



Upper Arkansas Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Upper Arkansas Regional Advisory Committee Meeting 9:00 AM (CDT), Friday December 15, 2023 Hybrid Meeting

Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Abram Lollar (Chair)	Garden City, KS	At Large Public 3	2025	Yes
Bill Simshauser (Vice-Chair)	Lakin, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2025	Yes
Roy Dixon	Garden City, KS	Agriculture Industry	2025	Yes
Fred Jones	Garden City, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2025	Yes
Kyle Averhoff	Garden City, KS	Dairy	2025	Yes
Hugh Brownlee	Syracuse, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2025	No
Titus Jaeger	Lakin, KS	Groundwater Irrigation	2027	Yes
Monte Morgan	Deerfield, KS	Surface Water Irrigation	2025	Yes
Ray Slattery	Dodge City, KS	Public Water Supply 2	2027	Yes
Gina Gigot	Garden City, KS	Groundwater Management	2027	Yes
Jason Shamburg	Deerfield, KS	At Large Public 2	2027	No
Emily Vsetecka	Garden City, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2027	Yes
Joe Jury	Ingalls, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2027	Yes

Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Keadron Pearson	KWO
Wade Kleven	KDHE
Susan Metzger	KSU
Daran Rudnick	KSU
Sarah Sexton-Bowser	KSU
Carmen Rhodes	Finney Co. Conservation District
Trevor Ahring	GMD3

- 1. Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 9:15 PM by the Chair. All present provided self-introductions.
- 2. Review of Agenda:** The agenda was reviewed. No changes were made.
- 3. Review of May 2023 Meeting Notes:** The meeting notes were reviewed. There were no changes requested by the RAC members. The motion was made by Ray Slattery to approve the notes as written. Bill Simshauser seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.
- 4. Updates**
 - a. RAC Member:** Each committee member provided a two minute update on regional events and issues.
 - b. Kansas Water Office (KWO):** Keadron Pearson(KWO) gave an update on the recent agency changes that had occurred since the last RAC meeting.

Membership: Abram Lollar (Chair), Garden City, KS; Bill Simshauser (Vice-Chair), Lakin, KS; Joe Jury, Ingalls, KS; Kyle Averhoff, Garden City, KS; Hugh Brownlee, Syracuse, KS; Roy Dixon, Garden City, KS; Titus Jaeger, Lakin, KS; Fred Jones, Garden City, KS; Monte Morgan, Deerfield, KS; Gina Gigot, Garden City, KS; Ray Slattery, Dodge City, KS; Emily Vsetecka, Garden City, KS; Jason Shamburg, Deerfield, KS

KWO Planners: Keadron Pearson, 620-765-7489, keadron.pearson@kwo.ks.gov

- c. **Kansas Water Authority (KWA):** Keadron Pearson (KWO) provided an update to the RAC on the recent KWA meetings.
- d. **FY2025 Budget:** Keadron Pearson (KWO) shared an update on the current status of the FY2025 Budget.

5. Regional Activities

- a. **Letters of Support Requests:** The RAC heard requests for letters of support for the following proposals:
 - Finney County Conservation District Water Education in Western Kansas
 - Securing a Reliable Water Supply for the City of Deerfield
 - Kansas Sorghum Partnership for Water-Smart Agriculture to Conserve and Extend the High Plains Aquifer
 - Resilience Planning to Sustain Irrigated Cattle and Dairy Feed and Forage Systems
 - Alternative Irrigation Technologies and Watershed Assessments at the Flickner Innovation Farm
 - Testing Ag Performance Solutions (TAPS): Deploying the Interactive Farm Management Competition on Working Farms
 - Conversion of Irrigation Canal to Pipe on the Southside Ditch and Great Eastern Ditch
 - GMD3 A Plan for Action to Address the Declining High Plains Aquifer in Southwest Kansas

Following presentations of each proposal the committee discussed each request and asked questions to each presenter. After discussion has ceased, the motion was made by Bill Simshauser to offer letters of support for each of the eight proposals presented. The motion was seconded by Fred Jones. There was not discussion and the motion passed.

- b. **Tabled Draft Messages from Previous Meeting:** Two tabled messages from a previous meeting originally presented by Bill Simshauser and Titus Jaeger were brought back before the committee for consideration. Following a brief discussion, the motion was made by Bill Simshauser to send both messages as drafted on to the KWA for consideration. The motion was seconded by Roy Dixon. No additional discussion was had. The motion failed with a vote of the 3 in favor and 8 against.
- a. **Governor's Water Conference Overview:** Abram Lollar (Chair) gave an overview of his experience and thoughts from the Governor's Water Conference that had taken place the previous month in Manhattan.
- c. **January KWA/KWO Legislative Visits:** Abram Lollar (Chair) shared of the upcoming January KWA and KWO member Legislative Visits taking place next month. He asked the RAC if their was anything of interest or note that they felt he should mention or keep in mind to please let me know.

6. Other Business

- a. **Agency Reports:**
 - Wade Kleven (KDHE): Reported on domestic water well sampling that was being done in Kearny County. He also shared other regional issues that KDHE was currently working on.
- b. **Public Comments:** None
- c. **Future Agenda Items from RAC Members:** None
- d. **RAC Messages to the KWA:** Following the discussion of previously presented proposed messages. Fred Jones made the motion to send the following message to the KWA for consideration. It was seconded by Kyle Averhoff. There was not further discussion and the motioned passed unanimously.

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“At the Dec 15th Upper Arkansas RAC Meeting, the committee voted unanimously to approve providing letters of support for the following proposals to help extend the life of the High Plains Aquifer:

- *Finney County Conservation District Water Education in Western Kansas*
- *Securing a Reliable Water Supply for the City of Deerfield*
- *Kansas Sorghum Partnership for Water-Smart Agriculture to Conserve and Extend the High Plains Aquifer*
- *Resilience Planning to Sustain Irrigated Cattle and Dairy Feed and Forage Systems*
- *Alternative Irrigation Technologies and Watershed Assessments at the Flickner Innovation Farm*
- *Testing Ag Performance Solutions (TAPS): Deploying the Interactive Farm Management Competition on Working Farms*
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We believe there is a need to have facilitation for water users to come together to improve and help develop effective water conservation practices and programs that help with short-term and long-term solutions. We have had discussion on two different concepts brought forward by members of the RAC. If the grant projects presented at today’s meeting were to receive approval, those activities would be helpful in developing these concepts. The Upper Ark RAC would like to express our sincerest thanks and appreciation to the KWA for the work to restore the SWPF and bring awareness to the water challenges we face. We request a seat at the table for developing the formal process to establish goals and actions to: “halt the decline of the Ogallala Aquifer while promoting flexible and innovative management within a timeframe that achieves agricultural productivity, thriving economies and vibrant communities — now and for future generations of Kansans.”

Thank you from the Upper Arkansas RAC”

e. Future Meetings:

- i. GMD3 Board Meeting: December 18
- ii. Kansas Water Authority: January 23 & 24
- iii. Ogallala Aquifer Summit: March 18 & 19

The meeting was adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

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