

MINUTES – APRIL 10, 2025  
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 April 10, 2025. The board members present were Tom Taylor, Darrell Wood, Craig Zwick, Joe Schlessiger, Kerry Froetschner. The board members Marlyn Spare, John Janssen, Fred Grunder, and Gary Hornbaker were not present. The District staffs present were Orrin Feril and Vanessa Marks. The guests present were Brandon Bortz, Felix Revello, Merrill Cauble, David Stroberg, and Russ Snyder. The guests present via Zoom were Jeff Crispin, Justin Vosburgh, Chris Smith, and Jeff Lanterman.

The April regular board meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Tom Taylor.

A presentation by Felix Revello regarding water quality in Pawnee County was added to the agenda as item 4a.

Darrell Wood moved, and Kerry Froetschner seconded to approve the March minutes as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

Orrin Feril provided the board and public with the April treasurer's report and highlighted the unique items for further board review. Kerry Froetschner moved, and Craig Zwick seconded to accept the April treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

The District has been working with the other groundwater management districts and the division of conservation of the Kansas department of agriculture to get logistics for the Irrigation Technology Initiative finalized. The final agreement between KDA–DOC and the District has been approved and signed by Steve Frost and is awaiting approval by the District board. Following final review and discussion regarding the rollout of the program, Craig Zwick moved, and Darrell Wood seconded to approve the agreement as presented and authorized Orrin Feril as signatory on the agreement representing the board of directors. Motion carried 5-0.

Felix Revello and Merrill Cauble have been collecting water samples in and around an existing feedlot operation and a potential new location in Pawnee County. These samples have been brought into the District office for analysis. The gentlemen have concerns about these feedlot operations in the sensitive groundwater area of the District negatively impacting the water quality for neighboring well owners. Following their presentation, the several questions and suggestions were addressed by all in attendance. It should be noted that the water laboratory in the District office is not a certified laboratory so the results should not be utilized for management decisions but rather for information purposes only. No additional action was taken by the board.

The District received two applications to offset water from within the Rattlesnake Creek region for recreational purposes. Application numbers 51313 & 51314 are requesting five acre-feet respectively through utilization of K.A.R. 5-25-22 to reduce Water Right File No 29632 by 11.45 acre-feet to account for the change in consumptive use from irrigation to recreation use. As presented, the applications do not meet K.A.R. 5-25-22 (a)1 and K.A.R. 5-25-22(a)4. Following this discussion, Darrell Wood moved, and Craig Zwick seconded to recommend a waiver of the pertinent regulation and recommend approval of the applications. Motion carried 5-0.

During this legislative session, the statute regarding the Multi-Year Flex Account (MYFA) program was amended. Recently, KDA–DWR has provided suggested revisions to K.A.R. 5-16-1

et seq. to maintain compliance with the updated statute. These revisions were reviewed by the board with no significant concerns. During this process, the District will need to request revocation of K.A.R. 5-25-21 which relates to the MYFA statute as well within the District.

Orrin Feril discussed staff activities for the past few weeks and upcoming months. There is an upcoming educator course conducted by the Kansas Geological Survey in Great Bend in June. This is a free water education course for educators to receive continuing education credits. All were encouraged to spread the word about the opportunity. The Watershed Plan-EIS is very near to being ready for publication in the Federal Register. This will initiate the 45-day public review and comment period. The document will be available in several formats and locations throughout the watershed. All are encouraged to review the document and provide comments.

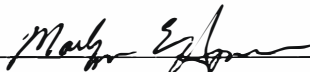
Jeff Lanterman, KDA-DWR, updated the board on the pilot augmentation project highlighting the rapid positive stream response to pumping. The Walnut Creek IGUCA draft report will be available soon for review.

David Stroberg, KWA, noted the upcoming meeting next week in Deerfield. The agenda will include a legislative update, a review of the Arkansas River history, and an overview of the Garden City reclamation project.

Vanessa Marks and Brandon Bortz, CKWBA, provided an update on the CAMP project. So far there have been 24 CAMP contracts, 12 private deposit contracts and one private deposit contracts signed. This is a significant rise in total deposits within a single year. The CKWBA is considering another revision to the charter to deal with savings account balances while the corresponding water right is deposited into CAMP. In the compilation of the annual report, Vanessa Marks noted that there were approximately 950 acre-feet withdrawn from the savings account program in 2024 but only 470 acre-feet was actually diverted.

The next District board meeting is tentatively set for May 9, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

With no further items to discuss, the board adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Attest by:  Dated: 5-9-25