

Meeting Minutes
Region 6 San Jacinto Regional Flood Planning Group Meeting
March 11, 2021
9:00AM
CISCO WebEx Virtual Meeting

Roll Call:

<u>Voting Member</u>	<u>Interest Category</u>	<u>Present (x) / Absent () / Alternate Present (*)</u>
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>	X
Matthew Barrett	<i>At-Large, River Authorities</i>	X
Elisa Macia Donovan	<i>Agricultural Interests</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

<u>Non-voting Member</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Present(x)/Absent() / Alternate Present (*)</u>
Adam Terry	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	
Natalie Johnson	Texas Division of Emergency Management	
Kristin Lambrecht	Texas Department of Agriculture	X
Joel Clark	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board	X
Ellen Kinsey	General Land Office	X
Megan Ingram	Texas Water Development Board	X
Kelly Mills	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	X
Jeff Taebel	Houston-Galveston Area Council	X
Ellie Alkhoury	Texas Department of Transportation	X
Tom Heidt	Port Houston	X
Michael Turco	Harris-Galveston Subsidence District	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

Aaron Tuley
 Alfred Garcia

Ashley Poe
 Bob Lux

Brandon Wade
Brooke Bacuetes
Chuntania Dangerfield
Clarissa Perez
Cory Stull
Danielle Goshen
Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs
Erin Kinney
Fatima Berrios
Glenna Sloan
Hector Olmos
James Bronikowski
Jill Boullion
John Yoars
Justin Bower
Kena Ware
Krista Melnar
Laura Atlas
Laura Norton
Maggie Puckett
Mark Unland
Mark Vogler
Marlisa Briggs
Matt Lopez
Michael Bloom

Michael Keck
Michael Reedy
Morgan White
Natalie Ballew
Neil Gaynor
Pam Hawkins
Penny Bradshaw
Philip Berzins
Rebecca Andrews
Reem Zoun
Reid Mrsny
Robert Kosar
Sally Bakko
Shea Sullivan
Stephanie Griffin
Stephanie Ruediger
Stephanie Zertuche
Susan Chadwick
Terry Barr
Tiffany Cartwright
Todd Stephens
Tommy Ramsey
Vince DeCapio
Unknown Caller: 3

**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, Chair of the SJRFPG, called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and welcomed all attendees.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: Welcome and Roll Call

Ms. Max, Secretary of the SJRFPG, took roll call and a quorum was established.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Texas Water Development Board Update

Morgan White, on behalf of the Texas Water Development Board, gave a brief update stating that TWDB had begun processing grant fund applications, and anticipates having all contracts with planning group sponsors executed by March 31st. Ms. White also stated TWDB has been working with the Regional Flood Planning Groups on setting up their websites, and preparing for the required pre-planning public meetings.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Registered Public Comments on Agenda Items 5-17 (limit of 3 minutes per person)

No written comments were received. The verbal comments given during the meeting are as follows:

- a) John Yoars, Agenda Item 8 – Mr. Yoars expressed his support for Neil Gaynor as a representative for the Montgomery County area.
- b) Neil Gaynor, One Water Task Force, Agenda Item 8 – Mr. Gaynor highlighted the importance of flood and water planning within the upper watershed area within the San Jacinto Region.
- c) Laura Norton, MUD 47 and Woodlands Water Board of Trustees, Item 8 – Ms. Norton stated her concern and disappointment with the lack of representation in the upper watershed area of Region 6.
- d) Penny Bradshaw, Interested Resident, Agenda Item 8 – Ms. Bradshaw stated her concern pertaining to the lack of representation for the Upper Watershed and recommended the SJRFPG add an additional seat to represent the upper watershed area. She recommended Neil Gaynor for that position.
- e) Glenna Sloan, Interested Resident, Agenda Item 8 – Ms. Sloan expressed her concern for repeated flooding in the upper watershed area and recommended Neil Gaynor as the upper watershed area representative.
- f) Robert Lux, President of MUD 60, Agenda Item 8 – Mr. Lux requested an additional voting seat for representation of the upper watershed area.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: Approval of minutes from the February 11, 2020 SJRFPG Meeting

Ms. Vinson moved to approve the meeting minutes with the minor correction of having Jeff Taebel shown as present during the meeting. Ms. Max seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: Announcement of new Alternate Members and new Non-Voting Members

Ms. Max announced that there were two new voting member alternates. She announced Mark Yetzen as Todd Burrer's alternate and Jill Boullion as Sarah Bernhardt's alternate.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: Update from Executive Committee, discussion, and possible action on Liaison to the neighboring Region 8 Lower Brazos Regional Flood Planning Group

Mr. Poppe opened the floor to the SJRFPG members for any recommendations or possible volunteers to serve as a liaison. Ms. Vinson asked if Mr. Turco was still willing to serve as the Region 8 liaison, and Mr. Turco replied affirmatively. Ms. Vinson moved to have Mr. Turco serve as the liaison to Region 8, Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: Discussion and possible action on Regional Flood Planning Group Membership, including the consideration of the addition of new voting and non-voting members/ member categories and update on current solicitation efforts for new members in categories already approved

Ms. Berrios provided an update on the solicitation process for candidates for the Coastal Communities and Public Categories. Ms. Berrios stated that only two applications had been received and reminded all the attendees that the deadline for submitting an application is March 26, 2021.

