

MINUTES – APRIL 09, 2026
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 09, 2026. The board members present were Tom Taylor, Kent Moore, Darrell Wood, Kerry Froetschner, Gary Hornbaker, Joe Schlessiger, Marlyn Spare, and Craig Zwick. Board member Fred Grunder was not present at the meeting. The District staffs present were Orrin Feril and Vanessa Marks. The guests present were Chris Smith (Zoom) and Jason Norquest (Zoom).

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

Kerry Froetschner moved, and Craig Zwick seconded to approve the March minutes as presented. Motion carried 8-0.

Orrin Feril provided the board and public with the April treasurer's report and highlighted the unique items for further board review. Darrell Wood moved, and Kerry Froetschner seconded to accept the April treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried 8-0.

The agreement with the Kansas Department of Agriculture – Division of Conservation (KDA–DOC) for the Irrigation Technology Initiative began in April 2025. Under Agreement TSP-2025-05, State of Kansas Water Plan funds were authorized for irrigation system evaluations. The agreement was extended in December 2025 and is currently set to expire at the end of June 2026. An additional amendment was presented to the board for consideration. The proposed amendment would extend the agreement through December 31, 2027, and would also authorize up to \$500 per project for follow-up evaluations after irrigation technology improvements have been implemented Craig Zwick moved, Marlyn Spare seconded to approve the TSP-2025-05 amendment. Motion carried 8-0.

A second agreement with KDA–DOC for the Irrigation Technology Initiative (CS-2025-05) extends the initiative to provide cost-shares for implementing technology improvements. An amendment to the agreement was presented to the board that extends the agreement through December 31, 2027, and would add explicit eligibility for pumping system improvements. Kent Moore moved, Gary Hornbaker seconded to approve the CS-2025-05 amendment. Motion carried 8-0.

Orrin Feril discussed staff activities for the past few weeks and upcoming months. The recent outreach meetings for the draft Action Plan were discussed. It was recommended that letters were sent to those within the decline areas identified by the estimated usable lifetime map. The board appreciation dinner is scheduled for April 11 at 6:30 pm in Great Bend. New agreements for FY2026 ITI project received and under review. The GMDA conference will be held in Lubbock TX this year. Marlyn Spare moved, Craig Zwick seconded to approve sending Orrin Feril to the conference. Motion carried 8-0.

Balleau GW submitted a scope of work to coordinate findings with KGS to ensure consistency and collaboration stemming from KGS' concerns regarding specific yield calculations and assumptions in the model. Will be an addendum to the original model report highlighting new changes and improvements (including OpenET integration & recharge rate changes). Darrell Wood moved, Gary Hornbaker seconded to approve the scope of work for \$ 31,680. Motion carried 8-0.

