

Solomon-Republican Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Solomon-Republican Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

10 am, Thursday, April 27, 2023

Pioneer Seeds Meeting Room, 240 W. US Highway 24 Downs, Kansas & Zoom Meeting

Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Donald Hellwig, Chair	Solomon, KS	Agriculture	2025	No
Raymond Debey, V-Chair	Cawker City, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2023	No
Timothy Driggs	Phillipsburg, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2023	No
Keli Habiger	Phillipsburg, KS	Fish, Wildlife & Recreation	2023	Yes
Mike Brzon	Courtland, KS	At Large Public 2	2025	Yes
Rhonda Coffman	Agenda, KS	At Large Public 3	2023	Yes
Robbin Dibble	Alton, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2025	No
Stanley Kats	Prairie View, KS	Irrigation West	2025	Yes
Sharon Sahlfeld	Beloit, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2025	Yes
David Pfizenmaier	Clay Center, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2025	No
Arnold Ross	Webber, KS	Irrigation East	2023	No
Amanda Johnson	Glasco, KS	Conservation/Environment 2	2023	Yes

Others in attendance:

Name	Agency	Name	Agency
Amelia Nill	KWO	Jennifer Nichols	KDHE
Weston McCary	KWO	Monty Breneman	NRCS
Victoria Potts	KWO		

I. Welcome and Introductions: In Chairman, Don Hellwig’s (Agriculture) absence, Amelia Nill (KWO) called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. Amelia called on each attendee for a brief introduction before beginning the meeting.

II. Review of January 17th Meeting Notes: Amelia asked if everyone had seen the January 17th meeting notes and if there were any additions or corrections, there were none. A motion was made by Stanley Kats (Irrigation West) and seconded by Amanda Johnson (Conservation/Environment 2) to accept the notes. The notes were accepted with no changes.

III. RAC Business:

- a. **NRCS Programs Available in Solomon-Republican Region:** Monty Breneman (NRCS) gave a presentation to the RAC about the NRCS’s background and what current programs are available within the Solomon-Republican region. He described many programs such as EQIP, ACEP, CSP, RCPP and others. Amelia asked if a program such as RCPP might be appropriate to address the

RAC's goal #5, which has to do with road ditch run-off and erosion. Monty stated that since the roadways are county-owned it would be more likely to work with the counties to implement terraces on roadways in order to stop the erosion. He also mentioned that RCPP could potentially provide some incentives for landowners to participate in structural implementation along the roads.

- b. **WISE Program:** Weston McCary (KWO) discussed the Water Innovation Systems and Education (WISE) program with the RAC. He highlighted the many challenges the state faces, such as reservoir sedimentation, groundwater depletion, municipal water quality issues and more that are driven by agricultural practices. The WISE program works with producers to utilize technology and enhanced practices to improve soil health on farm. He said that while the WISE program is fairly technical, they work directly with farmers to understand the information. Weston mentioned that they are placing emphasis on education and outreach in order to have more producer training events.
- c. **RAC Goal Implementation:** Amelia presented the RAC with the RAC Goal Implementation spreadsheet. She said that this tool will be used to help the RACs further breakdown their Goals and Action Steps in order to put in place timelines and plan to make progress on the goals. She asked the RAC members in attendance if they would like to begin working on this spreadsheet. The RAC members decided to defer this work until the next meeting since many RAC members were not at this meeting.
- d. **Legislative Updates:** Victoria Potts (KWO) gave an overview of the 2 recently-signed bills that came out of this year's legislative session, HB 2302 and HB 2279. Victoria described that HB 2302 allocates more money (\$35 million) to the SWPF. Some of this money is shared into new grant funds, run by the KWO. Additionally, she stated that \$52 million was allocated to pay for the Milford and Perry Reservoirs debt. She went onto describe HB2279, which increases GMD reporting requirements.
- e. **RAC Membership & Expectations:** Amelia informed the RAC that the RAC membership drive will be opening this summer. She said that those current RAC members with expiring terms will be notified and will have the opportunity to reapply during the drive period. Additionally, Amelia reminded the RAC members of the importance of their role on this committee, stating that it is essential for RAC members to attend the meetings as well as voice their opinions and ideas for the region.
- f. **KWA/KWO Updates:** Amelia mentioned that the next meeting the RAC would be participating in is the budget input meeting in late summer. She stated that it would be a good idea for RAC members to review the RAC Goals before then. Additionally, she brought up that at the most recent Kansas Water Authority meeting, held the week before in Kansas City, Kansas, the Authority discussed how the 2 new bills would affect funding for water and that the RAC's should begin to identify their priorities that they would like to see funded.
- g. **Regional Event Sharing:** No regional events were shared at this time.

IV. Agency or Public Comments: Jennifer Nichols (KDHE) shared with the RAC that there is an increase in state funds for education and outreach for the private well program. She stated that the LEPP program

is in their budget this year. She shared the resources they are using for this program and described that private water well testing is being done to meet water quality standards.

V. Upcoming Meetings:

- a. Kansas Water Authority, June 7th, (Dodge City, Kansas)
- b. Solomon-Republican RAC: Doodle Poll (July/August)

VI. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned with no further business at 11:44 am.