Ms. Vinson asked for clarification as to when the applications would be received by the SJRFPG members, and asked if there would be an Executive Committee meeting held before the SJRFPG meeting. Ms. Berrios stated she would distribute the applications before the next SJRFPG meeting. Discussion ensued.

After further discussion, Mr. Barrett redirected the discussion to the Upper Watershed representation topic. Many SJRFPG members stated their support of the creation of the category and there was discussion on which areas would be included in the new “Upper Watershed” area. Ms. Armstrong moved to create a voting member category for Upper Watershed, defined as areas upstream of the Lake Houston dam, Mr. Barrett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Poppe opened discussion for the creation of the solicitation notice for the Upper Watershed Category. Ms. Vinson asked if the same process would be followed as the previous solicitation notices. The group, by consensus, decided that the Planning Group Sponsor would draft and distribute the solicitation notice without further action from the SJRFPG or Executive Committee members.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: Discussion and possible action pertaining to the development of a new Region 6 -SJRFPG Website

Mr. Poppe opened the conversation by stating that approximately half of the other regional flood planning groups had websites up and running. Mr. Poppe stated Harris County Flood Control District Communications could help the SJRFPG create the website with an anticipated cost of \$800. Mr. Costello asked if Harris County Flood Control District would be reimbursed for the website. Ms. White replied yes but that she would verify with her managers.

Ms. Max stated that the grant application has roughly \$3000 for miscellaneous expenses such as this, but reminded the SJRFPG that the consultant could also create the website. Ms. Bernhardt asked for clarification regarding the motivation for establishing the website up before the consultant was on board. Ms. Max stated that the website could be valuable in that it would limit the posting deadline requirements, and would make it easier to gather public comments and communicate better with the public. Mr. Poppe then stated that the consultant would also need additional time to establish the website, and anticipated that the website established by the consultant would not be ready for use until late July. Opposed to if Harris County set up the website with a use date of early May.

Discussion ensued. After deliberation, no action was taken and Mr. Poppe stated that the SJRFPG would continue to coordinate with the TWDB for posting requirements.

Mr. Poppe gave a 10-minute recess at 10:35 AM and called the meeting back into session at 10:45 AM.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10. Discussion and possible action concerning public engagement strategies including organizing and setting a future date for a public meeting as required by Texas Water Code §16.062(d) and 31 Texas Administrative Code §361.12(a)(4):

Mr. Poppe summarized the previous discussion on this item and reminded the SJRFPG that the pre-planning meeting is required. He stated that the SJRFPG could wait to hold the pre-planning meeting until the consultant is hired or it could be scheduled as soon as possible. Mr. Poppe stated that the virtual platform Harris County Flood Control Districts currently uses is called “Public Input,” and indicated it could be used for the pre-planning meeting. Mr. Poppe then stated that the soonest HCFCD could schedule the meeting was in a month and a half, so in mid-April. Ms. Vinson moved to authorize the scheduling of a pre-planning meeting in accordance with the Texas Administrative Code and Texas Water Code at a time that the consultant could attend, to be conducted by Harris County Flood Control Districts would hold. Mr. Fisseler seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11: Discussion and update to the SJRFPG concerning tracking of public engagement and speaker requests on behalf of the SJRFPG and development of media request guidance

Ms. Berrios, on behalf of the Planning Group Sponsor, summarized that both Harris County staff and Harris County Flood Control District staff are coordinating to draft a media guidance document for the SJRFPG members to use, and reported that the Harris County Flood Control Communications Team recommended that one person be designated for all news media requests.

Ms. Berrios then presented a public engagement tracking form that would be used by SJRFPG members when requested to present in their official capacities. She then reminded everyone that the requests would need to be approved by either the Chair or Vice Chair. Ms. Berrios also stated that the Harris County staff had created a PowerPoint presentation that the SJRFPG speakers could use in the future.

Ms. Bernhardt then asked about how social media would be tracked. Ms. Max stated that social media had not previously been discussed, but stated that it would be a topic that would need to be addressed as the SJRFPG continued to operate and the consultant was hired.

