

Minutes: _____ Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District 4 December 14, 2006 Board Meeting

1. OPEN MEETING, ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA

The December board meeting was opened at 10:10 a.m. CST, December 14, 2006 in the district office, Colby, KS by President Scott Maurath.

Board members present for some or all of the meeting were: Jeff Deeds, Monty Biggs, Lon Frahm, Roger Zwegardt, Doug David, Dave Mann, Bill Nondorf, Dave Rietcheck, Scott Maurath, Jon Friesen and Mitch Baalman.

Board Members absent were. None

Others present for some or all of the meeting were: Wayne Bossert, Ray Luhman and Dan Simmering – GMD 4 staff; Scott Ross and Jessica Ahlquist - DWR; Susan Stover and Diane Coe - KWO; and Bill Golden - Kansas State University.

There were no changes to the agenda.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

Dave Mann moved for approval of the consent agenda including: 1) the November 9, 2006 minutes; and 2) the November financial report including the November, 2006 expenditures totaling \$24,267.55. Mitch Baalman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

3. MANAGER'S REPORT

a. Bureau of Reclamation draft Resource Management Plan for Webster Reservoir was out for public comment and contained 1 statement regarding groundwater - to the effect that groundwater depletion of base flows and farm conservation practices has reduced inflows into the reservoir, and that the reduced inflows have altered district operations and caused wider fluctuations of pool levels. The public comment period is open until January 1, 2007. Since there was no action proposed in the draft report, the board decided there was no need to provide any comments on behalf of the district.

b. GMD 2 had a new manager - Lee Wheeler from Hesston whose background has been in irrigated ag consulting in Colorado and Kansas.

c. The district has purchased a new copier for \$10,000 to replace the aging and failing current copier. It is comparable in cost to the existing copier, but is faster and has a few more features.

d. The Kansas Water Congress will be meeting for their Winter Session in Topeka on January 8, 2007. The board was invited to attend.

e. The Water Transition and Assistance Program (W-TAP) regulations first draft was released several weeks ago and the GMD's have made comments. The second draft is due for release any day now and is expected to include the comments already made.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Refinement of High and Medium Priority Areas: Staff explained the 3 maps last requested by the board (included in the board packet) and covered again the protocol process in general terms. Discussion was had regarding the map renditions of our High Priority areas and how

well they captured or missed these areas. The board generally agreed that the mapping concept was valid. Following much discussion, *Dave Mann moved to adopt map 2 as the district's High Priority Areas plus the Thomas County 4-township area. Lon Frahm seconded the motion which passed unanimously.*

By way of reference, Map 2 includes in a high priority area any quarter township that contains two or more triggered sections. Triggered sections are any section whose section level data shows 9% or more decline between the years 1996 and 2002, or, a reported 2-mile water use density value of 275 acrefeet or more, with all sections showing less than 15 feet of 1996 saturated thickness and less than 25 acrefeet of 2-mile reported water use density eliminated.

b. Modeling Effort Presentation: Susan Stover of the Kansas Water Offer backgrounded the modeling effort covering both aspects - the hydrologic and the economic. She then introduced Bill Golden for his presentation of the economic portion. Bill explained the fundamentals of how the model will work, indicating that crop production functions for each crop and specific crop budget numbers actually drive the model. He then presented examples of these functions and numbers which had been aggregated for the NW Kansas Crop Reporting district over the past 15 years - 1990 through 2005. He then asked the board to carefully consider the CRD numbers and advise him if these were reasonable numbers or not. In discussion, the board indicated that the crop production function, at least for corn, did not appear correct. They also questioned several of the irrigated crop budget numbers provided by KSU (Table 1).

