

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Region 6 San Jacinto Flood Planning Group Meeting**  
**January 14, 2021**  
**9:00AM**  
**CISCO WebEx Virtual Meeting**

**Roll Call:**

<b><u>Voting Member</u></b>	<b><u>Interest Category</u></b>	<b><u>Present (x) /Absent ( ) / Alternate Present (*)</u></b>
Russ A. Poppe	<i>Chair, Flood districts</i>	X
Alia Vinson	<i>Vice Chair, Water districts</i>	X
Alisa Max	<i>Secretary, Counties</i>	X
Gene Fisseler	<i>At-Large, Public</i>	Alternate Present (X)
Matthew Barrett	<i>A-Large, River authorities</i>	X
Elisa Macia Donovan	<i>Counties</i>	X
Jenna Armstrong	<i>Small business</i>	X
Paul E. Lock	<i>Electric generating utilities</i>	X
Sarah P. Bernhardt	<i>Environmental interests</i>	X
Stephen Costello	<i>Municipalities</i>	X
Timothy E. Buscha	<i>Industries</i>	X
Todd Burrer	<i>Water utilities</i>	X

<b><u>Non-voting Member</u></b>	<b><u>Agency</u></b>	<b><u>Present(x)/Absent ( )/ Alternate Present (*)</u></b>
Adam Terry	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	X
Ellen Kinsey	General Land Office	
Joel Clark	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board	X
Kelly Mills	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	X
Kristin Lambrecht	Texas Department of Agriculture	X
Megan Ingram	Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)	X
Natalie Johnson	Texas Division of Emergency Management	X

**Quorum:**

Quorum: **Yes**

Number of voting members or alternates that were present: 12

Number required for quorum per current voting membership of 12: 7

**Other Meeting Attendees: \*\***

Amy Samples  
Brad Pickering  
Brandon Cook  
Brandon Wade  
Brooke Bacuetes

Chuntania Dangerfield  
Cory Stull  
Dr. Shelly Sekula-Gibbs  
Fatima Berrios  
Grant Crowell

Him Stinson  
J. Rice  
James Bronikowski  
James M Stinson  
Jeff Taebel  
Jill Boullion  
Jim Stinson  
Justin Bower  
Laura Norton  
Lisa Lattu  
M. Mitchell  
Matt Nelson  
Matt Zeve  
Michael Bloom  
Michael Reedy  
Mohamed Bagha  
Morgan White

Neil Gaynor  
Paul Lock  
Rachel Herr  
Rebecca Andrews  
Reem Zoun  
Reid Mrsny  
Sally Bakko  
Stephanie Castillo  
Stephanie Griffin  
Stephanie Zertuche  
Stephen Costello  
Terry Barr  
Todd Burrer  
Todd Stephens  
Tommy Ramsey  
Zach Holland  
Anonymous Attendees (no name provided): 4

\*\*Meeting attendee names were gathered from those who entered information on the GoToWebinar meeting.

*All meeting materials were available for the public at:*

<http://www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/planning/regions/schedule.asp>.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Call to Order**

Mr. Poppe called the meeting to order at 9:01AM.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: Welcome and Roll Call**

Mr. Poppe welcomed members to the meeting and provided meeting facilitation information. Roll call was taken.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Texas Water Development Board Update**

TWDB did not have any updates. Ms. Ingram announced that a presentation would be given during the meeting and requested to move on to the next agenda item.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Registered Public Comments on Agenda Items 5-16 (limit 3 min per person)**

Written comments were distributed to RFPG members via email prior to this meeting.

Verbal public comments related to the agenda were received from:

- a) Sally Bakko, City of Galveston – Agenda Item 9 – Ms. Bakko advocated for the Coastal Communities as a voting group member.
- b) Brandon Cook, City of Galveston – Agenda Item 9 – Mr. Cook applauded the Group for considering the Coastal Communities as a new voting member and encouraged the adoption of this recommendation.
- c) Neil Gaynor, Montgomery County MUD 6, President – Agenda Item 9 – Mr. Gaynor declared interest as a representative for Montgomery County as a committee member or liaison role with Stephanie Zertuche as his alternate.
- d) Laura Norton, One Water Group in Montgomery County – Agenda Item 9 – Ms. Norton indicated previous interest for being the additional voting member of the public as Neil Gaynor's alternate, however she improved her recommendation for Neil Gaynor with Stephanie Zertuche as his alternate as a committee member or liaison role.
- e) Dr. Shelly Sekula-Gibbs, The Woodlands Township - Agenda Item 9 – Dr. Sekula-Gibbs expressed agreement with the Coastal Communities as a new category and adding an additional voting member to the Water Districts category. Dr. Sekula-Gibbs advocated for Neil Gaynor and Laura Norton for the Water District category.
- f) Stephanie Zertuche, One Water Group in Montgomery County – Agenda Item 9 – Ms. Zertuche supported Neil Gaynor as a voting member for the Water Districts and expressed her interest on being his alternate.
- g) Jim Stinson, Woodlands Water Agency General Manager for 10 MUDs – Agenda Item 9 – Mr. Stinson expressed support for adding an additional voting member to the Water District category, and also supported Neil Gaynor and Stephanie Zertuche.

