

Missouri Regional Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, January 5, 2023, 9 am
In Person/Virtual Meeting

Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Joel Mahnken (Chair)	Leavenworth, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2025	Yes
Michelle Wirth (VC)	Kansas City, KS	Public Water Supply 3	2025	Yes
John Bishop	Atchison, KS	Recreation	2023	Yes
Martin Simon	Atchison, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2025	No
Mike Stec	Atchison, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2023	Yes
Jeffrey Grossenbacher	Bern, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2023	Yes
Chris Griffin	Troy, KS	WRAPs	2025	Yes
Carl Johnson	Leavenworth, KS	Conservation/Environment	2023	Yes
Lisa Montgomery	Reserve, KS	Sac & Fox Nation of Missouri in KS & NE	2023	Yes
Brett Neibling	Highland, KS	Agriculture 2	2023	No
Doug Allen	Sabetha, KS	Public Water Supply 2	2023	Yes
Vacant		Fish and Wildlife	2025	
Vacant		Agriculture Industry	2025	

Others in attendance:

Name	Representing	Name	Representing
Geoff Bohling	KGS	Don Whittemore	KGS
Angela Anderson	KWO	Clinton McNemee	City of Atchison
Mike Beezhold	KDHE	Meredith Fry	KLRD
Richard Rockel	KWO	Kirk Tjelmeland	KWO

- I) **Welcome/Introduction:** Joel asked if there was a quorum, which there was and he started the meeting at 9:05 am. Joel had those in the room introduce themselves and those on the phone do the same.
- II) **Approval of the Agenda:** Tj mentioned this was something he hadn't been doing but will start from now on. Joel asked if everyone would review the agenda knowing that Geoff/Don will go before RAC Business discussion. John moved to approve and Carl seconded it and it passed unanimously.
- III) **Discussion of December 14-15th KWA meeting:** Tj brought up the agenda and items of note on the 14th were the Public Water Supply Report which is available [here](#). The next item on the agenda was the report out by the KWA Ogallala Aquifer Committee with lots of discussion centered around the KWA Recommendations to use the word "halt" in the sentence, halt the decline of the Ogallala Aquifer. There was a great deal of news coverage on this with the idea that we can no longer

manage for decline of the aquifer but stability. The final item of day one was the 2023 Annual report that can be found [here](#) and will be used in presentations to the legislators and others. The report highlights budgets and some of the water issues across the state. The second day of the KWA meeting started with the RAC Ops Committee and RAC member applications. Next on the agenda were the two messages to the KWA regarding the Proof of Concept (POC) from Groundwater Management District 3 (GMD3). There was a good deal of discussion related to both messages and Dawn asked Earl Lewis, Chief Engineer, to speak to these. Earl said that DWR would provide answers to the questions that pertained to DWR from the Missouri RAC message. Dawn wanted DWR and GMD 3 to provide answers by the end of January. Earl mentioned that DWR had spent hundreds of hours on this particular permit and that the POC doesn't prove anything. He would like to see something from GMD 3 on scaling up of the project and costs estimates besides what is in the information related to the term permit. Gregg Graff spoke since a portion of the Missouri River water was going to be delivered to a playa lake on his property. Once the information from DWR and GMD 3 is provided to KWO this will be delivered to the RAC. Jeff mentioned the Ogallala is not the same everywhere and that a producer he knows out west stated that updating irrigation equipment is cost prohibitive and Local Enhanced Management Areas (LEMAs) should be encourage to help stabilize the aquifer.

- IV) **Groundwater Project Update:** Geoff and Don presented information from a shared ppt that can be viewed [here](#). Geoff stated there were two goals of the project: (1) establish a groundwater level and monitoring network in the Region and (2) provide a safe yield and water quality information. He said two of the wells continue to supply continuous monitoring and they have updated chemical analyses and have identified a possible well location in Brown County. Most of the wells are in the northern portion of the Region. Geoff said they had given up on existing wells. Carl wondered if there were other wells out there and Jeff asked they had contacted Rural Water Districts (RWDs). Geoff thought that might be a possibility and mentioned they are having problems getting access. Chris said Conservation Districts (CD) might be a good place to help identify landowners with wells that might be interested in providing access since the CD staff already have a relationship with the landowners. Geoff showed several slide depicting groundwater activity which can be seen on the KGS page located [here](#). Items coming up include finding critical well locations that will provide good data and work on estimating safe yield and continuing monitoring/interpreting water quality data. Don took over and talked about nitrate levels in the wells which are shallow and respond quickly to precipitation events. A couple of the wells showed higher chloride levels, one due to application of road salt and the other due to the bedrock formation. Chris asked how to protect our groundwater and Don responded, using good well-head protection, crop rotations and reductions in fertilizers. He added, maybe farm for net profit and not maximum production.