With no motion being made, the board agreed to solicit and review individual production records to provide what they felt were more accurate numbers for the modeling effort.

c. Management Program: *Dave Rletcheck moved to re-adopt the current Revised Management Program (effective date: March 9, 2006). Monty Biggs seconded the motion which passed unanimously.* Discussion then turned to how the board would prefer to approach any potential revisions for next year. It was suggested that the staff generated listing of goal statements and their evaluations be reviewed to decide which were still relevant and which were not. The non-relevant portions could then be eliminated. The next step would be to review the remaining goals to decide if the district is adequately achieving each goal or not. For those goals not adequately being achieved, the board would consider new ways of addressing the goal. No motion was made.

d. DWR/GMD 4 Metering MOU: *Roger Zweygardt moved to re-adopt the MOU as currently written. Lon Frahm seconded the motion. In discussion, Jon Friesen indicated that he would prefer knowing when his meters are getting checked and what the inspection results are, and the MOU should provide for this. On a call for the question, the motion passed unanimously with Jon abstaining.* Those voting for the motion felt that the notification process requested by Jon was too time consuming and would slow down the inspection process significantly.

e. Staff Contracts: *Jeff Deeds moved to go into executive session with manager Wayne Bossert present for 20 minutes (until 3:00 P.M.) to discuss staff contracts. Doug David seconded the motion which passed unanimously. At 3:00 P.M. Jeff Deeds moved to go into executive session with manager Wayne Bossert present for 30 minutes to discuss staff contracts. Doug David seconded the motion. At 3:30 P.M. the board reconvened in open session having taken no action in executive session. Dave Mann moved to increase the 2007 salary and benefits budget line item to \$219,993.00 to be applied to staff contracts at the manager's discretion. Bill Nondorf seconded the motion which passed unanimously.*

f. Consideration of New BRO Approach: Scott Ross reported that DWR is intent on taking the current blatant and recurring overpump program to a new level. While the current program has been useful as a pilot effort, the lessons learned indicate a new approach is warranted. He asked the GMD 4 board to consider cooperating on the new approach. There was much discussion on what the new approach should be and how it should be implemented. Without time to specifically address every design and implementation detail, *Mitch Baalman moved to move ahead with a new BRO program with staff working with the state on program details*

including who will trigger initial orders, what fines will be assessed and insuring that 2006 reported water use will not be used for any administrative actions. Monty Biggs seconded the motion which passed 9 votes for the motion and Jon Friesen voting in opposition.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Annual Meeting Decisions: President Maurath appointed Jon Friesen to present the 2006 Year in Review. Scott Maurath will present the annual meeting minutes. Jeff Deeds will present the 2008 Proposed budget. Mitch Baalman will present the 2006 Audit. Monty Biggs will present the 2007 elections. Scott Ross will be invited to cover the new BRO program.

6. DWR REPORT

Scott Ross of DWR introduced Jessica Ahlquist, a new employee taking over Mark Billinger's duties on the Solomon sub basin effort. Scott then covered the Republican River Compact status indicating that it is likely that Nebraska and Colorado will be over their allotments as the 2006 accounting, which will be under the "dry year" accounting rules, is completed upon receipt of all the 2006 water use report data. Scott also stated that the metering program is going well, in fact far better than he could have imagined. There are only a dozen or so 2006 meter inspections left to complete. He finally reported on some new dam specifications being developed by DWR which will likely increase dam enforcement issues.

7. OPEN SESSION - PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

a. KWA Position Appointment: President Maurath received a letter from the Governor's Appointments secretary regarding the western Kansas GMD's Kansas Water Authority representative. Dave Brenn's (the current KWA representative) term expires January 15, 2007. After discussion, Bill Nondorf moved that Lon Frahm's name be submitted as our nominee. Mitch Baalman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Lon had mentioned that he had just been recommended for the GMD position of the Upper Republican BAC. If he would be appointed to the KWA, he would resign the BAC position. It was decided that Dave Rietcheck would apply for the URBAC position in the GMD category in the event that Lon is appointed to the KWA and resigns this position. No motion made.


8. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND CONSIDER FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

January 11, 2007; February 21, 2007; March 8, 2007.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Monty Biggs moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:10 P.M., December 14, 2006. Lon Frahm seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:



Dave Mann, Secretary