

MINUTES – JANUARY 14, 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, January 14, 2021. Board members present were Darrell Wood, Fred Grunder, Phil Martin, Kerry Froetschner, Marlyn Spare, Craig Zwick, and Justin Gatz. Board members John Janssen and Tom Taylor were absent. District staffs present were Orrin Feril and Devan Cooper. Guests present via Zoom video conferencing were Jeff Lanterman, Toby Dougherty, Jeff Crispin, Holly Dickman, Keadron Pearson, Carolyn Dunn, and Kent Moore.

The January regular board meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Darrell Wood.

Phil Martin moved, and Justin Gatz seconded to approve the December minutes as presented. Motion carried 6-0-1.

Orrin Feril provided the board and public with the January treasurer's report and highlighted the unique items for further board review. Fred Grunder moved, and Craig Zwick seconded to accept the January treasurer's report as presented. Following discussion, the motion carried 6-0-1.

Orrin Feril presented the audit engagement letters from VonFeldt, Bauer, & VonFeldt, Chartered for review by the board. Craig Zwick moved, and Kerry Froetschner seconded to accept the engagement letter for VonFeldt, Bauer, & VonFeldt, Chartered to conduct the District's financial audit. Motion carried 6-0-1.

The District received an application for a term permit #20209066 that proposes to utilize an existing well in Pratt County for fire protection for a twenty-year term. As presented, the application does not meet the requirements per K.A.R. 5-25-13. Following discussion, Justin Gatz moved, and Fred Grunder seconded to recommend a waiver of K.A.R. 5-25-13 in line with existing precedent for fire protection in public interest and recommend approval of the application as presented. Motion carried 6-0-1.


KDA–DWR has provided the District with draft amendments to K.S.A. 82a-736. The proposed revision to this language deals with water rights that were not authorized for use between the average use years 2000-2009. Additionally, it would allow for as few as a 5-year average use period as an alternative at the discretion of the Chief Engineer. Following discussion, no action was taken by the board.

Orrin Feril discussed staff activities for the past few weeks and upcoming months. In follow up to last month's discussion regarding the annual meeting plans. Alternative venues have been explored and it was decided to change the location for the annual meeting on February 18, 2021 to the Twilight Theatre in Greensburg. All were encouraged to file their water use reports online and not wait until the last minute to do so. If assistance is needed, District staff can assist. KDA–DWR staff are assisting water users by appointment only due to limited staff availability.

Jeff Lanterman, KDA–DWR, stated that the annual water level measurements would be wrapping up soon with mixed results throughout the area. Keadron Pearson, KWO, introduced herself to the board as the new water planner for the Great Bend Prairie RAC. The GBP RAC will be having their next meeting in the coming weeks to finalize revisions to the region's water goals & action plans. Kent Moore, WaterPACK, noted that they are working on finalizing their plans for their annual meeting as well. ACRES Initiative will be having more meetings soon to keep that initiative moving forward.

The next District board meeting was tentatively set for February 18, 2021 at TBD in Greensburg, Kansas.

With no further items to discuss the board adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Attest by:  Dated 3-11-21