

# Smoky Hill-Saline Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

## Smoky Hill-Saline Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

1:00 PM (CST), Wednesday, January 4, 2023

City of Hays Convention & Visitors Bureau & GoTo Webinar

### Member Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Holly Dickman (Chair)	Hays, KS	Large Public Water Supply	2023	Yes
Baron Shively (Vice-Chair)	McPherson, KS	Conservation/Environment 2	2023	Yes
Daniel Baffa	Salina, KS	Conservation/Environment	2025	Yes
Tom Lutgen	Salina, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2023	No
Chris Meyer	Sylvan Grove, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2023	No
Tom Breit	Utica, KS	Agriculture 2	2025	Yes
Brad Shogren	Lindsborg, KS	Irrigation	2025	Yes
Martha Tasker	Salina, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2023	Yes
Rich Krause	Russell, KS	Small Public Water Supply	2023	Yes
Bevin Law	Longford, KS	Conservation	2025	Yes
VACANT	VACANT	At Large Public (cc)	2025	N/A
VACANT	VACANT	At Large Public 2	2023	N/A
VACANT	VACANT	Industry/Commerce 2	2025	N/A

### Others in attendance:

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Amelia Nill	KWO	Angela Anderson	KWO
Kelly Stewart	KDA-DWR	Weston McCary	KWO
Stacie Minson	KSU Research & Extension	Dan Wells	KDHE
Sarah Sexton-Bowser	Sorghum Drop XL	David Bollenback	KCC
Vanessa Salazar	KDWP	Jeff Crispin	City of Hays

- Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order by RAC Chair, Holly Dickman (Large Public Water Supply) at 1:12pm. She then allowed each meeting attendee to provide a brief introduction, including their name, where they are from and issues/topics of concern.
- Review of October 2022 Meeting Notes:** The meeting notes from the previous meeting were reviewed. Rich Krause (Small Public Water Supply) made a motion to approve the notes. Baron Shively (Conservation/Environment 2) seconded the motion. The meeting notes were approved with no additions or changes.
- RAC Business:**
  - WISE Program Presentation:** Weston McCary (KWO) provided the RAC with an in-depth presentation on the WISE (Water Innovation Systems & Education) Program that is being initiated by the Kansas Water Office. Weston stated that this is a private/public partnership that will transfer the existing water technology efforts into a more expansive program. He mentioned some of the already existing aspects that will continue to be included in the WISE program such as PACE farms, WISE farms, farm tours and field days. He described that they will be incorporating the lessons learned from the Water Technology Farms into the development of the WISE program. Weston reviewed several of the technological aspects of the program

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and described some of the other, non-technological pieces as well. He concluded by saying that he will keep the RACs informed on further updates about the WISE Program.

- b. **RAC Responsibility Presentation:** Amelia Nill (KWO) gave a presentation reviewing the responsibilities and role of the RAC and its members. She highlighted items from the RAC member notebook such as IPM, the typical annual schedule, and the Kansas Open Meetings Act. She stated that the RAC and its members serve as the eyes and ears for the issues and interests happening at a local level. The RAC is then responsible for communicating this to the KWO and KWA. Amelia wanted to remind the RAC of these responsibilities as the RAC begins a new year.
- c. **Sorghum Drop XL Presentation:** Sarah Sexton-Bowser presented on the Sorghum Drop XL program. She said that the program receives funding through KWO and is a public/private partnership. This program focuses on sorghum, which is a water-optimized crop, meaning that it is drought tolerant. Sarah highlighted that this is very important with Kansas being the largest sorghum producer on a state level and that most of the sorghum production within the state lies over the Ogallala Aquifer, which is quickly being depleted. The Sorghum Drop XL program is unique, because it is a non-GMO product and the difference is that it is a drop-trait that is specifically bred for. She shared the science and technology that is used for this program and said that they will continue to research and learn more about sorghum production.
- d. **Legislative Updates:** Amelia told the group that there will be a House Water committee this year, continuing on the momentum built up from the previous legislative session. Additionally, she informed the RAC that the Legislative Visits for RAC Chairs and KWA members are coming up on January 24<sup>th</sup> in Topeka.
- e. **KWA Updates:** Holly Dickman led the discussion on the most recent KWA meeting that took place in Colby, Kansas in December. She mentioned the KWA's decision to create language to halt the depletion of the Ogallala Aquifer. The KWA Ogallala Committee stated that depleting the aquifer is not in the State's best interest, therefore it is their responsibility to stop it. Holly also brought up the 2 messages from the Upper Republican RAC and the Missouri RAC regarding the recent request for a water transfer from the Missouri River to Western Kansas. The Smoky Hill-Saline RAC stated that they would like to be kept in the loop on any further correspondence or information regarding this saturation.
- f. **KWO Updates:** Amelia did not have any further KWO updates besides what was already mentioned in previous agenda items to share.
- g. **Discussion of Regional Events:** Amelia explained to the RAC that this time on the agenda will be used for sharing any public events within the Smoky Hill-Saline Region that the RAC could potentially have a presence at. She opened up the floor for anyone to share. Brad Shogren shared that his River Group is hosting a Smoky Hill River meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup> in Assaria, Kansas. At this meeting, they plan to hear presentations from agency folks and receive updates on the status of Kanapolis reservoir and the water quality of the River. Holly Dickman also mentioned that the City of Hays hosts a World Water Day festival in the spring.

4. **Agency or Public Comments:** Kelly Stewart (KDA-DWR) shared that annual water use reports recently went out and that the division is using mostly online reporting. He also stated that annual water well measurements are currently being done by KGS in Western Kansas. Dan Wells (KDHE) informed the RAC that KDHE has requested a budget enhancement request for LEPP funding. Additionally, he provided the RAC with an update about the recent oil spill in north eastern Kansas near Washington. He said that the spill has been contained by local crews and there is not a threat to drinking water in that area. He shared 2 links regarding the oil spill that provide further information about the situation. Stacie Minson (KSU Research & Extension) that currently WRAPS is looking into a drinking water protection initiative for Kanapolis due to the presence of nitrates. Also, she said that they are

looking at alternative water supplies and installing cover crops for the local land owners through the local WRAPS SLT. She included that they are working to update their livestock watering handbook as well. She asked if the BMP Resource Guide for Producers, created by the Kansas RAC could be shared and potentially adapted for the Smoky Hill-Saline Region.

5. **Upcoming Meetings:** The next Smoky Hill-Saline RAC meeting will be scheduled via Doodle Poll. This will likely take place in March or April 2023.

Brad Shogren (Irrigation) made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Rich Krause (Small Public Water Supply) seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned with no further business at 3:34pm.