

**Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 3  
Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors  
November 18, 2024**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

President McCormick called to order the November 18, 2024, Board of Directors meeting of the Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District at 9:03 a.m. The meeting was at the Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management Board Room.

**Directors Present in Person**

Chad McCormick, President, Industrial Representative  
Mike O'Brate, Treasurer, Finney County Representative  
Randy Hayzlett, Vice-President, Surface Water Representative  
Garrett Love, Secretary, Gray County Representative  
Zachary Gale, Hamilton County Representative  
Carl Clawson, Meade County Representative  
Clay Scott, Grant County Representative  
Andy Moser, Stevens County Representative  
Kent Dunn, Seward County Representative  
Bret Rooney, Haskell County Representative  
Fred Jones, Municipal Representative

**Directors Present by Phone or Zoom**

Reid Shrauner, Morton County Representative  
Kyle Maddux, Kearny County Representative  
Seth Nelson, Stanton County Representative

**Directors Absent with Notice**

Jacob Harshberger, Ford County Representative

**District Staff Present**

Jason Norquest, Assistant Manager  
Patty Stapleton, Office Administrator  
Chris Law, Director, Field Services  
Brandi Sneath, Office Assistant  
Trevor Ahring, Engineer

**Others in Attendance via Zoom or in Person**

Mike Meyer, Water Commissioner, Division of Water Resources, Garden City, KS  
Keadron Pearson, Kansas Water Office  
Brownie Wilson, Kansas Geological Survey  
Earl Lewis, Chief Engineer, Kansas Department of Agriculture  
Deborah Kohl, Facilitator, KSU, Community Vitality State Specialist  
Kevin Salter, Division of Water Resources, Garden City, KS  
Jonathan Aguilar, KSU  
Rusty Redding, Downing Drilling  
Titus Jaeger  
Gary Bolt  
Mark Rude

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**Consent Agenda**

The following items were submitted for approval as part of the consent agenda:

- Approve Agenda for November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
- Approve Minutes of Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, regular monthly board meeting
- Approve General Financial Report for October-November 2024
- Approve Western Water Conservation Projects, Financial Report for October-November 2024

**Mike O'Brate moved to revise the agenda to add Executive Session under Old Business. Fred Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed.**

**Brett Rooney moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Randy Hayzlett seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.**

**President's Report**

**DWR Report: Mike Meyer, Water Commissioner / Chief Engineer Earl Lewis**

Water Commissioner Mike Meyer reported they are cleaning up last year's water use reports that got flagged or that do not make sense. If the state cannot figure it out, a letter may be sent out for an explanation. The office is gearing up for the annual well measurements, which begin on the first of January. GMD1 will meet in Leoti on Wednesday to tie up loose ends on their Wichita County LEMA renewal.

**Other Agency Reports**

**DWR**

Kevin Salter announced that the 75th ARCA Annual Meeting will be held on December 13th at the Clarion Inn in Garden City, KS.

**RCPP Program**

Jason Norquest discussed the RCPP grant, allowing us to hire another employee. There are still some logistics to be worked out, but we should be in contract soon. Chris Law, Trevor Ahring, and Jason have been attending meetings and will be on a call this afternoon regarding the grant. In the board book (page 15), you will find the RCPP, Technical Assistance, and Guidance (salary and position descriptions). 18.5 million dollars in grant dollars starts as soon as the contract is signed and approved.

**Committee Reports**

**Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee did not hold a meeting.

**Policy and Legal Committee met on October 21st.**

Committee Chairman Clay Scott discussed the Policy and Legal Committee that met on October 21st. They had no work to do on changes, and the discussion focused on HB 2279, model runs, and scenarios. Jason contacted the Docking Institute in Hays, KS. They are providing a price on the model run, county by county. Discussion was held on the Producer Meetings that will be held in the next two days.

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**Public Meetings and Outreach Committee**

The topic of the Meeting and Outreach Committee was the upcoming Producer Meetings. A handout of the draft agenda was provided for the board to review. Several suggestions and updates were made.

