



# Upper Smoky Hill Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

## Upper Smoky Hill Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting

1:00 pm, Tuesday, February 20, 2018

KLA Environmental Services, 1303 Yucca Street (KS Highway 96 East), Scott City, KS

### Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Shane Mann (Chair)	Quinter, KS	Irrigation	2019	Yes
Frank Mercurio (Vice-Chair)	Scott City, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2019	Yes
Lonnie Busch	Leoti, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2021	No
Maurice Miller	Healy, KS	Agriculture Industry	2019	No
Mike Todd	Scott City, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2019	No
Farrin Watt	Leoti, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2021	Yes
Danny Welsh	Wallace County, KS	Groundwater Management	2019	No
Vacant		At Large Public (cc)	2021	
Vacant		At Large Public 2	2021	

### Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Mike Meyer	KDA/DWR
Kyle Spencer	GMD1
Richard Randals	Public
Richard Rockel	KWO
Alexandra Davis	KWO

### Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began at 3:20 p.m., a quorum was not present; three of the seven committee members were present.

### Approval of Agenda

Ginger's legislative, funding, and vision update was moved up before the State of the Resource Project.

### Review and Approval April & November Meeting Notes

No motion could be made for approval of minutes.

### Legislative, Funding, & Vision Updates – Ginger Harper (via conference call):

Ginger provided an update to the committee regarding legislation, funding, and the vision. The 8 million transfers have not been happening for some time. During legislative visits RAC Chairs and Water Authority Members met with 90 legislators. A great job has been done this year in raising the importance of the vision and water funding, and everyone wants to fund water. The budget situation in Topeka is far from resolved, however last week the appropriations subcommittee recommended 4 million in water funding from the state general fund, and that will go to the Senate subcommittee meeting on March 5<sup>th</sup>.

It has been a quiet legislative session so far, not very many actual bills have come out. The groundwater management assessments fee for raising the cap from 1.5 to 2 was passed by the senate, and is going to the house. Changing the filing

deadline for MYFA made it out. No funding bills came out of committee. It is important as RAC members for you to continue to reach out and engage with your local legislators.

Regarding the education and outreach portion of the vision, two proposals were heard from Waltz Tetrick on a statewide message/campaign they developed after conducting focus groups across the state. We were looking to hire an education coordinating position but did not receive the funding. She will have an update later this year.

### **State of the Resource Project Outreach Event Planning**

Richard Rockel explained that the basic idea behind the SOTR reports is that they work as an annual report card for each region. They will be a one stop shop showing progress, needs, etc. The documents can be used by the RAC and local groups to educate and communicate water issues. It is in the vision to conduct annual informational meetings in the area. It is up to the committee on how outreach should be done in the region. The committee had no comments on changes or additions to the document. It was decided that outreach should be conducted by going to present at meetings and to groups within the region using a presentation provided by the Kansas Water Office. No specifics were given on potential meetings to go to or groups to reach out to.

A comment was made by Farrin Watt that Water Conservation Areas should be incentivized over technology, leading to discussion on the Wichita County WCA and the lack of support from GMD1 on the development of a LEMA. Farrin voiced his concern regarding the lack of support and action by the GMD, and suggested working on getting a LEMA developed for Wichita County in order to lead by example, and wanted to know how to get that process started. Shane Mann suggested taking the WCA plan and converting it to a LEMA format and then putting it to a vote. If it passes take it to the board for approval. Mike Meyer pointed out the importance of getting public support, and how that would make it easier for the board to go through with it. He also suggested having the interim board go to a GMD Board meeting to start the conversation, and ask the board if they will support a LEMA if it is wanted by the county. Kyle Spencer said he thinks it would move forward if it were just for Wichita County, and if the board sees that the majority of individuals in the county are for the plan. It was decided to have a group from the interim board go to the GMD No. 1 board meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Kyle Spencer put them on the agenda tentatively for 10:30am. Frank & Farrin said they would both go, and Farrin requested that Tracy Streeter be there as well.

### **Ways to Expand Groundwater Monitoring Network within Upper Smoky Hill Region**

The committee discussed the benefits of monitoring existing wells instead of drilling new ones including cost benefits and established history. Kyle Spencer explained that GMD No.1 has worked with KGS to fund additional monitoring wells. The GMD has left it up to KGS to determine if there is a need and where additional monitoring is needed, and the GMD provides the funds. The committee agreed that it is best for the region to have the GMD and KGS continue to address monitoring needs in this way.

### **Education Outreach and High School Programs**

Alexandra Davis with KWO provided an update on High School Education initiatives that will be taking place in the Upper Smoky Hill Region. There has been concern in regards to having water subject matter specific to Western Kansas. Discussions with GMD No. 1 about their Cost Share Program have sparked ideas to utilize that program to get local farmers working with the schools and new technologies. The original idea was to meet with teachers and asses interest and work with those teachers to incorporate regional water education into the classroom. Now the goal is to develop pilot projects with participating schools that will be voted on at a workshop in the summer by teachers & administrators to become supplemental curriculum. There are three teachers from schools within the region that have agreed to pilot projects in their classroom before the end of this year. Two of the three schools have received a general introductory presentation on their water, and the third, Wichita County, is scheduled in the upcoming weeks. The pilot projects will be



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developed based on each individual teachers wants & needs for that specific class, and there is the potential to have a project that works with a local producer who has or wants to get technology.

### **Producer Survey**

There was a grammatical error pointed out on the survey. There was also agreement that acronyms should be spelled out for those who may not know what they mean. There was discussion on the best way to get participation without any conclusions.

### **Other Business**

Agency Reports – Mike Meyer KDA-DWR: Water use reports due March 1<sup>st</sup>

Public Comments – None

Messages to Kansas Water Authority – None

Future Meetings – KWA April 18, 2018, Lenexa KS; RAC Chair or designee attend

### **Adjourn**

5pm