Ms. Armstrong then asked for clarification on the designated media speaker, and Ms. Berrios clarified this individual, who has not yet been designated, would address news media requests, or other formal public speaking requests. Ms. Vinson then asked if the media policy guidance document would be forthcoming, and Ms. Berrios replied that Harris County and Harris County Flood Control District staff would be coordinating to create a draft in time for the next Executive Committee meeting and SJRFPG meeting. No action was taken on this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12: Update, discussion, and possible action concerning technical consultant procurement and grant status from TWDB, and/or Planning Group Sponsor

Mr. Mrsny reported that the Planning Group Sponsor was on schedule to execute all deadlines as shown in the tentative schedule. He then provided some important dates as follows:

- February 12, 2021: Request for Qualifications (RFQ) posted on Civcast
- March 3, 2021: Pre-Submittal Conference
- March 15, 2021: Deadline for RFQ submittals
- March 25, 2021: Evaluation Committee Meeting to discuss applicants
- April 1 & April 5, 2021: Interviews
- April 13, 2021: Commissioners Court Approval to allow Planning Group Sponsor to negotiate with the selected consultant

Mr. Mrsny stated that Commissioners Court approval would be needed on April 13th if the SJRFPG is to remain on schedule. He then stated an additional SJRFPG meeting would be required to approve the selected firm after April 13th in order to allow the Planning Group Sponsor to begin to negotiate a contract. Mr. Poppe then verified that only seven-day notice would be required if the SJRFPG wants to schedule an additional meeting to discuss and approve the selection of the consultant. Discussion ensued. No action was taken, but it was determined that the additional meeting would be scheduled tentatively around April 15, 2021.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 13: Update and discussion from the Planning Group Sponsor regarding project schedule and budget.

Ms. Max gave a brief overview of the grant application status stating the Planning Group Sponsor was on schedule to execute the grant contract by the end of March 2021.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 14: Update from Liaisons pertaining to other region progress and status updates

- a) **Trinity Region-** Mr. Burrer stated that the meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather and was rescheduled for next week, March 16th.
- b) **Neches Region** – Mr. Buscha stated that the regional flood planning group shortlisted three consultant firms, and had selected Freese Nichols & HDR team to develop its regional flood plan, and had moved into negotiations. He also stated that it has not identified a Trinity or Sabine liaison, and had selected a website domain as <http://nechesfloodplanning.org/>.
- c) **Lower Brazos Region** – Mr. Vogler reported no new information at this time.
- d) **Region H Water** – No liaison has been identified at this time and no update was available.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 15: Texas General Land Office (GLO) Presentation – GLO Combined River Basin Flood Study Overview

GLO gave a presentation which highlighted its proposed projects and flood study analysis which overlapped with the scope of work and timeline given to all the Regional Flood Planning Groups by TWDB. During the presentation, GLO stated it would be happy to provide its data collection and gap analysis to the regional flood planning groups. At the end of the presentation, Ms. Ellen Kinsey was named as the contact for additional concerns.

Mr. Costello asked if there were significant overlap between SJRFPG and GLO efforts as he was concerned about duplicate efforts. Ms. Kinsey stated that the GLO was coordinating with TWDB and The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) very closely to avoid duplicating efforts. Ms. White then stated that TWDB expects Regional Flood Planning Groups to use data collected by GLO where applicable.

Ms. Max also expressed her concerns and stated that within the grant contract between HCED and TWDB, it explicitly defined redundant work as being non-reimbursable. Mr. Costello concurred with Ms. Max and stated TWDB should meet with GLO and the Regional Flood Planning Groups to determine if duplicated efforts were defined in the RFPG scope of work. Ms. White stated that the efforts made by GLO were intended to be supplemental to the regional efforts, and each region had the discretion to use the “best available data” to develop their flood plans. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Poppe suggested that the consultant could move forward, but avoid proceeding with potential duplicate work. Mr. Poppe also suggested that a subcommittee would be beneficial to help coordinate with the GLO and TWDB.

Mr. Fisseler then stated that from a public viewpoint, the projects can become confusing and the scopes may blur with one another, so he suggested both scopes be clearly delineated.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 16: Presentation of 2021 Planning Group key dates and deadlines

- a) **Upcoming planning schedule milestones**
- b) **The next San Jacinto RFPG meeting will be on April 8, 2021 at 9:00 am.**

Key dates and deadlines: Next meeting will be April 8th. Ms. Max suggested the potential Executive Committee meeting could be held on April 6th.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 17: Reminder regarding Planning Group member training on Public Information Act and Open Meetings Act

Mr. Poppe gave a reminder that all members, including alternates, needed to complete the Public Information Act and Open Meetings Act training as soon as possible.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 18: Consider agenda items for next meeting

- Presentation from the Texas Living Waters Project
- Update on Pre-Planning Public Meeting and scheduling
- Update on grant and technical procurement of RFQ
- Update to GLO/TWDB issue
- Update and status of new Voting Category – Upper Watershed
- Update from Executive Committee meeting for recommendations for new voting member for both the Public Category and Coastal Communities Category
- Update and discussion on the logistics of in-person meetings
- Update and discussion regarding future TWDB/GLO/SJRFPG collaboration

AGENDA ITEM NO. 19: Public comments – limit 3 minutes per person

Item 19: Dr. Shelly Sekula-Gibbs from One Water Task Force. Dr. Shelly stated she was very grateful that the group had decided to add the new Upper Watershed category.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 20: Meeting Adjourn

Mr. Poppe adjourned the meeting at 12:08 PM.



Alisa Max, Secretary



Russ Poppe, Chair