

Cimarron Regional Advisory Committee Meeting
1:00pm, Thursday, April 11th, 2019
Conestoga Energy Offices, 1701 N. Kansas Ave., Liberal, KS

Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Nick Hatcher (Chair)	Liberal, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2019	Yes
Bret Rooney (Vice-Chair)	Satanta, KS	Groundwater Management	2021	No
Trista Brown	Satanta, KS	At Large Public 2	2021	Yes
Michael Bryant	Copeland, KS	Agriculture 2	2019	No
Calvin Burke	Liberal, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2019	No
Luke Grubbs	Hugoton, KS	Irrigation	2021	Yes
Brian Hemman	Hugoton, KS	Agricultural Industry	2019	No
Matt Higgins	Elkhart, KS	Public Water Supply 2	2021	Yes
Gary Boldt	Ulysses, KS	At Large Public 3	2019	Yes
Jim Sipes	Manter, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2021	Yes
Alan Olson	Ulysses, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2021	No
Jason Norquest	Garden City, KS	At Large Public 4	2019	Yes
VACANT		Conservation/Environment (cc)	2019	

Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Austin McColloch	KDA-DWR
Jett Little	KDA-DWR
Mike Meyer	KDA-DWR
Alexandra Geisler	KWO
Armando Zarco	KWO
Matt Unruh	KWO
Jonathan Aguilar	KSRE

Welcome & Introductions

Chairman Nick Hatcher began the meeting at 1:07pm and welcomed everyone, giving all those present a chance to introduce themselves. A quorum was present; seven of the twelve committee members were present.

Approval of Agenda

Gary Boldt motioned to approve the agenda. Matt Higgins seconded. The agenda was approved as presented.

Review & Approval of September, November, & January Meeting Minutes

Membership: Nick Hatcher (Chair), Liberal, KS; Brett Rooney (Vice-Chair), Satanta, KS; Trista Brown, Satanta, KS; Michael Bryant, Copeland, KS; Calvin Burke, Liberal, KS; Luke Grubbs, Hugoton, KS; Brian Hemann, Hugoton, KS; Matt Higgins, Elkhart, KS; Danny Law, Ulysses, KS; Gary Boldt, Ulysses, KS; Jim Sipes, Manter, KS; Alan Olson, Ulysses, KS; Jason Norquest, Garden City, KS
KWO Planners: Alexandra Geisler, 785-296-0865; alexandra.geisler@kwo.ks.gov
 Armando Zarco, 620-276-2901; armando.zarco@kwo.ks.gov

Jim Sipes motioned to approve all three sets of meeting minutes. Gary Boldt seconded. The September, November, and January minutes were all approved.

Water Technology Farm & Filed Days Update – Armando Zarco

Armando Zarco showed the committee where to access information about the Water Technology Farm Program on the Kansas Water Office website. In addition to an overview of the program and an updated map, the webpage includes information on each of the individual farms and access to the first annual Technology Farm Report covering 2018 harvest data. The report uses KWO data, which is not the same as what Jonathan from K-State hand collects and uses to look at the agronomy.

There are 10 technology farms still in place and KWO is pursuing 5 additional farms. Feedback indicates that 3 years is not enough time to evaluate, so even the farms already through that first 3-year period will be continuing with the program. Everything ultimately depends on funding availability. Homeland Farm, one of the additional 5 added this year, is located within the Upper Smoky Hill Region. Geiger in the East will be the first dryland technology farm, and the other three additional are located in central Kansas. The next step is to have field days in the July/August timeframe, with dates selected by the end of May or early June.

Jim Sipes asked if there were plans of moving any further west with the program. Armando is not apposed, but no one from that area has approached him or applied to be a Water Technology Farm. If anyone knows individuals in the area who may be interested in joining the program, put them in touch with Armando.

Oklahoma Coordination – Jim Sipes

The November meeting ended up being a GMD3 meeting, which was different from our goal of focusing on conversations between farmers without the involvement of state agencies. It has been difficult to get anyone from Oklahoma to show up. The Farm Bureau & Irrigation Association are both on board to help, but there was another water meeting that day which may have been a factor. Nick Hatcher suggested going to one of their meetings instead and trying to get on the agenda. The group thought that was a good idea and Jim will reach out and see about trying to get on an agenda. Jason Norquest asked what the overall goal of this effort is. The idea is to share what we are doing here in Kansas with our neighbors in Oklahoma, and get them to see the value in it. The industry doesn't stop at the state line, we want them to know we are in the same boat and get them to see the worth in capturing the amount they use and in using less. It would be good moving forward to further define what it is we want to convey so we are all on the same page giving the same message.

KWA Letter Response

KWO's Acting Director Earl Lewis sends his regrets, he was hoping to make it out and talk to the committee about this but had other priorities come up. Instead he put together a memo to help clarify the decision that was made. After reading through the memo Nick Hatcher explained that he feels like the RAC has done their part in this process. The committee has no authority but because they thought it was important to the region they sent a message the Kansas Water Authority asking for support. From this point going forward he doesn't believe the RAC has a dog in the fight. Trista Brown asked what the point of bringing it back up would be if the agencies/organizations aren't supportive of it, and wanted to clarify if GMD3 came to a different conclusion. Jason Norquest answered yes, the study GMD3 conducted showed that it would have effects. The USGS is putting in another well, and the Forestry Service was supportive but didn't want to get involved. The USGS surface gauge should be in operation even if information is not on the web, Mike Meyer clarified.

