



Solomon-Republican Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Solomon-Republican Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

9 am, Tuesday, June 2, 2020

GoTo Meeting and Conference Call

Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Timothy Driggs (Chair)	Phillipsburg, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2023	No
Keli Habiger (Vice-Chair)	Phillipsburg, KS	Fish, Wildlife & Recreation	2023	Yes
Donald Hellwig	Solomon, KS	Agriculture	2021	Yes
Mike Brzon	Courtland, KS	At Large Public	2021	No
John Cockerham	Osborne, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2021	No
Raymond Debey	Cawker City, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2023	Yes
Rhonda Coffman	Agenda, KS	At Large Public	2023	Yes
Robbin Dibble	Alton, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2021	Yes
Stanley Kats	Prairie View, KS	At Large Public	2023	No
Terry Nelson	Phillips County, KS	Irrigation West	2021	No
David Pfizenmaier	Clay Center, KS	At Large Public	2023	No
Arnold Ross	Webber, KS	Irrigation East	2023	No

Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Josh Olson	KWO
Lauren Koons	KWO
Kelly Stewart	KDA
Tim Weltmer	NRCS

- I. **Welcome and Introductions:** Josh Olson, KWO RAC Planner, called the meeting to order at 9:05 and completed roll call. Josh introduced himself to the group as the new KWO Planner for the Solomon-Republican RAC and provided some personal background information.
- II. **Review of February 24th SR RAC Meeting Notes:** Josh asked if there were any revisions to the February 24th meeting notes. There were no revisions, and the notes were approved as written.
- III. **RAC Business:**
 - a) **Review of RAC Informational Budget Webinar (slides [here](#)) and KWO regional budget summary:** Josh asked if there was any feedback on the information provided by the KWO to the RAC in the Informational Budget Webinar or the regional budget summaries. In particular, Josh asked for any additional information that the RAC thought would be useful for budget recommendations that will be made by the RAC in July. Don asked if there was an update on the expected financial impacts of the current COVID situation. Josh said that the state budget would be impacted, but that he did not have any specific details to share at this point.

b) **Review and revision of Goals and Action Plans (Priority Goal 1):** Josh asked if there were any comments or suggested revisions for Priority Goal 1. Don noted that it had been more than the two years suggested in the Goal, and that the Goal was not necessarily the RAC's top priority. Don also pointed out that most of the Goals are in a stage of being accomplished. Going through the Goal's Action Plan, Don noted that an agreement at Keith Sebelius Reservoir was already well on its way, though it would be useful to keep as an Action to inform those without a background. In discussing water efficiency, Don stated that the Action of exhausting all possible funding sources necessary to improve water efficiency probably belonged in all RAC goals. Josh asked if the Action of an economic study to determine the value of Western Kansas reservoirs was in reference to a particular reservoir, and Don suggested that the Action should be kept general, as all reservoirs will need it as some point. Don and Ray suggested removing the Action relating to the USF&WS and Kirwin Reservoir due to slow progress and a low chance of impact with the USF&WS. Don suggested Kirwin might be the next candidate for a pool change or other measures. Ray noted some management efforts related to removing trees and adjusting water levels. Ray thought that the Action of investigating the benefits of raising the Conservation Pool at both Kirwin and Webster was worth pursuing over the long term and noted that there have been short-term raises that helped with boating and water supply. Ray commented that he thought Webster could be raised without impacting flood risk. Don noted the benefits of additional water in the reservoir. Don suggested the final Action was focused on the Water Office and should be left as-is. Josh updated the Goal and Action Plan as suggestions were made.

Review and revision of Goals and Action Plans (Priority Goal 2): Josh asked if there were any suggested revisions for Priority Goal 2. Don noted that there has been some effort to use Kansas and Nebraska data to evaluate sediment and nutrient loads, but that it needs to be an ongoing process. Don also mentioned that the support would be appreciated, and the RAC should considering keeping the Goal. Don questioned if the numbering of the Goals is viewed as a prioritization, and suggested the RAC consider renumbering the Goals if it was. The Goal was left unchanged.

Review and revision of Goals and Action Plans (Priority Goal 3): Josh noted that the KWO now owns bathymetry equipment. Josh mentioned that he discussed Priority Goal 3 with Richard Rockel, and Waconda Reservoir is on the KWO's schedule for a bathymetric survey in 2023. Don asked about the previous use of the KBS for surveys. Josh explained that the KWO had previously contracted with the KBS for surveys, but the KWO is now doing them internally. Josh updated the Action Plan to reflect this change. Don noted that, given the lead time to get bathymetric surveys, 2023 isn't too far away, and that the RAC should continue to have Priority Goal 3. Keli joined the call, and Josh briefly gave her an overview of the meeting and discussion up to that point.

Review and revision of Goals and Action Plans (Priority Goal 4): Josh asked if there were any suggested revisions for Priority Goal 4. Don noted that the dates needed to be adjusted and language cleaned up, but that it is useful for the RAC to know what is going on with the Republican River Compact. Don also mentioned the impacts at Boswell and downstream in the Kansas River. Don stated that he would like to the Goal continue as a reporting mechanism and mentioned including an example of invasive species, though not necessarily as a bullet point. Keli agreed that being updated quarterly would be useful.

Proposed Priority Goal 5 and Action Plan: Don mentioned that there had been discussion about erosion a couple of times and whether to add a streambank stabilization goal. Don noted it was a problem at least in the lower Solomon that the RAC needed to think about. Robbin agreed. Ray expressed concerns about roads and ditches, and noted that he didn't know about any programs working with farms to reduce ditch erosion. Don suggested combining ditch and streambank erosion in a new RAC Goal. Keli suggested the group proceed with a discussion on the topic. Don suggested starting with a survey to identify problem areas of streambank and ditch erosion, as well as interviewing county engineers. Keli suggested moving identifying problem areas and researching what data is already available to the Action Plan. Don noted the importance of including the topic in the Goals to remind people of the issue. Bobbi pointed out the need to include who would be doing the Actions. Don suggested working with locals in conservations districts, WRAPS, county engineers, and public works departments for ditch efforts. Robbin suggested adding the NRCS, noting that they are separate from conservation districts. Ray noted that it takes the NRCS to coordinate and work with counties and townships. Robbin explained that conservation districts (which are in every county) and the NRCS (which is not in every county) have separate funding and need to coordinate. Josh drafted the proposed Goal and Action Plan as suggestions were made. The RAC agreed on the Goal as written.

IV. Agency or Public Comments: Kelly Stewart (KDA) mentioned ongoing efforts to seed ditches.

V. Upcoming Meetings:

- a. Kansas Water Authority Conference Call (June)
- b. Solomon-Republican RAC: Doodle Poll (July)

V. Adjourn: Keli adjourned the meeting with no further business at 10:19 am.