

# **NORTHWEST KANSAS GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT 4**

## **November 8, 2023**

### **1. OPEN MEETING, ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA**

The November 8, 2023 board meeting was opened at the GMD 4 office in Colby, Kansas by President, Brett Oelke.

Board members present for some or all the meeting were:

Jeff Deeds, Nate Emig, Lynn Goossen, Brett Oelke, Brent Rogers, Shane Mann, Ted Nighswonger and Marsha Schilling.

Board members absent: Jerry Binning, Karen Flanagan, and Dylan Loyd.

Others present for some or all of the meeting were: Shannon Kenyon, Jody McCain and Colter Stoll – GMD 4 staff; Jake Kling – GMD 4 Attorney; Kelly Stewart – DWR; Keadron Pearson (virtually).

Changes to the agenda were noted:

Add 8. a. **GRANTS**

### **2. CONSENT AGENDA**

Ted Nighswonger moved that the consent agenda be approved as amended. The motion was seconded by Lynn Goossen and passed unanimously by voice vote (no “nay” votes.)

Shane Mann moved the minutes of the September 6, 2023 board meeting be accepted as presented. The motion was seconded by Nate Emig and passed unanimously by voice vote (no “nay” votes).

Nate Emig moved that the financial report and expenditures for the months of September and October be accepted as presented. The motion was seconded by Brent Rogers and passed unanimously by voice vote (no “nay” votes).

### **3. OPEN FORUM**

A card for Karen Flanagan was passed around as she had hip surgery on Monday.

Shane Mann noted that a ruling should be coming soon in the Hays water dispute.

Brent Rogers inquired if Ted or Shannon had heard about the hiring of a county Administrator in Graham County.

### **4. AGENCY REPORTS**

Kelly Stewart noted that DWR is still working with KGS to get a mobile field program for their techs. Once it is found to be successful, they will hopefully open it up for use by the GMDs.

Representatives from each Field Office is working with the states IT department and Tech services department to get a workable system in place.

They are also hoping to develop a water right tool for producers to be able to verify information, much like the LEMA website.

Kelly wanted to reiterate that now is the time for producers to look into MYFAs, if they want the 2023 year included in the program.

The Stockton Field Office has discussions about every 2 weeks regarding regulations. They just finished the discussion on WCAs. Kelly would like input on "offsets to be allowed."

Rebecca Hageman was not able to attend.

Keadron Pearson reported the Governor's Conference is next week, November 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> in Manhattan. Registration has closed, due to the maximum number of attendees registered again this year! The next Kansas Water Authority Meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2023 in Concordia. There will also be a KWA Ogallala meeting December 28<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup> in Garden City. Plans are in the works for a W.I.S.E. program to be held in GMD 1 area in late May of 2024. Keadron informed the board that the new chair of the Upper Republican RAC is Scott Ross.

## **5. MANAGERS REPORT**

### **a. September and October Update**

September 7th was the NRCS Technical Committee Meeting in Salina. It was very disappointing as it was supposed to be a meeting where we provide recommendation to the NRCS, instead they showcased their programs. Shannon and other state agency folks were a bit disgruntled. She plans to have further discussions with other NRCS folks about this for future meetings.

September 26th was a Women in Ag day at NWKTC that Shannon attended. It was a quick course in driving a semi, grain cart and combine. It was great to interact with participants and provide support.

September 28th we were introduced to VariMax. It's another platform for crop based nitrogen and irrigation management. Kansas Corn provided the introduction as they have put a lot of their resources into the development with K-State. Shannon also met with the VariMax representatives, Kate Durham, and Western Plains Energy on October 16th.

Weston McCary and Shannon met with Scott Foote on October 4th as some funding has become available for non-irrigation projects. Scott is utilizing a water monitoring system at Hoxie Feedyard similar to municipalities and would like to expand that to his other feedlots. Scott has submitted the application for the project. Shannon noted that a letter of support from the board might be beneficial to getting funding for this project.

Shannon has a meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup> with Ron Alexander, City of Colby Manager, as he wanted some "seed" money for water savings in Colby. Weston thinks he can help him out with this as well.



Shannon had a conference call on October 5th with a couple of folks with Kansas Corn. They would like to know ways in which they can help us with water conservation technology. She told them we would keep the conversation on-going but was waiting for the State of Kansas dollars coupled with the RCPP grant to see what we would be getting first.

October 10th we were blessed by a reporter from the Kansas City Star in GMD 4. Lately, Shannon has been put-off by reporters that love our success story, then print the doom and gloom only. Shannon communicated to her that she was happy she took the time to come see the area and the story with her own eyes however, she was not happy with recent stories by journalists who did not print the entire story. The story is supposed to be on the front page of the Kansas City Star and Wichita Beacon November 11th or 18th.

As most of the board was aware, Shannon was out of the office with health issues. It will be a long healing process, but she wanted the board to know that Jody and Colter did an excellent job keeping the place going in her absence.

