

Meeting Minutes
Public Engagement Committee
March 10, 2022 at 11:30 AM
Hybrid Meeting | Virtual Registration: <https://bit.ly/3MmEzFZ>
Trini Mendenhall Community Center | 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, TX 77055

Roll Call:

<u>Public Engagement Committee Member</u>	<u>Interest Category</u>	<u>Present (x) /Absent () / Alternate Present (*)</u>
Todd Burrer	Water Utilities (Chair)	X (In-person)
Paul Lock	Electric Generating Utilities (Vice Chair)	X (In-person)
Rachel Powers	Environmental (Secretary)	X
Christina Quintero	Public	X
Connie Pothier	Small Business	X

Quorum:

Quorum: Yes

Number of voting members or alternates representing voting members present: 5

Number required for quorum per current voting membership: 5:3

Other Meeting Attendees: **

Voting: None

Non-Voting: None

In person:

Claudia Garcia (HCED), Fatima Berrios (HCED), Connor Stokes (Hollaway), Marcello Moacyr

Remote:

Bob Leibrock

Brooke Bacuetes

Colleen Gilbert

Ginger C. Horn

Grant Moss (Bayou Preservation Association)

Hollaway Environmental + Communications

Justin Bartlett

Mariah Najmuddin (Hollaway)

Matt Lopez (IRT-FCD)

Peggy Zahler

Stephan Gage (IRT-HCTRA)

Susan Chadwick

Todd Stephens

Tom Mumford (Hollaway)

Unknown: 2

**Meeting attendee names were gathered from those who entered information for joining the Webex meeting.

All meeting materials are available for the public at: [Flood Planning Group Meeting Schedule | Texas Water Development Board](#)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Call to Order

Mr. Burrer called the meeting to order at 11:31 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: Welcome and Roll Call

Mr. Burrer welcomed the meeting attendees and went around the in-person conference room for introductions. Ms. Berrios took attendance, and a quorum was established.

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

Ms. Berrios stated there were no registered public comments.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Update from Technical Consultant on public engagement metrics and strategies

Mr. Stokes with Hollaway Environmental + Communications, welcomed the committee and gave an update on the SJRFPG website dashboard metrics. Mr. Stokes stated there had been an increase in survey replies. Mr. Stokes updated the committee on the distribution list, which was up to 1,220. Mr. Stokes stated that the e-blast would increase and described the SJRFPG social media platforms to the group.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: Discussion and recommendations for public engagement metrics that support the goals outlined in the SJRFPG Communications and Media Engagement Plan – June 2021, as well as goals adopted by the SJRFPG in November 2021

Ms. Najmuddin with Hollaway Environmental + Communications, began by reviewing the Communication Plan goals presented to the group during the June 2021 Public Engagement meeting. Ms. Najmuddin stated that the goals and the plan should be informed by the Public Engagement Committee and opened for comments. Ms. Quintero stated she shared the survey with neighbors, and she had to guide the non-technical savvy through it, which she recognized as a barrier. Ms. Quintero stated that she noticed the font and zoom features on mobile devices proved difficult to read and suggested to bring up the link on the feed so that members could easily share it.

Mr. Lock wanted to ensure goals could be measured. Ms. Powers stated there was no discussion of “meaningful engagement and input from a broad audience” as a goal. Ms. Powers continued that the survey was providing opportunities for input and not getting input, so she suggested to include a goal for meaningful input. Mr. Burrer suggested to revise goal number four to include “...and get meaningful input.” Ms. Powers agreed with Mr. Burrer. Discussion ensued regarding “meaningful” definition. Mr. Stokes stated that the communications consultant intended to track the goals and acknowledged the committee’s concerns with the language in the goals. Ms. Powers differentiated between quantitative vs. qualitative goal setting. Mr. Burrer asked if the Texas Water Development Board provided a definition and whether these goals met the requirements, or not. Mr. Stokes explained further regarding the requirements of having different forms for public participation. Mr. Burrer stated he would like to quantify the term “meaningful” as it related to metrics.

Ms. Powers referred to the previous public comment meeting and noted that most people had questions, not comments. Ms. Powers stated that if people didn’t understand when and how to provide comments, it would be difficult to do so. Ms. Najmuddin suggested the need of a basic awareness campaign where people would be encouraged to visit the website paired with translating the technical terms into common language and making a timeline for the public’s reference. Ms. Powers suggested an “open house” style meeting with one period of the meeting intended for public comment and/or questions. Ms. Powers

continued that the rest of the meeting could be with stations, graphs, and charts to educate people, citing concerns with complying with the Texas Open Meeting Act. Mr. Stokes agreed with an “open house” style meeting and suggested this type of meeting could be useful for the next public meeting. Mr. Stokes suggested the communications consultant would take the input to the technical consultant to come up with how to incorporate them.

