project certification requirements for BECC funding. Topics that EPWU will cover at future meetings will include EPWU's Joint Desalination Project with Ft. Bliss, and EPWU's plans for arsenic treatment for Mesilla Bolson Well Water.

VIII. Schedule Next Meeting/Location:

The next MAC/SC Meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on January 24, 2002 at EPWU.

IX. Tour of Selected EBID Facilities

A brief afternoon tour of selected EBID monitoring sites was provided by Phil King and Henry Magallanez to Ari Michelsen, Bill Hutchison and Mike Fahy.