KGS is still in the hunt for data that producers would share. The data they are looking for can be acquired from an AgSense report. They do not need names or other personal data.

Shannon distributed a handout of the different programs available to producers, with information regarding their flexibilities. She wanted the board's input regarding the information, and the best way to disseminate the information.

**b. Future Opportunities**

November 6th was the NWKTC Precision Ag Advisory Committee meeting. Shannon served on this committee since the Precision Ag department was born. She decided that Colter would better serve in this position as he is a graduate and has learned what skills future graduates would need to enter a workforce that we need.

November 14th through the 16th is the Governor's Conference. Colter, Shane Mann, and Shannon will be attending. There will be a "pre" conference among agencies before the conference on reorganization of the Kansas Water Congress. Shannon's personal opinion is that Kansas water issues should have a say at the national level, however, she thinks the responsibility should fall on the KWA and not a separate entity like the Water Congress. Shannon asked for the board's thoughts on the matter.

November 20th and 21st is the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts conference in Wichita. Shannon has been asked to be on a panel Tuesday morning with several others.

The Governor has appointed a Special Advisor to Water. His name is Vijay Ramasamy. Sean Miller reached out to him and informed Shannon that he will be excellent at the position. Vijay wants to come visit all five of the GMDs for a day. December 1st we will be meeting with him and a small group of SD 6 LEMA folks at Hoxie Feedyard for a tour, then have lunch where he can ask questions of the producers. He seems very excited for this adventure.

December 4th through the 7th is our third round of public outreach. It's an item on Unfinished Business, Shannon just wanted to remind the board that it's an "opportunity".

Jay Kalbas, Director of KGS sent Shannon an email stating the Governor approved \$700,000 for surveying the HPAs in GMD 4. They are going to utilize Airborne Electromagnetic surveying (AEM) via helicopter to gather data that will strengthen our model and provide a more accurate Q-Stable approach to conservation. Shannon included in the board packet a short description from Jay on the project. He wants to coordinate on community engagement and education about the project and develop explanatory materials for stakeholders.

## **6. FIELD REPORTS**

Colter reported that since the last meeting, he has worked about 312 hours. Thirty eight of those have been spent in the field. He checked approximately 54 wells (some were on the 10 year list, as well as some he has not been to yet) and conducted a rate test. Colter has finished the 5-5-11 check paperwork, which is very time consuming as it is 5 pages long. He also has completed some MYFA applications as well.

## **7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **a. GMD 4 LEMA**

Shannon noted that approximately 20 zero allocation letters have been sent to the producers who do not have an allocation. There was only one that needed to be changed, and that has been put on the appeal list for change.

### **b. SD-6**

Nothing to report at this time.

### **c. Other LEMA Developments**

It was noted that the board needs to develop some "LEMA Rules". Before an entity wants to propose a LEMA to the board for consideration there must be some criteria it meets before consideration. Examples of the criteria were discussed. It was decided that any proposed LEMA to the GMD 4 Board of Directors must be at a minimum 36 square miles (township), contiguous acres, and coincide with the timeframe of existing LEMAs.

### **d. Public Outreach**

As noted in the manager's report, the third set of public meetings have been set for December 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> starting at 9:30 a.m. The order of the meetings are Hoxie, Colby, Goodland, and Saint Francis. Topic of discussion to include the many grant dollars available to water users.

## **1. NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. Grants**

Governor Laura Kelly and the Kansas Water Office announced that \$85 million over five years will go toward water projects with the launch of the Technical Assistance Fund Grants and Water Projects Fund Grants programs. Both grant programs provide funding for up-front



technical assistance and on-the-ground actions needed to address water quantity and quality issues around the state within municipalities.

The projects requested by GMD 4 will fall under a different pot of money that was applied for through an RCPP grant.

Another grant opportunity is the Kansas Water Plan Partnership Initiative (KWPPPI) that requires a 50% match on other water-related projects that support the Kansas Water Plan.

## **2. OPEN SESSION – Public Questions/Comments:**

Brent Rogers noted that while attending a National Corn meeting, water transfer was discussed, and a lengthy discussion ensued regarding the legalities associated with the issue.

Marsha Schilling noted that while watching the news, production is being help up due to goods not being able to be shipped down the Mississippi River due to record low level.

Shane Mann noted the Rattlesnake/Quivira LEMA is on pause.

Lynn Goossen noted that the board needs to start discussing the goal of the next LEMA.

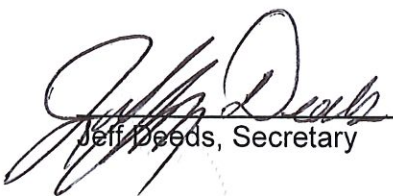
## **3. FUTURE MEETINGS:**

The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 14th, 2023 with the time to be determined, since the Christmas party usually follows.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**With no other business and no objections the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted:

  
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Jeff Deeds, Secretary