Chuntania Dangerfield summarized written comments as shown below:

- h) Todd Stephens – Mr. Stephens stated he received a letter from Bruce Rieser for nominating Neil Gaynor as a voting member with Laura Norton as his alternate.
- i) Matt Barrett – Mr. Barrett received a letter from Robert Lux also for nominating Neil Gaynor as a voting member. Elisa Donovan - Ms. Donovan stated Galveston Bay Foundation submitted a letter of consideration to add a presentation on Natural and Nature-based flood mitigation strategies to the March SJRFP Meeting Agenda.

- j) Christopher Bloch, City of Kingwood – Mr. Bloch provided a presentation and information regarding flooding and potential flood mitigation solutions related to Bens Branch (Kingwood).

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: Approval of the meeting minutes**

Mr. Poppe opened the discussion, and Ms. Max informed the group there were several comments submitted for revision for the previous meeting minutes.

The meetings minutes were not approved and it was decided that the meeting minutes would be revised, and presented for approval in the next SJRFPG meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: Announcement of alternate members**

Gene Fisseler announced Zack Holland as his alternate member.

Jenna Armstrong announced Mark Mitchell as her alternate member.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: Nominations, discussions and possible action to elect RFPG Vice Chair and Secretary**

Tommy Ramsey, with the Harris County Attorney's office, opened the discussion for the use of the chat function. Mr. Ramsey expressed several concerns using the chat function. Ramsey expressed concern related to the use of private messages, and recommended the board members should be careful to not deliberate or communicate within the chat privately. Mr. Ramsey recommended to disable the use of the chat function to safe guard these issues.

Ms. Vinson proposed to completely disable the function even for the public since public comments were offered twice during the meeting.

Mr. Poppe agreed and recommended to disable the chat function on future meetings.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: Update from Executive Committee, discussion, and possible action on Liaisons to Adjacent Planning Groups (Trinity, Lower Brazos, Neches, Coastal Communities)**

Mr. Poppe opened the discussion with a reminder that these positions were mandatory, and reported that the Executive Committee recommended liaisons should be limited to non-voting or voting members only.

Mr. Buscha then expressed his interest to serve as a liaison to Neches Group.

Mr. Burrer also confirmed his interest to serve as a liaison and mentioned he was willing to be a liaison for any group.

Mr. Holland then confirmed Mr. Fisseler's willingness to serve as a liaison for the Lower Brazos Group.

Ms. Armstrong moved to have Todd Burrer as the liaison to the Trinity Group and Tim Buscha as the liaison to the Neches, Ms. Vinson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 9A: Update from Executive Committee, discussion, and possible action on Regional Flood Planning Group Membership (Nominations, discussion, and possible action to add additional voting and non-voting member categories)**

Mr. Poppe opened the discussion and stated the goal of the RFPG was to fill gaps by adding both voting members and non-voting entities to achieve geographic representation and diversity. Mr. Poppe stated the only recommended new voting category was for Coastal Communities.

Ms. Armstrong moved to add Coastal Communities as voting member category. Sarah Bernhardt seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Poppe then stated the non-voting entities recommended by the Executive Committee: The Harris Galveston Subsidence District, Region H Water Planning, HGAC, Port Houston and TxDOT.

Ms. Max moved to add the following non-voting entities: Harris Galveston Subsidence district, Regional H Water Planning Group, HGAC, Port Houston and TxDOT. Ms. Vinson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 9B: Discussion and possible action on process of solicitation and selection of new Group members, as applicable**

Mr. Poppe opened the discussion and stated that the Executive Committee recommended the addition of two new voting members to the existing categories: one new voting category to the Public category and one new voting member Water Districts Category. Ms. Max emphasized the RFPG should strive to add both geographic representation and diversity.

Ms. Donovan asked for clarification if adding additional members to existing categories would also double their vote. Ms. Donovan was concerned that adding additional members to existing categories would diminish other stakeholder representation.

