

Meeting Minutes
Region 6 San Jacinto Regional Flood Planning Group
November 18, 2021
9:00 AM
Hybrid Meeting

Roll Call:

<u>Voting Member</u>	<u>Interest Category</u> (Executive Committee role)	<u>Present (x) / Absent () / Alternate Present (*)</u>
Timothy E. Buscha	<i>Industries (Chair)</i>	X
Alia Vinson	<i>Water Districts (Vice Chair)</i>	X* Auggie Campbell
Alisa Max	<i>Counties (Secretary)</i>	X
Gene Fisseler	<i>Public (At-Large member)</i>	X
Matthew Barrett	<i>River Authorities (At-Large member)</i>	X
Elisa Macia Donovan	<i>Agricultural Interests</i>	X
Jenna Armstrong	<i>Small Business</i>	
Paul E. Lock	<i>Electric Generating Utilities</i>	X
Rachel Powers	<i>Environmental Interests</i>	X
Stephen Costello	<i>Municipalities</i>	X
Marcus Stuckett	<i>Flood Districts</i>	X
Todd Burrer	<i>Water Utilities</i>	X
Brian Maxwell	<i>Coastal Communities</i>	X
Christina Quintero	<i>Public</i>	X
Neil Gaynor	<i>Upper Watershed</i>	X

<u>Non-voting Member</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Present(x)/Absent() / Alternate Present (*)</u>
Hope Zubek	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	X
Natalie Johnson	Texas Division of Emergency Management	
Kristin Lambrecht	Texas Department of Agriculture	X
Joel Clark	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board	X
Colleen Jones	Texas General Land Office	X Brooke Bacuetes
Megan Ingram	Texas Water Development Board	X
Melinda Johnston	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	
Jeff Taebel	Houston-Galveston Area Council	X
Ellie Alkhoury	Texas Department of Transportation	X* Alfred Garcia
Tom Heidt	Port Houston	
Michael Turco	Harris-Galveston Subsidence District	
Brandon Wade	Region H Regional Water Planning Group	X Jake Hollingsworth
TBA	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	
Sally Bakko	Gulf Coast Protection District	X

<u>Liaisons from RFPG</u>	<u>Regional Flood Planning Group</u>	<u>Present(x)/Absent()/Alternate Present (*)</u>
Todd Burrer	Trinity Region RFPG	X
Stephen Costello	Neches Region RFPG	X
Michael Turco	Lower Brazos RFPG	

<u>Liaisons from Other Entities</u>	<u>Entity</u>	<u>Present(x)/Absent()/Alternate Present (*)</u>
Mark Vogler	Lower Brazos RFPG	
Scott Harris	Trinity Region RFPG	
Brandon Wade	Region H Regional Water Planning Group	X* Jake Hollingsworth

<u>Technical Consultant Team Members</u>	<u>Entity</u>	<u>Present(x)/Absent()/Alternate Present (*)</u>
Cory Stull	Freese and Nichols Inc.	X
Maggie Puckett	Freese and Nichols Inc.	X
Hayes McKibben	Freese and Nichols Inc.	X

Quorum:

Quorum: **Yes**

Number of voting members or alternates that were present: 14

Number required for quorum per current voting membership of 15:8

Beto Moreno
Bob Kosar
Fatima Berrios
James Bronikowski
Jason Becker
Justin Bower
Kena Ware
Lisa Mairs
Michael Keck

Peggy Zahler
Rachel Herr
Rebecca Andrews
Reem Zoun
Stephanie Zertuche
Susan Chadwick
Valerie Woodard
Unknown: 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. Buscha called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: Welcome and Roll Call

Ms. Max took roll call and a quorum was established.

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

Ms. Berrios stated there were not any registered public comments and the meeting continued.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Texas Water Development Board Update

Ms. Ingram reminded everyone of the deadline for the Technical Memorandum which is on January 7, 2022.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: Approval of minutes - October 14, 2021

Mr. Buscha opened the floor for comments for any revisions to the meeting minutes. After Mr. Barrett provided minor comments, Mr. Fisseler moved to approve the meeting minutes as revised. Ms. Powers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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

Mr. Buscha stated that Ms. Sally Bakko was appointed as the non-voting member for the Gulf Coast Protection District (GCPD). Mr. Costello asked Ms. Bakko to provide information about the GCPD. Ms. Bakko stated the website for the GCPD was still in development, and that the group will be meeting every second Wednesday of each month. She stated she would keep the SJRFPG up to date with all initiatives and efforts made by the GCPD.

Mr. Buscha announced Mr. Stuckett had formally appointed his alternate member, Ms. Dena Green and confirmed she had been approved to serve by Harris County Commissioners Court. Ms. Max also stated Matthew Barrett had assigned Briana Gallagher as his alternate.

