

MINUTES – AUGUST 12, 2021  
BIG BEND GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT #5  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The monthly board meeting of the Big Bend Groundwater Management District #5 was held at the District office in Stafford, Kansas on Thursday, August 12, 2021. Board members present were Darrell Wood, John Janssen, Marlyn Spare, Fred Grunder, Craig Zwick, Tom Taylor, Kerry Froetschner, and Justin Gatz. Board member Phil Martin was absent. District staffs present were Orrin Feril and Devan Cooper. Guests present via Zoom video conferencing were Abe Lollar, Jeff Lanterman, and Earl Lewis.

The August regular board meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Darrell Wood.

A discussion regarding the USDA-NRCS Watershed Plan engineering firm qualifications was added to the agenda as item 5a.

John Janssen moved, and Tom Taylor seconded to approve the July minutes as presented. Motion carried 6-0-1.

Orrin Feril provided the board and public with the August treasurer's report and highlighted the unique items for further board review. Tom Taylor moved, and Justin Gatz seconded to accept the August treasurer's report as presented. Following discussion, the motion carried 6-0-1.

Craig Zwick arrived at the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

The District received application for water right number 50626. The applicant is requesting the diversion of surface water for habitat restoration west of Cheyenne Bottoms. The board previously recommended a waiver of K.A.R. 5-25-4 for water right 50388 (same applicant/same project). During the final processing of that application, KDA-DWR noted additional need for the evaporation of water from the impoundments. Conditional on the approval of this application, the applicant will dismiss water right 50388. Additionally, The Nature Conservancy is voluntarily reducing water right file number 42777 to offset the amount for the application. Neighboring water right's holders (TNC & KDWPT) have provided letters of support for this application. Following discussion with the applicant and KDA-DWR, Tom Taylor moved, and Craig Zwick seconded to recommend a waiver of K.A.R. 5-25-4(a) based on the amount requested is accounted for by offsetting nearby water rights and recommend approval of the application as presented. Motion carried 7-0-1.

Orrin Feril discussed staff activities for the past few weeks and upcoming months. The assessments were certified to the counties earlier this week. This is the primary funding source for the District. The CKWBA is seeing several participants come in to withdraw water from their savings accounts due to the drought. The CIG project is holding a field day on August 20 near Haviland.

The District received qualifications from three engineering firms to conduct the PL 83-566 Watershed Plan Environmental Assessment for Rattlesnake Creek Watershed Improvement. Earlier in the day the Rattlesnake Creek subcommittee met with each of the engineering firms virtually to request further clarification on their qualifications and understanding of the project. The members of the subcommittee provided their perspective on the engineering firms and answered questions from the rest of the board. Following this discussion, Marlyn Spare moved, and Justin Gatz seconded to select Olsson to conduct the Watershed Plan-EA and proceed to contracting with that firm. Motion carried 7-0-1.

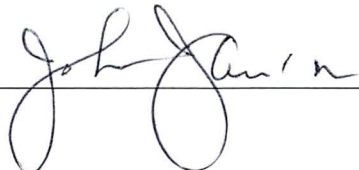
Orrin Feril provided Mike Oldham's report that the canal cleanup project is anticipated to begin within the next week to remove invasive trees within refuge boundaries.

Jeff Lanterman, KDA-DWR, stated that the field office is processing the term permits for water bank withdrawals as they come in and he has also noticed an increased number of MYFA applications. Earl Lewis, KDA, highlighted the upcoming KWA and House water committee meetings in Garden City.

In other business, Kerry Froetschner noted a concern with NRCS programs that prohibit cost share for implementation of drip irrigation on corners of center pivots due to not being reported as irrigated in 3 out of the last 5 years. Earl Lewis stated he'd follow up with NRCS to see if there are options to get this addressed.

The next District board meeting was tentatively set for September 09, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

With no further items to discuss the board adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Attest by:  Dated 10-21-21