

# Solomon-Republican Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

## Solomon-Republican Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

10:30 am, Tuesday, July 18, 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	Yes
Raymond Debey, V-Chair	Cawker City, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2023	Yes
Timothy Driggs	Phillipsburg, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2023	Yes
Keli Habiger	Phillipsburg, KS	Fish, Wildlife & Recreation	2023	No
Mike Brzon	Courtland, KS	At Large Public 2	2025	No
Rhonda Coffman	Agenda, KS	At Large Public 3	2023	Yes
Robbin Dibble	Alton, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2025	Yes
Stanley Kats	Prairie View, KS	Irrigation West	2025	No
Sharon Sahlfeld	Beloit, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2025	No
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	No

### Others in attendance:

Name	Agency	Name	Agency
Amelia Nill	KWO	Katie Basiotis	KDHE
Angela Anderson	KWO	Dan Wells	KDHE
Victoria Potts	KWO	Chelsea Erickson	KDA-DWR

**I. Welcome and Introductions:** Chairman, Don Hellwig (Agriculture), called the meeting to order at 10:32 am. Don called on each attendee for a brief introduction before beginning the meeting.

**II. Review of April 27<sup>th</sup> Meeting Notes:** Don asked if everyone had seen the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting notes and if there were any additions or corrections, there were none. A motion was made by Tim Driggs (Public Water Supply (cc)) and seconded by Robbin Dibble (Conservation/Environment (cc)) to accept the notes. The notes were accepted with no changes.

### III. RAC Business:

- a. Budget discussion & recommendations:** Victoria Potts (KWO) provided the RAC with the background and context in regard to the current budget situation from the State’s perspective. He informed the RAC that their input today in essential in determining water priorities and resources looking into the upcoming fiscal year. It was noted by the RAC that it seems to be important to demonstrate success in terms of the funding, in order to prove that the increased funding in warranted. The RAC members discussed the questions provided from the KWO and gave their feedback. A motion was made by Tim Driggs (Public Water Supply (cc)) and seconded by Ray Debey

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(Agriculture (cc)) to submit the RAC budget feedback to the KWA Budget Committee. The RAC's budget input was approved to send onto the KWA Budget Committee.

*“The Solomon-Republican Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) would like to pass the following feedback to the Kansas Water Authority Budget Committee for consideration for the FY 2025 State Water Plan Fund.*

1. *The RAC would like to highlight the following progress of note for the regional and statewide water resource issues:*
  - *Reporting and progress from the Kansas Bostwick Irrigation District on their updates and efficiencies*
  - *Bathymetric surveys done by the KWO*
  - *Streambank stabilization projects completed throughout the state*
  - *Increased push on farmer to farmer meetings through the conservation districts*
  - *Increased education and awareness for soil health practices*
2. *The RAC would like to highlight the following activities that could potentially be most impactful under the Guiding Principles.*
  - *Continued efforts for streambank projects and ditch erosion*
  - *Agency manpower – more technical assistance needed throughout state*
    - i. *Encouraging younger folks to take on contracting jobs/agency positions*
    - ii. *Promote the recruitment of workforce through agency scholarship & internship programs*
  - *Drought mitigation*
  - *Increase education & cost share programs for non-point source pollution*
    - i. *Developing educational/informational materials specific to towns/areas – targeting municipalities (under the 10,000 pop. Threshold)*
    - ii. *Addressing increased nutrient & pesticide application with the reduction of tillage practices*
    - iii. *Funding opportunities for newer technologies that could help in reducing nutrient & pesticide application*
3. *The RAC would like to recognize the following activities as the highest priority under the 5 Guiding Principles:*
  - *Water resources cost-share program*
  - *Non-point source program*
  - *Aid to conservation districts*
  - *General water education*
    - i. *Through in-school curriculum*
    - ii. *Working with local units of government*
4. *The RAC would like to highlight the following as “low hanging” issues or priorities that should be addressed:*
  - *Conservation district programs*
    - i. *Non-point source program funding*
    - ii. *Water resources programs*
  - *WRAPS funding*
5. *The RAC would like to address the following urgent emerging issues, priorities, and unique opportunities:*
  - *Including road ditch erosion within streambank stabilization projects framework*
  - *Rural water districts not having enough water*
  - *Addressing HAB issues*
  - *Reduce economic damage and water supply vulnerability due to drought*

- a. **KWA/KWO Updates:** Victoria Potts (KWO) informed the RAC that the House Water Committee will be holding an interim meeting in the coming months.
- b. **Regional Event Sharing:** No regional events were shared at this time.

**IV. Agency or Public Comments:** Katie Basiotis (KDHE) shared with the RAC that the Non-Point Source plan update has been started and is due next year. Dan Wells (KDHE) added that the Environmental Conference will be held August 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. He also stated that within FY23, KDHE has taken around 320 HAB samples. Finally, Dan mentioned that the Washington County pipeline spill has been completely cleaned up by TC Energy. Chelsea Erickson (KDA-DWR) shared that the Republican River Compact Annual Meeting is to take place August 31<sup>st</sup> in Burlington, Colorado. She said that there is virtual as well as in-person attendance options. She also updated the RAC about streamflow conditions within the region, stating that the Smoky Hill Access District might run for the first time this year.

**V. Upcoming Meetings:**

- a. Kansas Water Authority, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, (McPherson, Kansas)
- b. Solomon-Republican RAC: Doodle Poll (October)

**VI. Adjourn:** A motion was made by Tim Driggs (Public Water Supply (cc)) and seconded by Robin Dibble (Conservation/Environment (cc)) to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned with no further business at 11:54 am.