**Old Business**

**Executive Session:**

**At 9:31, Brett Rooney moved to go into Executive Session for ten minutes to discuss personnel matters with Jason Norquest requested to stay in attendance. Kent Dunn seconded. The motion carried.**

**New Business**

**Kent Dunn moved to approve the executive team's hiring of a headhunter to research for an Executive Director further. Bret Rooney seconded. The motion passed.**

**Interim Executive Director Report**

**Travel Request, Four States Irrigation Council, Jan 29-31, 2025**

**Fred Jones moved to approve travel to Denver for up to two staff members. Mike O'Brate seconded the motion, which carried.**

**Draft Retreat Agenda**

Jason Norquest directed the board to the draft February Legislative Retreat agenda. This is an important meeting, and attendance would be beneficial. Each GMD will provide a one-pager describing the history and Programs, Policies, and Oversights they are working on. These papers will be handed out on Monday with reminders about the reception.

Fred Jones suggested moving the ICARE and Conservation Initiative to the top of the list, showing importance.

**Conference Reviews**

**NWRA.**

Randy Hayzlett, Clay Scott, and Jason Norquest attended the NWRA conference in New Mexico. It was well attended and provided a lot of useful information. Clay Scott added a couple of highlights that were discussed:

- There is a lot of money available for emerging contaminants. Municipalities are critical to that. Legal frameworks make it a violation to transport water containing contaminants, even if the contamination is out of your control. There are no prosecutions currently, but it remains a challenging regulatory issue.
- \$14 billion is available for water conservation and infrastructure, a lot targeted for the Colorado River Basin. However, several hundred dollars are allotted for other issues.
- May want to investigate other state-specific approaches to conservation and programs for water users.

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**Governor's Water Conference**

The Governor's Water Conference was held November 12-14, with about six hundred in attendance. Our office's communication with agencies seems to be opening well.

**Western Water Conservation Projects**

**Finney County Water Users Headgate Project Overage**

Jason Norquest recapped the Finney County Water Users Headgate Project accounting issue a couple of years ago. Accounting shows that the project had an overage of \$19,842.26 due to engineering inspections exceeding the original estimate. Kaw Valley paid the overage amount to the Western Water Conservation Projects funds to cover contractual obligations with the construction company (Building Solutions), while Trevor Ahring worked with the State of Kansas to retrieve the tax payments made. The state successfully refunded \$20,039.89. The \$20,039.89 had been deposited into the Western Water Conservation Projects Funds Bank account. A return of monies in the amount that was initially provided for the overage (\$19,842.26) is due back to Kaw Valley. This transaction can be returned to them without any costs exceeding the original project budget.

The Western Water Conservation Litigation Committee met via conference call and moved to approve the new submittal for project overage via a new application.

**Randy Hayzlett moved to approve the application from Finney County Water Users Association project overage. Andy Moser seconded. The motion was approved.**

Jason added that Connie hopes to get out here during the ARCA meeting and would like to discuss with Chad, Randy, and Jason what to do with the additional funds.

**Board Member Report**

No additional reports were announced.

**Keadron Pearson: KWO**

Via Zoom, Keadron Pearson with the Kansas Water Office stated that around 643 people attended the Governors Water conference.

Kansas Water Authority will meet on December 11<sup>th</sup> in Parsons, KS, for the final review of the Strategic Planning Report.

**Strategic Planning Discussion**

**Final Prep with Moderator for Producer Meetings**

Deborah reviewed the agenda for the producer meetings. Starting with the introductory welcome and team introductions, a couple of compelling stories will be told, expressing their thoughts and support for the process. Brownie Wilson will then present his slides and scenarios, providing the groundwork for discussion in the smaller breakout groups. In the breakout sessions, we will ask everyone to review the documents and information presented to them. We should be able to have four to six small groups, depending on attendance. Next, we will review the definitions included in the handouts and look at the scenarios along with the supporting documents. This is primarily an opportunity for us to listen and capture thoughts, allowing us to move to actionable steps in the future. Brownie Wilson provided a review of slides for Producer Meetings. Trevor Ahring added that

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a sheet of definitions and a map showing codes and the percentage you would have to reduce would also be available.

President Chad McCormick talked about future meetings and the importance of holding them.

Gary Boldt added that having several Board of Directors available at the meetings would be helpful.

**Recessed for lunch at 11:32. Quorum was lost.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Garrett Love

GMD3 Board Secretary