From a RAC standpoint, if you want it on the forefront for the KWA you can send a message relaying continued interest on tracking, said Matt Unruh. Similar to last year the plan is to engage the RACs on budget recommendations, and you could bring it up at that time as well. Jason continued saying that GMD3 is still dealing with Colorado water court. There is a compact between Oklahoma & Kansas for surface water flows, but it does not include Colorado. Discussions have occurred with Tracy and others about an interstate fund to address issues such as these. What happened to the money received from Colorado that the legislature stole, and the money from Nebraska? Nick Hatcher suggested that the next message from the RAC needs to be in support of something like that, a fund that could be built over time. Mike Meyer added one last piece of advice to be careful what you point to when looking at the data. There has been legal expansion and development on water rights in between, and they had authority to do it for years but are just doing it now.

SOTR RAC Presentations & Outreach Efforts

Alexandra apologized for not having more work done on these by now. She plans to work with those volunteers in hopes of having a draft ready for the committee to review at the next meeting.

2019 Membership Drive

Alexandra Geisler asked everyone to look at the sheet included in the meeting materials that shows the membership drive timeline, and a table that highlights all members with a 2019 membership expiration. Those commit members, their official expiration date being 6/30/2019, should have received an email notification from her in March. The open call for applications will be during the month of May, and anyone interested in a position, including current members, will need to submit an application by May 31st. The KWA RAC Operations Committee will review candidates in June, and make recommendations for the full KWA to take action on at the July meeting in Goodland. Alexandra added that she can collect any completed applications at the end of the meeting, and has extra blank applications for anyone that needs one.

There was a question regarding the chair position as Nick announced that he will not be reapplying. Matt Unruh explained that the chair and vice-chair are appointed by the chair of the KWA, therefore the RAC will not need to take any action. Membership appointments will be made July 31st, and following that the KWA Chair will make appointments. The next meeting for the RAC will take place in the August/September timeframe following that membership appointment. The question was asked where things stand in Topeka. Nominations have been put forward for KWA positions that have expired, including the chair of the authority. It is at the discretion of the Governor. They are just to the point where some of the cabinet level agency heads are being put forward to the Senate for confirmation. Mike Beam was just confirmed to be Secretary of KDA. We are not a cabinet level agency so selection of the KWO Director is lower on the pecking order. There is a lot of hope that action will be taken here in the very near future.

Agency Reports

Jason Norquest GMD No. 3: Fully implement and work on timing for well evaluations, if you do a re-drill, it helps to set an idea of what the effects will be. If you want to see results it is on website already: What We Do – Well Evaluations. He and several others from the GMD spent half a week in DC, and got the chance to talk to members from both Kansas and Colorado. In regards to the Ark Valley Conduit the legislature promised to deal with water quality issues along the Arkansas River in Colorado. We got legislation through this session that says if that gets funded not to forget about the Ark in Kansas. To get into EQIP, NRCS wants numbers. We just got finished with a 3-year project on mobile-drip irrigation working with Clay Scott from Grant County on the first three spans. Really good results and data from the project were presented to the State NRCS office last Monday. The response was positive, and we're hoping to get mobile-drip added as an option to be funded.

Mike Meyer KDA-DWR: Water use reports were a huge success, with over 88% of people filing online. There were very few paper reports, and just a handful that are late. The benefit is that we have the data now and can already start reviewing

it. In the past with paper reports it took months to get all the data from the reports entered. There were a lot of comments on what can be fixed, and for the 5th year we will continue to work on improving it. This was the first year pushing it, last year only 20% used the online system. There is a \$250 fine for each water right if you haven't submitted, and after June it will be \$1000 for each water right and a suspension. Our office has moved, it is now on old Highway 50 between Garden City and Holcomb. KDA-DOC has funding available to help cost-share on technology up to \$10,000 for those in WCAs. The deadline is in April, see your local NRCS office. There are now 23 WCAs, and still interest in individuals wanting to conserve.

Matt Unruh KWO: Gave a brief update on where things stand with the State Water Plan fund budget. Last week the House & Senate conference committee met to go through everything budget related. They made progress on the Water Plan Fund, and although no bills came from it from a budget standpoint they will not go back on agreements made in conference committee. Highlighted in your materials are changes from the Governor's recommendations. For the most part they are positive with dollars added. The Drinking Water Protection Program could have benefits for this region. The CREP increase is targeted towards CREP related activities in the Rattlesnake Creek area. Legislature is on a break right now, and when they come back one of the big actions will be approval of the budget.

Armando Zarco asked the committee their thoughts on the joint meeting in January. The overall response was positive, and they would like to do it again with a bit more focus on joint problems between the two. Nick Hatcher noted that the Master Irrigators session was interesting and that he would like to see that topic carry on and continue in Kansas. This could possibly be a joint topic both RACs can work on together. Other states are pursuing it outside of Texas, and the committee would like to see it on the agenda moving forward each meeting until something happens.

Other Business

Public Comments – Jonathan Aguilar has an update from KSRE. Danny Rogers has retired, and the research station is going to be hiring some new Agronomists.

Messages to Kansas Water Authority – None

Future Meetings –

Next RAC meeting – Conference call on Thursday November 1st @ 11:30am

Joint meeting with Upper Arkansas RAC – beginning of next year

Governor's Conference on the Future of Water in Kansas – November 13th & 14th in Manhattan

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10pm.