Mr. Buscha announced Ms. Armstrong had resigned her position as the Small Business voting member due to a career change, and advised the Project Sponsor would be soliciting nominations for her replacement.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: Nomination, discussion, and possible action to add a fifth member to the Public Engagement Committee

Mr. Buscha opened the floor for any nominations or volunteers for the participation as the fifth member of the Public Engagement Committee and discussion ensued among the voting members. Seeing no nominations or volunteers, the agenda item was deferred.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: Liaison Reports pertaining to other region(s) progress and status:

- a. **Trinity** – Mr. Burrer stated the meeting was currently underway and would provide an update at the next SJRFPG meeting.
- b. **Neches Region** – Mr. Costello stated the Neches Region was on the same timeline as the SJRFPG and stated their Floodplain Management Goals were similar to the ones proposed by the SJRFPG.
- c. **Lower Brazos Region** – Mr. Turco was not available to provide an update.
- d. **Region H Water Planning Group** – Mr. Hollingsworth stated that Region H met on November 3, 2021, to discuss extending the terms for voting members to five years. He stated

approximately half of the members were reappointed and stated all their meetings will be in-person. He then stated the next meeting will be on February 2, 2022.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: Presentation and updates from the SJRFPG Technical Consultant & Reminder to complete the stakeholder survey

Mr. Stull stated that Freese and Nichols Inc. would be providing an overview of the progress they had made thus far and also give an interim deliverable of all data collection efforts. He stated Ms. Puckett would be presenting all data collection information. He stated there would be a significant amount of content that would be included in the Technical Memorandum, but emphasized it was by no means a finalized product, adding it was more of an interim snapshot of the progress. He stated the SJRFPG would need to approve the submittal in the Technical Memorandum during the December planning meeting.

Mr. Buscha reiterated what Mr. Stull had said and asked if there would be another progress update before the approval of the Technical Memorandum. Mr. Stull stated additional narratives would be added to the presented draft along with additional geospatial information. Ms. Bakko noted that the Gulf Coast Protection District was not listed as a political subdivision in the current draft and asked what process was in place for adding additional political subdivisions. Mr. Stull advised Ms. Bakko that if the GCPD wished to provide feedback, it should do so through the stakeholder survey that was live on the SJRFPG website, and stated that newer entities would be updated as new data was received. Mr. Stull also stated FNI could meet with the GCPD if further input was desired.

Mr. Fisseler asked if the draft of the Technical Memorandum was similar to the Regional Flood Plan that would be submitted to TWDB. Mr. Stull stated that once 2022 comes around, the plan will be to adopt the Regional Flood Plan by parts, stating there will be 10 chapters as they correspond to the 10 scope of work tasks. He then stated the content that was included in the draft Technical Memorandum was preliminarily tabular data and would continue to grow. Mr. Stull then encouraged the voting members to become familiar with the format and content of the draft Technical Memorandum in order to contribute comments, emphasizing the TWDB had provided guidance documents for its deliverable. Mr. Stull also noted the Technical Memorandum would be posted on the website for public and stakeholder view.

Ms. Puckett then began her presentation stating that she would be giving a general overview of the information found in the Technical Memorandum. She stated the Floodplain Management Goals would also be incorporated as approved by the SJRFPG. She stated there were 15 total goals – eight of which were 10-year short term and seven 30-year long term goals. She then reminded everyone of the identification process for Flood Management Strategies, Flood Management Evaluations, and Flood Mitigation Projects. She proceeded to share a draft list of potentially feasible flood management evaluations, and strategies and flood mitigation projects. She noted once data is collected, they would refine the list based on stakeholder input. Ms. Puckett stated that the majority of the feasible actions were gathered by unfunded recent CDBG-MIT, FIF and FEMA BRIC applications submitted by entities within the Region.

Ms. Max asked for clarification as to whether additional projects would be considered after the Technical Memorandum deadline. Ms. Puckett clarified saying yes, that FNI would continue to incorporate additional projects as data was gathered. Ms. Puckett also stated that infeasible actions would also be included in the report. She then moved on and provided a list of spatial data. Ms. Puckett provided a timeline of the coming months stating that the main priority was the submittal of the Technical Memorandum. She stated there was a potential for the Technical Committee to meet and discuss any additional feedback on the Technical Memorandum. Mr. Stull then reiterated that data collection efforts would be exhaustive and would continue after the Technical Memorandum is issued. Mr. Stull then stated that infeasible projects as defined by the TWDB to also include strategies and evaluations, would be

classified as such based on a lack of information; however, these could be moved to the feasible list if additional funding was identified to support data collection efforts.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10: Update and recommendations from the Technical Committee and possible action from the RFPG as it relates to:

a. Approval of the Floodplain Management Goals

Mr. Buscha stated the goals would be approved today and asked Ms. Donovan to provide an overview of the Floodplain Management Goals as discussed by the Technical Committee. Ms. Donovan then went through the Floodplain Management Goals and explained the intent of each one. Mr. Buscha then thanked Ms. Donovan and the Technical Committee, emphasizing the importance of securing future funds for flood mitigation projects. He then opened the floor for any discussion.

Mr. Fisseler asked if there was a clear definition of “critical facilities.” Ms. Donovan answered that hospitals, fire stations, schools, power generation facilities, wastewater treatment plants, and other facilities are defined as critical facilities. Mr. Costello stated that the number of critical facilities was in the thousands and asked Mr. Stull if he could confirm the total number. Mr. Stull indicated a total of 4851 critical facilities were currently in 100-yr floodplain and stated that number was expected to increase once the Atlas 14 data is incorporated.

