

MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 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 Wednesday September 10, 2025. The board members present were Tom Taylor, Darrell Wood, Marlyn Spare, Kerry Froetschner, Gary Hornbaker, and Fred Grunder. The board members not present was Joe Schlessiger. The District staffs present were Orrin Feril and Vanessa Marks. The guests present were Jeff Lanterman (Zoom), Toby Dougherty (Zoom), Jeff Crispin (Zoom), Kent Moore, and David Stroberg.

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

A board review for Water Right 50300 was added to the agenda as item 5a.

Kerry Froetschner moved, and Darrell Wood seconded to approve the August minutes as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

Orrin Feril provided the board and public with the September treasurer's report and highlighted the unique items for further board review. Darrell Wood moved, and Craig Zwick seconded to accept the September treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

The District is saddened to hear of the loss of John Janssen on August 17, 2025. John served the District since 1994 representing Kiowa county. He dedicated his service to central Kansas with an honest, common-sense approach to water conservation and management. With his passing, the Kiowa county director's position needs to be filled in accordance with District policy. Tom Taylor resigned from the At-Large position effective immediately. Vice-President Fred Grunder accepted his resignation and assumed control of the board meeting. Darrell Wood moved, and Kerry Froetschner seconded to appoint Tom Taylor to fill the Kiowa county position. Motion carried 6-0. Kerry Froetschner moved, and Craig Zwick seconded to elect Tom Taylor as board president. Motion carried 7-0. Tom Taylor resumed control of the board meeting. Marlyn Spare moved, and Kerry Froetschner seconded to appoint Kent Moore for the At-Large position effective immediately. Craig Zwick moved, and Marlyn Spare seconded to elect Kent Moore as treasurer.

Marlyn Spare moved, and Kerry Froetschner seconded to have the officers and District manager to represent the District with Equity Bank and update the signature card to reflect the change. Motion carried 8-0.

The District received a change in place of use application for water right file number 50300 in Rice county. The applicant is requesting to increase the irrigated acres from 11.5 acres to 31 acres in order to more efficiently irrigate the crops. This request triggers a requirement for an agreement with the District to annually monitor the place of use and water use. Following review of the pertinent provisions of the application, Craig Zwick moved, and Gary Hornbaker seconded to enter into monitoring service agreement with the applicant and recommend approval of the application as presented. Motion carried 8-0.

The District has been reviewing proposed revisions to K.A.R. 5-4-1b as presented by KDA-DWR. This proposed language would make significant changes to how impairment complaints are handled throughout the state. The District raised concerns in September 2024 but many of those concerns were not addressed by KDA-DWR in the latest revision. This proposed regulation will have a public hearing on October 27 in Manhattan, KS at KDA-DWR headquarters. A draft letter

was presented to the board that was prepared in coordination with legal counsel. Following a review of the draft letter, Darrell Wood moved, and Fred Grunder seconded to finalize the letter and submit it to KDA–DWR as testimony in the public hearing and be presented by Orrin Feril on October 27, 2025. Motion carried 8-0.

Orrin Feril discussed staff activities for the past few weeks and upcoming months. The District has scheduled outreach meetings in each county at the end of October to solicit input from the public regarding the crafting of the action plans for the areas of concern approved by KDA–DWR in 2024. The schedule for those meetings was presented to the board. With the timing of these meetings with respect to fall harvest, it was recommended that the District send a postcard to each eligible voter outlining the meeting dates as soon as possible. The Kansas Geological Survey will be present at these meetings to assist with hydrology questions. It is the goal to have the model work conducted by Balleau GW ready for the outreach meetings. The board briefly discussed possible actions for each area, but no formal action was taken.

Jeff Lanterman, KDA–DWR, reported on the pilot augmentation project, noting it is anticipated to start pumping again in October for the fall migration. The USGS is currently accepting bids for well contractors to drill observation wells at Quivira NWR. It was noted that the bidding specifications did not require the use of neat cement but rather bentonite as the casing grout. In areas with high chloride content, the bentonite grout will break down defeating the purpose of the grout to inhibit vertical movement of water along the well casing.

David Stroberg, KWA, highlighted a recent meeting on August 20 that outlined potential revisions to the State Water Plan budget. The upcoming meeting on October 15 is planned to be in the Kansas City area.

Vanessa Marks, CKWBA, provided a brief update on the Association’s activities specifically regarding the appointment of a board member and issues regarding the deposit and lease program.

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

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

Attest by:  Dated: 10-9-25