V) **RAC Business:**

- a. **Review of October 18th meeting notes:** Joel asked if everyone had read the notes and if there were any edits or corrections, there were none. Tj added that the budget questions are highlighted and if there are any other questions to let him know. Carl moved that the notes be

accepted as written and John seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion and the notes were approved unanimously.

- b. **Missouri River Subcommittee:** Michelle mentioned the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC) had met in person and there will be no pulse this spring. Flows from Gavins Point dam were temporarily increased to improve flow past an ice jamb at Omaha. It was hoped that the warmer weather would also help, with some melting. She mentioned that several utilities up and down the River are struggling with the lower flows. Mike added that he had been in contact with Jud, USACE, about this. With bed degradation the same amount of water flowing down the River is less accessible to the folks needing it.
- c. **Ag Subcommittee:** Jeff mentioned that the River is still the cheapest way to move commodities. The [2023 Missouri River Navigators meeting](#) is February 23rd at the Farm Bureau building in Jefferson City, Missouri. He also mentioned the new [Waters of the US \(WOTUS\)](#) that are reverting back to previous rules which would prohibit or require permits to almost anything including terrace work, puddles and ditches would be regulated. Michelle added that these new regulations would create more work for NRCS and FSA employees.
- d. **Education Subcommittee:** John mentioned there had not been any education meetings but with Angela on the meeting there will be some more information provided.

VI) **City of Atchison Radial Collector Well Project:** Clinton McNemee, Deputy Public Works and Utilities Director, provided the group with some information on the project in its early stages. Low flows, Gavins Point releases of 12,000 cfs, in the Missouri River prompted the city to invest in a portable pump to move water up to their inlet. The City also applied and received a grant from FEMA for a little over a million dollars for engineering and design work and the hope is to get additional grant funding to complete the project. Clinton said they also need to complete upgrades to their water treatment plant. Joel offered that their project to design and build a 10 MGD Collector Well was \$7 million and that it would be more now. Michelle offered to assist where possible and that Leavenworth and KWO could help as well. Michelle brought up about the SPARK dollars for utilities and Richard offered the decisions hadn't been made yet but recommendations can be seen [here](#).

VII) **Water Education Update:** Angela mentioned the [Kansas Runs on Water website](#) and the work that has been completed on this hoping to provide a valuable resource to anyone wanting information on water. She hopes to build a site that can provide the information people need, more information will be added in the future. Angela is planning a meeting in the near future to get the education group back together; which John is a part of. She mentioned that if there is a need for a speaker or materials contact her or their Planner and we'll be happy to help out. World Water Day is March 22nd and there will some activities at the Capital.

VIII) **Azerbaijan "Public Water Resources Management:** Carl led this discussion and spoke about the Open World Program in which the Lansing Kiwanis had participated in for a couple of years. Last year there was a group from Mongolia that came over with their agenda [here](#). He applied and

received a grant for 2023. A group of individuals from Azerbaijan will be here from October 6-14th staying at host families. The intent is to establish working relationships and facilitate knowledge transfer on water resources. He is working on some initial meetings hoping to involve many agencies and entities into the schedule, possibly even a RAC meeting. He added their country has a big water quality problem.

- IX) Review of RAC Goals:** The meeting was running long so the RAC Goals will be revisited at the next meeting. The RAC Goals can be found in the [Kansas Water Plan](#).
- X) Other Issues or Agency Updates:** Chris mentioned the success of the Farmer to Farmer meetings with the discussion of cover crops, sharing what worked and what didn't. She was very successful in getting cover crop contracts in place and asked for more money to cover the remaining contracts. Mike, KDHE, gave an update on the oil spill in Washington County and there is a website located [here](#) that has a ton of information and current conditions. The map was brought up and Mike explained what had taken place so far. Tj mentioned there is a Water Committee Chaired by Representative Jim Minnix that meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 am and can be livestreamed [here](#) and past recordings can be viewed [here](#).
- XI) Public Comments:** There were none.
- XII) Messages to the Kansas Water Authority:** There were none.
- XIII) Upcoming Meetings:**
- Legislative Visits, January 24th Topeka, start time 7:45 am
 - KWA meeting, January 25th Topeka, Topeka Public Library
 - KWA meeting, April 19th, TBD
 - Next Missouri RAC meeting Doodle Poll, February/March in person/virtual
- XV) Adjournment of Meeting:** John moved to adjourn and Carl seconded it. The meeting ended at 11:45 am.