

PANHANDLE GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S REGULAR MEETING – BY TELECONFERENCE - MINUTES

DISTRICT OFFICE - Windmill Room
201 W. Third Street, White Deer, Texas
April 28, 2020 – 8:00 a.m.

The Board of Directors of Panhandle GCD will hold a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 28, 2020 at 8:00 a.m., by teleconference* to discuss and, if appropriate, act upon the following items:

***To dial in call (844)844-0014 – Access Code: 610970**

Board members or staff present in person or by phone were:

Phillip Smith	President
Chancy Cruse	Vice-President
William Breeding	Secretary
Danny Hardcastle	Director
Charles Bowers	Director
F.G. Butch Collard	Director
Brett Britten	Director
Jim Thompson	Director
Danny Hardcastle	Director
CE Williams	General Manager
Britney Britten	PR/Education

Guests Present by Phone: Kent Satterwhite, Chad Pernell, Julie Allegretti

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:07 a.m.

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

President Phillip Smith opened the meeting by stating the public meeting was posted according to Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-14, and it met Texas open meeting guidelines. He asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

3. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MINUTES

a) March 11, 2020

Charles Bowers made the motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Brett Britten. Motion passed unanimously.

4. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON EXPENDITURES

a) March 2020

Bill Breeding made the motion to approve March expenditures, seconded by Charles Bowers. Motion passed unanimously.

A copy of the March 2020 expenditures is attached to these official minutes.

5. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON RAINWATER HARVESTING REBATE APPLICATION

a) Tony Britten

General Manager CE Williams explained Tony Britten is requesting to receive \$16,129.60, which is half the cost of his total rainwater harvesting project.

Charles Bowers made the motion to approve the rainwater harvesting rebate application and send our monetary share of the project after completion, seconded by Brett Britten. Motion passed unanimously.

A copy of the complete rainwater harvesting application is attached to these official minutes.

6. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON AG LOANS

a) Leland Gabel

Williams explained Gary Sutherland, the Ag Loan Financial Advisor reviewed the application and recommended funding the loan in the amount of \$62,187.44.

Bill Breeding made the motion to approve the ag loan, seconded by F.G. Butch Collard. Motion passed unanimously.

7. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON AG LOAN PROGRAM RETURN OF EXCESS FUNDS TO TWDB

Williams explained interest in the Ag Loan program has fallen over the past year, and one factor could be due to the rise in the interest rate. He explained the 3.03% interest rate is more comparable to the other lending institutions and sprinkler companies than it has been in the past. He said the District has been moving money from its reserves to cover the interest on funds that have yet to be loaned out. Williams proposed the District send back approximately \$640,000 and keep \$150,000 of the existing loan. The total funds sent back would depend on the pending loan application which is still under review at this time. The \$150,000 would be able to cover one more loan if someone applies. Williams noted if people become interested in the next few months, the District could start the process again and apply for a new loan from the Texas Water Development Board.

Charles Bowers made the motion to send back approximately \$640,000 to the Texas Water Development Board and keep \$150,000 for the program, seconded by Bill Breeding. Motion passed unanimously.

8. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON PRECIPITATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM AND METEOROLOGY CONTRACT

Williams said after much consideration he believes the District should agree to the contract with West Texas Weather Modification Association (WTWMA) in San Angelo, with Dr. Arquímedes Ruiz-Columbié (Archie) being the head meteorologist. Archie will work with a couple of meteorology students attending Texas Tech in hopes of training them to be a weather modification meteorologist. He said WTWMA is getting the contract ready and the program should be up and running in the next two weeks. Williams said Aaron Woosley will be able to fill in until we find a fulltime pilot. Williams said he has a lead on a pilot and will be talking with him next week.

Director Britten asked if the Board could get a monthly update on the program and Williams said he would check with Archie to see if he would be able to get the data quickly enough.

Charles Bowers made the motion to move forward with the proposed meteorology contract, seconded by Bill Breeding. Motion passed with 7 for and Jim Thompson and F.G. Butch Collard abstaining.

9. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE APPOINTMENT OF A STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

Director Hardcastle suggested moving forward with the committee but holding off on meeting with the committee until it is safe to do so. Director Bowers asked the other directors if they have appointed someone from their precinct yet. Hardcastle said he asked Brett Buckingham and his is willing to participate when the time is right. Director Britten said he appointed Dustin Babcock. Director Thompson said he apologized for missing the last meeting when the committee was first discussed, and he said he is not in favor of forming a committee at this time. Bowers said at the last board meeting, there were many attendees who wanted to give input and the board decided to form the committee that would represent each precinct appropriately. Bowers also said he views the committee as a learning experience for those who participate. Director Breeding said he agrees with Thompson and if the community wants to give more input, they are invited to every board meeting. Director Collard agreed stating anyone can come to the board meeting, and there is a public comment time at each one. He also he cannot find anyone willing to participate in the stakeholder committee in his precinct.