Ms. Vinson clarified that each new voting-member added would be an additional vote. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Buscha moved for adding a new voting-member to the Public, Water Districts and Coastal Communities groups. Mr. Costello recommended to further discuss those categories, and suggested adding another voting member to represent small and large cities.

Ms. Bernhardt cautioned that stakeholder interest groups were all large groups, and recommended the RFPG further consider representation.

Ms. Donovan stated that adding up to 18 voting members was not required. She stated Executive Committee members already hold strong influence in the RFPG, so adding additional members to these existing groups with executive members as representatives, could dilute other groups.

Ms. Bernhardt made a recommendation to add another category to better represent geographical rural areas instead of Water Districts.

Ms. Max then stated it was crucial to add another Public voting-member to get proper representation for socio-economic diversity, and underserved communities.

Ms. Armstrong agreed that adding another Public member was critical.

Mr. Poppe suggested amending the motion, and voting on the new voting-members individually.

Mr. Buscha amended his motion and moved to add the Coastal Communities as a new voting member. Mr. Costello second the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Buscha moved to add another member to the Public categories. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Bernhardt requested further discussion for a more suitable name for the new Public category to something more specific such as an equity and diversity seat. She expressed that by not clearly stating the desired interest to be represented by the additional voting membership category, it could be manipulated in the future, and not ensure the intended stakeholder interests are represented.

Ms. Ingram clarified that there was flexibility and stated that either the solicitation process could be directed for a specific group, or a new category name could be proposed.

Ms. Vinson agreed with Ms. Bernhardt's concern and stated the current RFPG would use the new seat for diversity, but it was possible future groups members would not. Ms. Vinson suggested it might be appropriate to consider a new voting category since it would link those desired attributes to a specific seat.

Ms. Max stated if a specific seat was given for equity, it could also work against its purpose since future members could only require that seat for diversity. Ms. Max indicated she would like to see the diversity and geographic representation memorialized for the future flood planning group members.

Mr. Holland and Mr. Poppe emphasized that the solicitation process carried the most weight and stated that solicitations would be recorded and memorialized.

Mr. Buscha then moved to add another voting member to the existing Public category. Mr. Poppe seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

*Russ Poppe gave a 10-minute break at 10:50 AM.*

*Russ Poppe opened session again at 11:01 PM.*

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 9B (*Continued*): Discussion and possible action on the process of solicitation and selection of new Group members, as applicable.**

Mr. Poppe summarized that the only added categories were Coastal Communities and an addition to the Public category.

Ms. Vinson then motioned to add another voting member to the Water District and stated districts were not represented within the City category.

Ms. Donovan stated counties could encompass those individuals, and stated the Water Districts did not represent all rural areas.

Mr. Poppe indicated that the Water Districts category was very broad, and included unincorporated portions of the counties, which could represent large new areas of development.

Ms. Max made a recommendation that the category should be further evaluated by the Executive Committee. Ms. Vinson concurred with Ms. Max recommendation and withdrew her motion.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 9C: Discussion and possible action on potential changes to by-laws necessitated by Regional Flood Planning Group Membership discussion from Item 9A-B.**

Mr. Poppe confirmed that no new changes resulted from the discussion from 9A and 9B.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 10: Update from executive committee, discussion and possible action concerning formation of RFPG communities.**

Ms. Max recommended three alternatives for the consultant selection since the grant will be received by Harris County. The alternatives were as followed:

- a) Harris County executes the selection process entirely on their own based on set and approved requirements from the RFPG,
- b) The RFPG establishes a consultant selection committee; or
- c) All members of the RFPG select the consultant through open meetings.

Mr. Costello agreed having part of the planning group in the selection process, as a selection committee, was the best option. Mr. Buscha agreed with Mr. Costello and expressed his interest in participating in the selection committee.

Mr. Poppe stated the RFQ was currently in process, and indicated the best technical consultant would be selected.

Ms. Max stated that if the RFPG wanted to avoid violating the Open Meetings Act, the committee would have to be less than a quorum of RFPG participating in a non-voting capacity. Ms. Max stated Amy Samples, of the Harris County Attorney's Office, had indicated subcommittees might also implicate the Open Meeting Act.

After further discussion, Ms. Vinson suggested to defer the conversation until more legal input was available from the Harris County Attorney's Office.

Ms. Max stated that the Harris County Attorney's Office concluded further discussion would be required with TWDB about implications of the Opens Meetings Act. Ms. Max clarified that those individuals serving on the committee could not have a conflict of interest. Ms. Max suggested to form a RFQ Review Committee.

