

Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

11:30am (MT) 12:30pm (CT), Wednesday, June 5, 2019

Fort Wallace Museum

2655 US-40

Wallace, KS 67761

Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Sid Metcalf (Chair)	Oberlin, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2019	No
Mike Schultz (Vice-Chair)	Brewster, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2019	Yes
Brian Baalman	Menlo, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2021	No
Shannon Kenyon	Colby, KS	Groundwater Management	2019	Yes
Gary Fisher	Atwood, KS	Local Government	2021	Yes
Ken McCarty	Rexford, KS	Agriculture Industry	2019	No
Tyson McGreer	Colby, KS	Public Water Supply 2	2021	No
Ian de Waal	Saint Francis, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2019	No
Sue Evans	Colby, KS	At Large Public 2	2021	No
Scott Ross	Atwood, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2021	Yes
Kenneth Sanderson	Goodland, KS	Conservation/Environment 2	2019	No
VACANT		Agriculture 2	2021	

Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Steven Walters	KDA-DWR
Steve Frost	KDA-DOC
Matt Unruh	KWO
Alexandra Geisler	KWO
Armando Zarco	KWO

- Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:45pm CT by Vice-Chairman Mike Shultz. All present provided self-introductions. A quorum was present; four of the eleven committee members were present.
- Approval of Agenda:** Alexandra Geisler (KWO) recommended to move Budget Information & Recommendations to after the RAC Goals/Action Plan Review & Timeline. Gary Fisher motioned to approve the agenda, Scott Ross seconded. The agenda was approved as amended.
- Review and Approval of April Meeting Notes:** The meeting notes from the April meeting were discussed. There were no corrections or additions. Shannon Kenyon motioned to approve the meeting notes, Gary Fisher seconded. The April notes were approved as presented.
- Republican River Compact Agreement Stakeholder Group:** Alexandra Geisler (KWO) reported that the Kansas Water Office is in the process of putting together the stakeholder group, and should be looking at having the first meeting sometime in the upcoming months.

5. **SOTR RAC Presentations: Alexandra Geisler (KWO)** reported that she has not been able to work on the presentations as requested by the RAC. She plans to get together with the volunteers to have a draft ready by the next meeting for the committee to review.
6. **RAC Goals/Action Plan Review & Timeline: Matt Unruh (KWO)** explained that working with the RACs on updating goals and action plans is the kick start to KWO updating the Vision and incorporating it into the Kansas Water Plan. The intent for today is to provide the committee a status update, and get feedback on if and where work is needed within the current goals and action plan. Following this round of meetings, there will be public meetings scheduled in the Fall to give the public an opportunity to provide input to KWO and the RACs. That feedback will be compiled and provided back to the RACs to be taken into consideration when finalizing revised and/or new goals and action plans. The new administration recognizes the progress that has been made on raising awareness and action taken, and wants to continue to build upon that momentum.

Alexandra Geisler (KWO) presented a PowerPoint on the process of updating the RAC's Goals and Action Plans. The RAC then went through the Goals and Action Plans and they, along with other attendees at the meeting, had the following suggestions, questions, and comments:

Priority Goal #1: Develop and adopt a water conservation management plan that provides maximum flexibility while reducing overall actual use, in concert with GMD 4, to extend the aquifer life and economic well-being by January 1, 2017. Utilize a time-phased implementation approach, not less than 2 years or greater than 5 years, to phase in conservation measures to lessen economic impacts and allow user transition. Conservation Plan shall address all types of use while considering flexibility tools and overall actual reduction.

- Reword so that the goal also applies to the portions of the region outside of GMD4
- Change the date and instead state: "continuation of the water conservation plan"
- Remove the phrase: "not less than 2 years or greater than 5 years"

Priority Goal #2: Enhance current efforts on education of all water users for all age groups on sources of supply, quantity of supply, best management practices, etc. to help stakeholders conserve and extend.

- Include water quality into this goal

Priority Goal #3: Republican River Compact administration should be encouraged to maintain compliance in the South Fork Republican River.

- Add "Basin" at the end

Priority Goal #4: Increase utilization and adoption of water conservation technology and practices by 10% by 2020. Actively seek annual funding to ensure successful achievement of goal.

- Reword to the following: "Continue to increase utilization and adoption of water conservation technology and practices. Actively seek annual funding to ensure successful achievement of goal"

Priority Goal #4: Encourage the state to coordinate with the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA), as well as our Congressional delegation and neighboring states, to develop common sense tools for crop insurance that encourage water conservation and have such tools and policies available by 2017.

- Considering removal of this goal, as it is completed.
- Alternatively, keep the goal and note that it is complete

New Water Quality Goal: The committee would like to increase awareness about source water protection, point source pollution, and establish a baseline of water quality within the region including a network similar to what is used to track water quantity.