Ms. Bakko stated the economic security of Region 6 was significant to the nation as a whole. She stated that some of the manufacturing facilities that developed chemicals and industrial products should be included as critical facilities for the sake of the national economy. She then stated that the Regional Flood Plan should be consistent with what the GCPD would be stating to secure funds. Mr. Buscha thanked Ms. Bakko and stated the Regional Flood Plan should incorporate additional language to make a distinction between the types of critical facilities described by Ms. Bakko and those described by Ms. Donovan, as those described by Ms. Bakko served other functions aside from emergency management. Ms. Ingram stated there was flexibility for the SJRFPG to include additional definitions as stated in the guidance documents. Mr. Stull agreed and stated he would work with Ms. Bakko to incorporate all the information.

Mr. Barrett then thanked the Technical Committee for its work on the Floodplain Management Goals. He stated that the SJRFPG should consider making changes to the Floodplain Management Goals moving forward as projects and data come in to ensure that goals are reasonable and that good, beneficial projects are not eliminated from consideration due to not meeting these preliminary goals. He then stated there was a significant amount of funds that were provided in response to Hurricane Harvey and stated that proposing a goal to increase state and federal funding, as opposed to specifically non-disaster based funding, may not be feasible due to these previous large, disaster-based funding amounts.

Mr. Buscha and Mr. Campbell also thanked the Technical Committee and for their efforts on the Floodplain Management Goals. Ms. Donovan moved to accept the Floodplain Management Goals. Mr. Costello seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11: Update and recommendation from the Executive Committee, and possible action from the RFPG as it relates to the voting member reimbursement policy and procedures

Mr. Buscha stated that the Executive Committee met to discuss the procedure for voting member travel expense reimbursements. Mr. Buscha then walked through the proposed voting member reimbursement policy and noted conditions where reimbursements would not be authorized. He then opened the floor for comments to the policy noting his only comment was the removal of the “adjacent county” language, which was one of the conditions noted that restricted travel reimbursements. Ms. Powers agreed with Mr. Buscha’s comments and stated the policy should serve to increase diversity in member participation.

Mr. Burren then stated that the reimbursements should be considered on a case-by-case basis. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Max stated she would approve the policy as revised with the removal of the “adjacent county” language if the policy would be revisited during future planning cycles. Mr. Fisseler moved to approve the voting member reimbursement policy as revised with minor changes. Mr. Stuckett seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12: Approval and certification of administrative expenses incurred by the Project Sponsor for the development of Regional Flood Plan

Ms. Max stated that the administrative expenses covered the costs associated with the management of the grant on behalf of the SJRFPG. She stated this was a requirement and the maximum for each month was set at \$5,000. Mr. Costello moved to approve the administrative expenses. Mr. Gaynor seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 13: Discussion and potential action to authorize the Planning Group Sponsor to negotiate and execute an amendment to the Regional Flood Planning Grant contract with the TWDB, to incorporate additional funding for the first cycle of regional flood planning, including necessary revisions to the contract scope of work and budget.

Mr. Buscha stated the amendment was to address additional funds that the SJRFPG had received from the TWDB. He stated the total amount received was \$635,000 (later corrected to \$627,500), which would be used for additional tasks by the Technical Consultant. Mr. Costello moved to approve the contract amendment with the TWDB. Ms. Powers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 14: Discussion and potential action to authorize the Planning Group Sponsor to negotiate and execute an amendment to the Regional Flood Planning Grant subcontract with the Technical Consultant, Freese and Nichols, Inc., to incorporate additional funding for the first cycle of regional flood planning, including necessary revisions to the contract scope of work and budget.

Mr. Buscha stated the Project Sponsor would need to negotiate the amendment with the technical consultant, Freese and Nichols Inc, to fully execute the contract amendment. Mr. Costello moved to approve the contract amendment negotiations with FNI. Mr. Barrett seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 15: Presentation of Planning Group key dates and deadlines:

- a. Upcoming planning schedule milestones
- b. Next SJRFPG planning meeting to be held on December 9, 2021

Mr. Stull stated the Technical Memorandum was the next major deliverable which would be due to TWDB on January 7, 2022.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 16: Update and discussion pertaining to in-person RFPG meeting location(s)

Mr. Buscha stated that the Project Sponsor would be using the Trini Mendenhall Community Center for the next monthly planning meeting to address technical issues.

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

Mr. Buscha reminded all the members of the SJRFPG that the Public Information Act and Open Meetings Act trainings were mandatory.

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

- Fifth member for Technical Committee

- Fifth member to Public Engagement Committee
- Solicitations for Small Business Voting Member
- Approval of Technical Memorandum
- Officer Elections

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

Ms. Berrios stated there were no comments from members of the public.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 20: Adjournment

Mr. Buscha adjourned the meeting at 11:49 a.m.

Alisa Max

Alisa Max, Secretary

Timothy E. Buscha

Timothy Buscha, Chair