Mr. Buscha, Ms. Donovan, and Mr. Costello expressed interest in participating in a RFQ Review Committee.

Ms. Vinson moved to create the RFQ committee with the members being Alisa Max, Elisa Donovan, Timothy Buscha, and Stephen Costello. Alisa Max second the motion, which carried unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 11: Presentation of TWDB for RFPG**

Ms. Ingram presented for TWDB – on the scope of work and overview for the Flood Planning Groups.

- a) Task 1: Planning area description
- b) Task 2A and 2B: Existing & future condition flood risk analysis (hazard, exposure and vulnerability analysis)
- c) Task 3: Evaluation and recommendation on floodplain management practices
- d) Task 3B: Flood mitigation & floodplain management goals (short and long term)
- e) Task 4A: Flood mitigation need analysis (FME, FMS, FMPs)
- f) Task 4B: Identification and evaluation of potential FMEs and potential feasible FMSs and FMPs
- g) Task 4C: Prepare technical memorandum (due Jan 2022)
- h) Task 5: Recommendation of FMEs, FMSs, and FMPs
- i) Task 6A: Impacts of Regional flood plan
- j) Task 6B: Impacts on Water Supply
- k) Task 7: Flood response information and activities
- l) Task 8: Administrative, regulatory and legislative recommendations
- m) Task 9: Flood infrastructure Financing Analysis
- n) Task 10: Public participation & plan adoption

Ms. Donovan, referring to the Texas Administrative Code for regional and state flood plans, suggested that ecosystems functions should be incorporated into the tasks. She stated new flood plans were required to complement existing natural and nature-based systems. She stated flood plans should take into consideration fisheries and wildlife, ecosystem services, green space and recreation and reduce environmental impacts.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 12: Update from planning group sponsor regarding status of Regional Flood Planning grant and technical consultant procurement**

Ms. Max provided a status update for grant funding allocation and stated a proposal to increase public engagement funds by \$55,000. She stated this would be achieved by moving funds from tasks 1, 2A, and 2B by \$15,000 each, and task 4B by \$10,000. She stated these funds would all go to item 10 and the total fixed budget would remain at \$2.446M, which included \$73,000 for expenses. Alisa Max stressed Harris County would provide assurance that grant funds would not be used to perform any duplicate work, however projects could be re-done with other funds.

**Key Dates to highlight**

- January 21, 2021- Grant application due
- End of March- Estimated execution of TWDB grant contract
- January 2021- Estimated start of consultant procurement process
- By end of May- Estimated execution of Consultant Contract
- Jan 7, 2022- First memorandum due to TWDB
- August 1, 2022- Draft Regional Flood Plan to TWDB
- January 10, 2023- Final Regional Flood Plan to TWDB



**AGENDA ITEM NO. 13: Discussion and possible action concerning pre-planning public input as required by TWC 16.062(d) and 31 TAC 361.12(a)(4)**

Mr. Poppe opened this discussion and summarized that per the referenced TAC, the RFPG was required to hold a public meeting for public input. He stated given the COVID pandemic, this requirement would have to be virtual.

Ms. Ingram clarified there was no time requirement as to when to set these public meetings.

Mr. Poppe suggested separate meetings to discuss the pre-planning meetings since conversations could be extensive and time consuming.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 14: Presentation of 2021 Planning Group meeting dates and deadlines**

Mr. Poppe stated that the RFPG meeting would be held on the second Thursday of every month at 9AM, and the next meeting would be February 11, 2021.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 15: Reminder regarding planning Group member training on public information act and open meetings act.**

Mr. Poppe gave a reminder regarding Planning Group Member training on Public Information Act and Open Meetings Act. Ms. Max clarified that training verification should be sent to the SJRFPG email.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 16: Agenda items for next meeting**

- Presentation from GLO. GLO will be ready to present in the February meeting.
- Galveston Bay Foundation requested to give a presentation at the March meeting.
- Update from Executive Committee on items discussed during this meeting including additional discussion on adding voting members in existing categories, and solicitation notices.
- Update on RFQ scoring committee discussion after deliberation from Executive Committee
- Update on solicitation request and responses
- Update on the consideration of the Lower Brazos Liaison
- Standing item – update on timeline and budget status

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 17: Public comments**

No public comments were given for non-agenda items.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 18:**

Meeting Adjourned at 12:29 PM by Russ Poppe.



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Alisa Max, Secretary



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Russ Poppe, Chair