- Alexandra Geisler (KWO) and Armando Zarco (KWO) will work with Dan Wells (KDHE) and Plant Health out of KDA to draft a goal for the committee to review at the next RAC meeting

The committee would like to complete any edits/additions to the goals before doing any work on the action plans. Alexandra Geisler (KWO) will incorporate the above edits into the goals and send it out to the committee to review before the next meeting.

- 7. Budget Information & Recommendations: Matt Unruh (KWO)** presented on the KWA budget recommendation for FY20 and FY21, developed in the last week of May by the KWA Budget Committee. Matt explained the overall budget process and timeline pointing out that similar to the involvement of the RACs in last year's budget process, today is an opportunity for the committee to evaluate the proposed budget and determine if it is consistent with their goals and regional priorities. They have the opportunity to provide feedback such as what projects are the highest priority for this region, changes needed to funding amounts, or if there are projects not listed that should be included. This feedback will be compiled from all fourteen RACs and provided to the KWA Budget Committee for consideration when putting together recommendations to bring forward to the full KWA.

Matt briefly discussed the Governor's budget and how the SWPF is utilized, funded, as well as the \$3.25 million and the \$8 million transfer. Matt then went through the budget recommendations, highlighting changes from the previous fiscal year and budget items that may be of interest in this particular region. The RAC discussed which programs and projects they felt were a priority to fund in order to accomplish the goals and action plans for the Upper Republican Region. The RAC put together the following recommendations to send out the group as a whole for approval, and once approved provide as a message to the KWA.

The Upper Republican RAC supports the proposed budget and would like to highlight a need for additional funding for Western Kansas. The RAC identified the following line items as priorities that are important to fund in order to accomplish and carryout the goals and action plan of the UR RAC. These items include Water Conservation Specialist (KDA), Real-Time Water Management – Telemetry (KDA), Interstate Water Issues Program (KDA), Irrigation Technology (KDA), Contamination Remediation (KDHE), and Drinking Water Protection (KDHE).

8. Agency and Public Input:

Shannon Kenyon (GMD4): reported that tomorrow's board meeting is cancelled, and will be postponed for at least a week. Ray Luffman, the current GMD4 Manager, is retiring at the end of this month and she will be taking his place. The LEMA is currently in district court, oral arguments have been heard and they are waiting on a ruling which will determine how far in the court system it will go up. She has been working with Rob Akin with K-State

on a crop water use model, BAITSSS, developed by Dr. Ramesh Dhungel. The model determines evapotranspiration, figuring in rainfall, and can provide data showing if producers are using more or less water than what is needed in a given year. It presents the possibility to create target groups for education and cost-share. The board, very excited about the opportunities, had the model applied to most of Sheridan 6 and drafted a letter in support of obtaining the model for use within the district and is working to come up with an agreement with K-State to run it. Shannon can get Rob to come to the next meeting and explain the model in further detail to the committee, and if interested the RAC can send a message to KWA in support of GMD4 obtaining the model.

Steven Walters (KDA-DWR): reported that the office is working on data cleanup to get ready to release, and improving the water use online program. The Hays water transfer applications got tentatively approved, but have been legally challenged. The Chief Engineer has gotten comments back to GMD5 in regards to Rattlesnake Creek. The synopsis of that memo is that they get one more chance, but it is likely that an IGUCA will have to be established. Chelsea Erickson out of Steven's office sent a message for the group explaining that the Colorado compliance pipeline has pumped 600 acre/feet and is expected to pump more. Nebraska has yet to pump and the annual meeting will be held on the 21st or 22nd of August.

Steve Frost (KDA-DOC): reported that he is thankful to be able to attend. The DOC received funding last year for Irrigation Technology without requesting for it. Those funds were limited and used to reward those who had adopted WCAs on their own by providing cost-share for irrigation technology, most of which was used up on soil moisture probes. Funding was received again this year and they are looking to continue the cost-share, and hopefully will receive funding for next year as well.

Armando Zarco (KWO): reported that the next KWA meeting is coming up on July 30th & 31st in Goodland, and that because it is close it would be good for members of this committee to try and make it. The first day is a tour of the tech farm, and day two is the actual meeting. We are in the process of finalizing dates for the Water Technology Farm Field Days. The actual field day with Northwest Technical College will be in conjunction with their Ag Expo. The rest will be in the July/August timeframe and a final schedule should be published in a couple of weeks. The annual Governor's Conference will be in Wichita this year, on November 7th and 8th.

9. Future Meetings

GMD4 Board Meeting: June 13th @ 9am – Colby

Kansas Water Authority: July 30th & 31st – Goodland

Next RAC Meeting: September TBD (Wednesday September 11th, 1:30pm @ GMD4 Office in Colby)

Scott Ross motioned to adjourn the meeting, Shannon Kenyon seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 3:20pm CT.