Mr. Stokes stated that the entire Communications Plan was included in the meeting materials and opened for comments or questions. Mr. Stokes began with the introduction of the Communications Plan and continued to present a high-level overview of the plan to the committee and meeting attendees. Mr. Burrer opened for questions and noted the measuring metrics graph at the end. Mr. Stokes pointed out that the graphic used quantitative tracking and didn’t speak for Ms. Powers’ concerns or qualitative tracking. Ms. Powers noted in section four regarding key audiences, should specifically include community-based organizations or ambassadors. Ms. Powers touched on representatives from lower income communities and those with historically less investment in infrastructure. Mr. Stokes concluded that Ms. Powers’ suggestion could be incorporated in the plan. Mr. Burrer opened for further comments, and none were provided.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: Discussion and possible recommendations for leveraging SJRFGP member participation in public engagement strategies

Mr. Stokes reviewed a list of recommendations on increasing outreach and level-of-feedback received. Ms. Najmuddin explained further regarding social media platforms and the ability to share by identifying and tagging those organizations and communities that Ms. Powers mentioned previously. Ms. Najmuddin continued by reinforcing that there should be a SJRFGP presence on social media platforms and to be intentional in reaching groups where they were. Ms. Najmuddin continued with the communications consultants’ recommendations and advised the group that they put together informational booklets to attendees of the TFMA Conference to increase awareness, as part of the outreach. Ms. Najmuddin opened the floor for feedback or ideas on what community engagement could look like.

Mr. Burrer stated the recommendations looked great and suggested going through MUDS and the Cities for distribution. Ms. Powers didn’t see recommendations on reaching out to the media and Ms. Najmuddin stated they could put together a press list and come up with a press release. Ms. Quintero suggested to make a presentation on Fox 26 on Saturday morning for awareness. Ms. Quintero suggested having a press release and doing a press conference. Ms. Quintero stated she would get with her contacts at Fox 26 and Univision. Ms. Quintero further suggested to include an interactive text pop-up on the site to give feedback in trying to access the survey. Ms. Quintero raised the question if the group could get feedback from other regions in their encountered struggles with community engagement. Ms. Powers suggested SJRFGP presence on Earth Day which expects 10,000 people. Mr. Lock suggested H-TV where the City of Houston broadcasts their open meetings. Mr. Moacyr suggested a database of people who opened insurance claims related to flood. Mr. Moacyr stated he had a contact at the Houston Business Journal and offered to make that connection as another way to reach the public. Ms. Pothier commented on recommendation number three in the plan and suggested the County Clerk send notices to homeowners/business owners and property taxpayers in their mailouts. Mr. Burrer asked the group for additional recommendations and there weren’t any. Mr. Stokes stated that the next step would be to include the Committee’s recommendations in the Plan and get it out for adoption.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: Discussion and possible recommendations regarding the next public outreach meeting format and public input method(s) as required by Texas Water Code §16.062(d) and 31 Texas Administrative Code §361.12(a)(4)

Mr. Stokes stated the consultants were looking at a Summer 2022 date for the next Public Engagement meeting. Mr. Stokes stated the communications consultant wanted to start the planning process for the next Public Engagement meeting. Discussion ensued regarding possible dates. Mr. Stokes could not specify a firm date after Ms. Powers asked for a more targeted date. Ms. Berrios stated that the next mandatory meeting was set for public comments to the draft Regional Flood Plan, which should be ready in May, thus having a meeting in June made sense. Mr. Burrer implored the group to nail down a date for scheduling and suggested to move the date to include Ms. Powers. Ms. Berrios clarified the Regional Flood Plan draft is due in early August and required to be presented to the public for a window of 30-days. Ms. Berrios suggested to follow up with Freese and Nichols Inc., to pick a date. Mr. Burrer suggested June 21, 2022 with three full weeks to review before the meeting. Ms. Berrios stated to continue to have hybrid meetings and Ms. Powers suggested multiple meetings for a better outcome. Mr. Stokes wanted to ensure that the proposed open house style meeting format wouldn't interfere with Texas Open Meeting Act. Ms. Powers suggested to keep virtual separate from in-person meetings. Mr. Burrer asked if it was necessary to get permission for funding from the group. Ms. Berrios stated it could be considered by the SJRFP, but only needed Chair approval. Ms. Powers asked Ms. Quintero if this plan aligned for meaningful input from the communities she works with. Ms. Quintero agreed with keeping the in-person separate from the virtual open house. Mr. Burrer asked where we could have the "open house" meetings. Ms. Berrios stated the project sponsor would seek legal input and report back and added that a central location to the region or a community center would be most appropriate.

Mr. Stokes offered second language translations and translations with materials or meetings through the communications consultant. Mr. Stokes brought up the discussion from last year on Vietnamese language or any other language and the group wanted to stay with English and Spanish. Ms. Powers suggested to pose the language services need as a question in the meeting notice to provide opportunity for someone to request additional language, we could accommodate, and the communications consultants agreed. Mr. Burrer asked for further comments on the public outreach discussion and there were none.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: Consider agenda items for the next meeting

Mr. Stokes suggested to revisit the implemented recommendations and to further discuss qualitative metrics in the next meeting agenda. Mr. Stokes suggested to revisit the next Public Meeting discussion and to further plan for that meeting. Ms. Powers suggested a late April or early May meeting. Mr. Burrer suggested to decide on a date for the next meeting and suggested for the committee to input and decide. Mr. Lock suggested April 21 and April 28. May 5 was also suggested as April 28 presented a conflict for the communications consultants. Mr. Burrer suggested May 5 which seemed to be an agreeable date with time to be determined. Mr. Burrer suggested that any time after 9:00 a.m. and before 5:00 p.m. The Project Sponsor committed to send out the invitation once details were ironed out.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: Public comments – limit 3 minutes per person

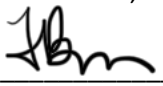
Mr. Burrer opened for public comments. No public comments were made.

AGENDA ITEM 10: Adjourn

Mr. Burrer opened for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lock moved to adjourn, and Ms. Powers seconded the motion. Mr. Burrer adjourned the meeting at 12:39 p.m.



Rachel Powers, Secretary



Todd Burrer, Chair