

Planning Water Resources for the State as a Whole Committee Meeting Minutes

August 6, 2020, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

held via GoToWebinar Videoconference

Committee decisions bolded and italicized in document

Participation: Number of Planning Water Resources Committee Members present 5 of 5:

H	Mark Evans	C	Kevin Ward	K	David Wheelock
N	Carl Crull	O	Melanie Barnes		

Senators/Representatives/Other VIPs in Attendance: Heather Harward

TWDB Board Members and Staff: Sarah Backhouse, Kevin Smith, Claire Boyer, Lann Bookout

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Chair Mark Evans (Region H) called the meeting to order and determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order.

2. Public Comment

No public comments were offered.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the July 28, 2020 Meeting

There was a comment to revise attendance list for TWDB staff. Mr. Evans asked for motion to approve minutes. Mr. David Wheelock (Region K) motioned to approve, Ms. Melaine Barnes (Region O) seconded. ***Minutes of the July 28, 2020 meeting were approved unanimously by the committee.***

4. Review of Problem Statement and Goal Statement

Mr. Evans presented Problem Statement and Goal Statement.

5. Discussion of Planning Water Resources for the State as a Whole

Mr. Kevin Smith presented the recommendations in the Planning Water Resources committee report to the Interregional Planning Council (IPC) to be presented at the August 12,2020 IPC meeting. Recommendations in report were as follows: 1) Long range and visionary planning and 2) Planning from state perspective.

The committee stated that Recommendation 1,b., i. (Legislative recommendations) should be specific that the legislature provide funding to implement recommendations. Mr. David Wheelock (Region K) stated that the order of the TWDB recommendation and Legislative recommendation should be switched. Mr. Carl Crull (Region N) stated funding is limited and currently Region N only has funds to address areas of supply shortage. Mr. Crull stated that they rely on project sponsors to justify and provide information for the plan. Mr. Evans agreed that new tasks must be funded.

Mr. Wheelock stated that planning beyond 50-year horizon and planning for droughts worse than the drought of record (DOR) is significant. He pointed out that low growth regions have suggested doing simplified planning and questioned how these recommendations would effect these regions. Mr. Wheelock suggested revising the TWDB recommendation so that the proposed new planning tasks were “authorized” rather than “required”. removing language “consider” when addressing legislature.

Ms. Sarah Backhouse asked the committee if current 50-year planning horizon would remain with long range and visionary planning. Mr. Mark Evans (Region H) replied 50-year planning horizon should stay and suggested that revisions to the planning horizon could be addressed by future IPCs. Ms. Melaine Barnes (Region O) stated state level involvement would help some of the RWPGs. She stated that 50-year planning horizon limits imaginative thinking for state as a whole. Mr. Crull stated that 50-year planning horizon should remain but the regional water plans would include an additional chapter to consider beyond 50-year planning horizon to consider statewide and multi-regional projects. Mr. Evans agreed. Mr. Kevin Ward (Region C) asked if the issue isn't 50-year planning but long-term megadroughts.

Mr. Evans asked if projects are to be considered without regard to the lowest cost;, should the state be the project sponsor. Mr. Ward responded that Toledo Bend reservoir is still owned by the state and that funding is not the issue and provided an example of TWDB funding billions of dollars to projects. Mr. Ward added that Lake Conroe was also funded and owned by the state, later bought back by a local entity.

Mr. Ward agreed that the order of the Legislative and TWDB recommendations should be switched. Ms. Barnes stated legislature recommendations should be first since the state would need to allow this visionary planning to occur.

The title of Recommendation 1 was agreed by the committee to be revised to include “regional water planning process.” Mr. Evans stated important that recommendations are tied to the regional water planning process since that is currently in use. Ms. Barnes stated that recommended tasks should occur at beginning of the process. The committee discussed the language in the Brief Observation for Recommendation 1 and revised the observation to include obstacle of project sponsorship and state that obstacles do not facilitate the consideration of inter-regional and statewide water planning projects. Committee agreed to switch order of Legislative and TWDB recommendations.

The committee discussed Recommendation 1 language to the TWDB. Mr. Wheelock questioned if the 50-year planning horizon was broadened, is it implicit that the TWDB would develop guidelines. Ms. Backhouse stated that guidelines are revised with rule changes, doesn't think needs stating in recommendation. The recommendation language was revised to clarify potential water needs as potential water shortages and clarify that feasible projects should be evaluated without limitations to sponsorship or costs.

Recommendation 1 to the legislature was revised to capture that the state returning to initial sponsorship of projects without guarantees from local sponsors.

Recommendation 1 to RWPGs received one minor grammatical revision.

Recommendation related to RWPG liaison was removed since recommendation was assigned to the Interregional Coordination Committee.

Recommendation to future Interregional Planning Council's was added to consider whether the IPC is the appropriate mechanism for planning for water resources for the state.

The committee discussed Recommendation 2 and agreed to remove Recommendation 2 and move some of the proposed items to Recommendation 1. The legislative recommendations related to state agencies under Recommendation 2 were moved to Recommendation 1. The RWPG recommendation regarding Chairs conference calls under Recommendation 2 was moved to the TWBB recommendation under Recommendation 1. Remaining Recommendation 2 was removed. The Brief Benefits from Recommendation 1 and 2 were combined.

6. Discussion of August 6, 2020 Interim Report

Kevin Smith noted that the committee initially planned to review the draft Council report at this meeting and discussed the schedule for report development. The committee section of the draft IPC report will now be reviewed at the August 20 meeting.

7. Discussion of Agenda for Future Meetings

Mr. Evans discussed plan to approve committee report to IPC at August 20th meeting.

8. Public Comment

No public comments were offered.

9. Announcements

Mr. Evans discussed dates for future committee and IPC meetings.

10. Adjourn

Mr. Evans asked for motion to adjourn. Mr. Crull motioned, Ms. Barnes seconded motion. The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:07 pm.