

Solomon-Republican Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Solomon-Republican Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

10:00 am, Tuesday, July 2, 2019

Pioneer Seeds Meeting Room, 240 W. US Highway 24, Downs, KS

Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Donald Hellwig (Chair)	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)	2019	No
Timothy Driggs	Phillipsburg, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2019	No
Stacey Forshee	Ottawa County, KS	At Large Public	2019	No
Keith Houghton	Tipton, KS	Fish, Wildlife & Recreation	2019	No
Terry Nelson	Phillips County, KS	Irrigation West	2021	No
David Pfizenmaier	Clay Center, KS	At Large Public	2021	Yes
Arnold Ross	Webber, KS	Irrigation East	2019	Yes

Others in attendance:

Name	Agency	Name	Agency
Lynn Davignon	KDWPT	Mike Nyhoff	KDWPT
Kelly Stewart	KDA-DWR	Pete Gile	KBID
Steve Frost	KDA-DOC	Jackie Craine	KWO
Matt Unruh	KWO	Kirk Tjelmeland	KWO

I. Welcome and Introductions: Don Hellwig, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:05 am with self-introductions around the table, attendance was a sparse with wheat harvest being in full swing. With only three RAC members present a quorum was not reached.

II. RAC Business:

- a) **Review of March 6th meeting notes:** Don asked if there were any additions or corrections to the March 6th meeting notes, there were none. They stand approved as written.
- b) **Review of the April 18th KWA meeting in Abilene:** Don mentioned that the facility in Abilene was something to experience with the train tracks right next to the building and the loss of electricity. Items that KWA agenda that stuck out were the report on the Harmful Algae problems across the state by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and a message from the Upper Ark RAC about the movement of water to western Kansas from the Missouri River. A couple other items of importance to the RAC were the introduction of the 5-year Vision review and discussion of the potential Republican River Access District.

III. Update from the Kansas Water Office (KWO) on Budget: Jackie gave a presentation on the State Water Plan Fund Transfer Request which can be found here. The goal of this item is to solicit budget

recommendations from each RAC that will be passed onto the Kansas Water Authority (KWA). She went through the spreadsheet of agency requests and her and Matt provided additional information on each of the items as questions were raised. There was a good deal of discussion about Streambank Projects. In particular how important the streambank projects are. David also mentioned how using milo had saved tons of soil in one of his fields. He also talked about the need to improve terraces or build new ones to slow down and capture runoff during those big rainfall events which is causing damage to county infrastructure. He thought this had a great deal to do with residue management. Jackie also mentioned that State Water Plan has seen a little more funding over the last couple of years, \$3.25 million in 2018 and \$4.25 in 2019. The following items were listed off by RAC members present to be put into memo form for the KWA:

- *Continued funding of Vision Education Strategy*
- *Continued Funding of the Milford Lake Watershed RCPP*
- *Continued funding of the Harmful Algae Bloom Pilot*
- *Continued funding of Non-Point Source Pollution*
- *Continued funding of Water Resource share*
- *Increased funding for Streambank Stabilization*

Tj will put these items together and send out to the RAC for review and ultimately submission to the KWA.

IV. Update from KWO on RAC Membership: Tj led this discussion with some positive news that we have four or five applications to fill vacated positions on the RAC. In 2017 there were no applications submitted for this RAC. However, we continue to look more people willing to serve so if anyone knows of a person that might be a good fit please pass along an application. The RAC application can be found online [here](#). Tj will send out an application with the budget input memo the morning of July 3rd. RAC applications will be reviewed by the RAC Operations Committee and hopefully appointments will be made by this fall.

V. Update on KBID Projects: Pete Gile presented a ppt that is available [here](#). He started the discussion with the recent passing of one of their personnel and that she would be greatly missed. Pete also mentioned that they had been trying to reduce a bill for tainer gate repair at Harlan County Reservoir and made progress after a couple trips to Washington DC. His first slide illustrated overall canal conversion, approximately 23.14 miles of open canal has been or will be converted to buried pipe of varying sizes over the next several years. The estimated cost for the project is almost \$4.3 million with a good portion of the materials being funded with Nebraska settlement dollars. There have been three sections completed to date: 31.1, 32.1 and 33.0 for an actual cost of \$1.6 million. Completion of these projects have resulted in 9.08 miles of open canals being eliminated. Pete is continuing to apply for WaterSMART grants, most recent grant was for \$300,000. Thus far KBID has received \$400,000 in grants and has contributed \$433,000 in in-kind work. He estimates a water savings by conversion to pipe of 2,087 acre-feet/year, KGS is monitoring some wells to help document those savings. Pete has specific projects planned out for the next couple of years and hopefully grants will help increase the number of

miles of converted open canals. Also, efficiency continues to improve with the number of sprinklers in the KBID increasing to around 75%.

- VI. Review of RAC Goals and Action Plans:** Tj started this discussion with a memo that Matt presented to the KWA at their April meeting. This is basically a 5-year review of the Goals and Action Plans to make sure they are lined up with the Vision and make any changes necessary to make the Action Plans more pertinent. The ppt that he presented is available [here](#). In the ppt there was a timeline laid out for moving forward, which included public meetings to review Goals and Action Plans coupled with the RACs input on improving/modifying these with a completion date of summer 2020. In the ppt there are two links, one to a spreadsheet for tracking Action Plan and the other for a state-wide dashboard showing all 14 RACs and their progress on their Action Plans. Tj asked those present for comments on the spreadsheet to make sure each step had been categorized correctly. A couple changes are necessary, especially one related to KDWPT and work at Kirwin. A couple Action Steps will be adjusted as well like the quarterly reporting for the Republic River Compact. As for the public meetings to review the Goals and Action Plans it was suggested that Phillipsburg and Beloit might be good places to hold these with more people and the original Goal setting meetings took place at these locations.
- VII. Update on Milford RCPP:** Matt started this discussion noting that we are past the signup and ranking periods and the NRCS is hoping to have contracts in place shortly. KWO and other partners of the RCPP are interested in seeing the numbers of acres covered and dollars invested in contracts. Matt mentioned increasing the outreach effort to producers and drawing on Agriculture related industry. David offered the idea of getting local Agronomy experts to help with this and doing some mentoring. David also offer the idea of incentive payments to producers to convert their equipment to phosphorus injection instead of broadcasting. This equipment is not readily available for producers.
- VIII. Comments:** Mike mentioned that their Park Division is suffering from all the flooding. There is still a bunch of water to be moved through the system and it could be months before the reservoirs are down to conservation pool. He also mentioned the HAB issues that are starting to popup with several of the reservoirs and the toll that HABs takes on visitation. Lynn added that all of this high water is good for fish production however there could be lots of fish flushed when the reservoirs are drawn back down. Tj added about the Rural Prosperity Tour that the Lt. Governor is conducting, there was one held in Phillipsburg and on August 1st there will be one in Concordia. Gathering information for report to Governor on prosperity of rural Kansas. Pete wanted to make sure everyone was aware of the 4 states irrigation tour be held in Goodland, end of July.
- IX. Future Meetings:**
- a. Kansas Water Authority: TBD, Goodland, KS.
 - b. Solomon-Republican RAC: Doodle Poll (September/October after public meetings)
 - c. Don adjourned the meeting with no further business at 11:55 am.