

**PANHANDLE GROUNDWATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

DISTRICT OFFICE - Windmill Room  
201 W. Third Street, White Deer, Texas  
July 13, 2021 – 9:00 a.m.

Those Present Were:

Jim Thompson	President
Charles Bowers	Director
William Breeding	Director
Lee Peterson	Director
Devin Sinclair	Director
Britney Britten	Asst. General Manager
C.E. Williams	General Manager
Ashley Ausbrooks	Hydrogeologist
Julie Bennett	Permitting Administrator

Guests Present: Lance Williams, Producer; Kent Satterwhite, CRMWA; Ryan Berry, Producer; Zach Berry, Producer; Julie Allegretti, City of Amarillo; Floyd Hartman, City of Amarillo; Chad Pernel, CRMWA; Dustin Babcock, Producer; Nick Bamert, Producer; Mike Friemel, Producer

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

President Thompson Called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT – Please limit comments to 3 minutes.

There was no public comment.

3. REPORT FROM RULES COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND DISCUSSION ON DISTRICT RULES

Director Bowers first asked those in attendance to fill out the PGCD Rules Workshop Survey for Producers at the end of the workshop to assist the board in decision making with the rule amendment process.

Mike Friemel asked about the Master Irrigators Program. Asst. Manager Britten stated it is a program developed by North Plains Groundwater District, who has presenters that focus on irrigation management and efficiency strategies as well as incorporating latest technological advancements to improve operations. Britten added the program would be adapted to the needs of our district.

Bowers presented discussion items concerning possible remedies for one-acre-foot overages, asking those in attendance to read it over following with a question-and-answer period. He then addressed item number 5, stating the proposed change to a 4-year rolling average with a possible 5 year rolling average being

implemented in the case of natural weather-related events as being the most significant change. This will move any possible fining to year 5, giving time for any changes to farming practices to avoid a fine.

Mike Friemel asked about the fine schedule. Bowers stated the committee has not addressed the fine schedule. Adding they are hoping to find a solution to over-pumping without fining, by educating on soil moisture probes, no-till farming and other water conservation practices.

Director Bowers continued to review the discussion items highlighting programs and practices that could be utilized by producers in lieu of fines and to be given credits towards their water usage.

Director Sinclair stated that when reviewing the production reports, it was realized that even in drought years 87% of water users were in compliance with the one-acre foot. Adjusting those numbers by giving users a small credit by implementing some of the farming practices listed it raises that percentage to 97% in drought years.

President Thompson stated that due to concern from water users on the accuracy of meters item number 6 was included. The committee is proposing a 5% variance on the total pumping, per the meter reading, adding that by reducing the total pumping by 5% brings most of the over producers into compliance.

Ryan Berry asked how over production because of natural weather-related events would be defined on any given year. Sinclair stated defining it could limit who would receive the exception.

Asst. Manager Britten stated it is not the district's intention to tell producers how to farm. We want to learn from the producers in attendance. That is the reason for the Water Conservation Plan Survey, to take what farming practices are being used to help other farmers.

General Manager C.E. Williams asked if credits will be given if producers are currently using the water conservation methods listed. He was told they would.

Several in attendance stated that they feel like this is a real good start, and the district is headed down the right path showing leniency and having a contingency plan when over pumping occurs due to reasons out of the producers control.

Mr. Thompson stated the district's main goal is to keep the 12" rule and implement policies to help the producers stay in compliance.

Sinclair stated that he had been in favor of eliminating the fine schedule, however after researching other groundwater districts in the state he realized many districts have similar rules to protect groundwater users from people who can pump all the water they want and pay the fine with no problem. Therefore, there is a need for fines with some teeth in place.

Spreadsheets of the breakdown for 5%-meter reading variance and fine schedule with the 5%-meter variance was reviewed and discussed. Britten stated that on 640 acres with 500 irrigated acres with a half-mile pivot, if this is your normal practice as of today you are pumping 1.28 ac ft which has been in the rules for 20 years. Adding in the additional 5%-meter variance is 1.33 ac ft, which is 16 inches on wet acres.

Floyd Hartman with the City of Amarillo stated that this is a good compromise for agriculture, but there needs to be some consideration for public water systems and other water user groups. Mr. Hartman added that the City of Amarillo has multiple water conservation programs and projects in place. He urged the board to remember the smaller municipalities.

The Board stated that over pumping will stay with the land to avoid lease swapping.

The Board thanked everyone for coming stating we still have a lot of work to do.

**Possible Remedies and Options for One Acre-Foot Overages Discussion Items, PGCD Rules Workshop Survey for Producers, Water Conservation Plan Survey and spreadsheets are attached to these minutes.**

The Board recessed at 10:34 am

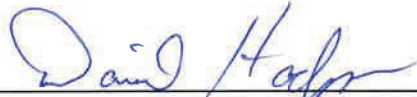
President Thompson reconvened the meeting at 10:46 am

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session was called.

5. ADJOURN

Charles Bowers made the motion to adjourn, seconded by William Breeding. Meeting adjourned at 10:48 am



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David Hodges, Secretary



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Jim Thompson, President