Jim Thompson made the motion to table the appointment of the stakeholder committee until the Board can meet in person to further discuss, seconded by Bill Breeding. Motion passed unanimously.

10. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON AMENDMENTS TO THE EMPLOYEE MANUAL

Williams said he added in a mandatory two weeks-notice policy in hopes of alleviating unnecessary stresses when employees quit with no notice. He also changed the sick leave payout policy for employees to receive all of their accrued sick leave instead of the previous 50 percent policy.

Director Britten asked if the new policy allows Williams to deny payment to an employee who does give proper notice, and Williams agreed by changing the wording from shall to may, it would allow that, however that was not his intentions.

Brett Britten made the motion to approve the employee manual amendments, stating that all accrued time payout discrepancies must come before the board, seconded by Chancy Cruse. Motion passed unanimously.

11. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON TAX DEEDS AND PROPERTY CARDS FOR TRUST PROPERTY IN THE CITY OF CLARENDON

a) Parcel 7597	Bid:	\$100.00
b) Parcel 8052	Bid:	\$500.05
c) Parcel 8283	Bid:	\$50.00
d) Parcel 8621	Bid:	\$117.77
e) Parcel 8648	Bid:	\$50.00
f) Parcel 9836	Bid:	\$400.00
g) Parcel 9866	Bid:	\$55.00
h) Parcel 9867	Bid:	\$55.00
i) Parcel 9868	Bid:	\$55.00
j) Parcel 9869	Bid:	\$55.00
k) Parcel 9870	Bid:	\$105.00

Bill Breeding made the motion to approve the tax deeds and property cards for trust property in the City of Clarendon, seconded by John R. Spearman Jr. Motion passed unanimously.

12. CONSENT AGENDA – DRILLING PERMITS

The following items are part of the Consent Agenda. All Well Permit requests have been thoroughly reviewed by staff, are administratively complete and the General Manager is recommending issuance.

RECLASSIFY WELLS –

- a. Hardcastle Farms requests to reclassify irrigation well WH-361-R located in the NE4 of Sec 51, Blk A8, H&GN Survey in Wheeler Co from a 3” to a 2”.

F.G. Butch Collard made the motion to reclassify the well, seconded by Jim Thompson. The motion passed with 8 for and Danny Hardcastle abstaining.

DRILLING PERMITS FOR WELLS PUMPING MORE THAN 25,000 GALLONS A DAY OR 17.5 GPM

- 1) DO-506 Clifford Fraser – An 8” well to be drilled by Raymond Lichtie by March 15, 2020 in the SE4 of Sec 24, Blk B3, H&GN Survey (being located approx. 5 mi E of Groom at Boydston Rd. (CR5) & CR B

Charles Bowers made the motion to approve the well, seconded by F.G. Butch Collard. Motion passed unanimously.

- 2) CA-1344 Simms & Son – An 8” well to be drilled by Hydro by April 1, 2020 in the SE4 of Sec 34, Blk 7, I&GN Survey (being located approx. 5 mi NE of Panhandle & 1.5 mi N or Hwy 60 on FM 2385)

John R. Spearman Jr. made the motion to approve the well, seconded by Brett Britten. Motion passed unanimously.

13. STAFF UPDATES

Williams said the staff and board are required to take a short cybersecurity course by June 15th, and he suggested viewing the video after the board meeting.

14. MANAGER’S REPORT

Bowers said he believes we need to put the rules discussion back on the agenda for the next meeting. Hardcastle said he would like us to add a drought rule to allow for additional pumping when an area is affected by drought. He said he would like to see this tied to the drought monitor somehow. Many of the directors agreed this would be beneficial to all operators. Williams agreed this was an option we could investigate further.

15. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO SET FUTURE MEETING DATES

Williams said he did not see a need to schedule a meeting yet, especially with the uncertainties with the Coronavirus, but he requested President Smith to appoint a budget committee that would need to meet this summer. President Smith appointed Chancy Cruse, Danny Hardcastle and F.G. Butch Collard to the budget committee.

16. ADJOURN

Bill Breeding made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Jim Thompson. Meeting adjourned at 9:34 a.m.


William B. Breeding, Secretary


Phillip Smith, President