

MINUTES  
2023 ANNUAL MEETING  
BIG BEND GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT #5  
*AND*  
CENTRAL KANSAS WATER BANK ASSOCIATION  
February 16, 2023 – Stafford County Annex – St John

The annual meetings for the Big Bend Groundwater Management District #5 (District) and the Central Kansas Water Bank Association (Association) were held February 16, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Stafford County Annex in St John, Kansas.

Orrin Feril called the Central Kansas Water Bank Association and Big Bend Groundwater Management District No. 5 annual meeting to order on behalf of John Janssen and Darrell Wood respectively at 7:00 p.m. There were approximately 45 eligible voters and 23 visitors in attendance for the meeting.

Orrin Feril presented the approved minutes from the 2022 annual meeting.

Greg Ebert announced the Central Kansas Water Bank Association election of directors and presented the candidates for the two open positions. Vernon Hirt and Curtis Tobias as incumbent candidates and Brandon Bortz were on the ballot for these two positions. Earlier in the afternoon, Curtis Tobias requested his name be removed from the Association ballot. John Janssen moved, and Leon Dunn seconded that nominations cease, and a unanimous ballot be cast for Vernon Hirt and Brandon Bortz to fill the two positions on the Association board. By show of hands, the motion carried unanimously.

Tom Taylor announced the District election of directors and presented candidates. Incumbent Darrell Wood was on the ballot for Edwards County. Incumbent Craig Zwick was on the ballot for Rice County. Joe Schlessiger was on the ballot for Barton County. Nominations were opened to the floor for all positions three times. John Janssen moved, and Fred Grunder seconded that nominations cease, and a unanimous ballot be cast for the candidates to fill the open positions on the Big Bend GMD5 board. By show of hands, the motion carried unanimously.

John Janssen presented the financial report and proposed 2024 budget. The public present were encouraged to review these records in preparation for the July budget hearing to consider the budget for FY2024.

Aaron Ball, Olsson, provided an overview of the Rattlesnake Creek Watershed Plan-EA status and how the public can be involved in the process. Several questions were addressed by Mr. Ball and Orrin Feril regarding water quantity and quality in the area, land access, and timeliness of a resolution.

Orrin Feril provided a brief overview of the Association and District activity reports for 2022. The Association is in the midst of revisions to the charter. Justin Vosburg moved, and John Janssen seconded to amend section 303 of the charter to allow the ability to amend the charter throughout the year at board meetings in addition to the annual meeting. Following discussion regarding the potential impact of this amendment, the motion carried unanimously. Additional items the Association is looking to amend were discussed as well with no action taken. The District has been very busy this year with assisting the Association with its activities, legislative activities, and water user assistance. Recently, the USFWS filed a request to secure water for 2023. At this point, no further information is available.

Earl Lewis, Chief Engineer for the Kansas Department of Agriculture – Division of Water Resources, provided an overview of issues throughout the region including the USFWS' request to secure water and addressed several questions from the audience.

Jeff Lanterman, Stafford field office water commissioner, presented an update on the activities of the Stafford field office for 2022.

Pat Janssen, WaterPACK, made an announcement that their annual meeting would be held on Monday February 20 in St John.

Orrin Feril thanked everyone in attendance for their attention in the activities and encouraged everyone to stay involved in the water conversation in Central Kansas. With nothing further to discuss, Orrin Feril adjourned the joint annual meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Attest by *M. E. Spore* Date 4-13-23