

**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 13, 2018
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING OF
NORTH PLAINS GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

The Board of Directors of North Plains Groundwater Conservation District met in regular session January 9, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. in the Conference Room in the Richard S. Bowers Water Conservation Learning Center Building at the North Plains Water Conservation Center, 6045 West County Road E, Dumas, Texas 79029-7201. The following persons were present:

Members Present at 9:02 a.m.:

Daniel L. Krienke, Vice-President;
Bob B. Zimmer, Secretary;
Gene Born, Director;
Justin Crownover, Director;
Zac Yoder, Director; and
Mark Howard, Director.

Staff Present during part or all of the meeting:

Steve Walthour, General Manager;
Dale Hallmark, Assistant General Manager/Hydrologist/Producer Services;
Kristen Blackwell, Executive Assistant;
Odell Ward, Program Coordinator – GIS/Monitor Wells;
Curtis Schwertner, Natural Resource Specialist; and
Julia Stanford, Conservation Outreach Specialist.

Others present during part or all of the meeting:

Dana Moreland;
Wenwei Xu, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Lubbock, Texas;
F. Keith Good, Attorney; and,
Ellen Orr, Paralegal.

Vice President, Daniel L. Krienke, declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Director, Gene Born, gave the invocation and Vice President Krienke led the pledge.

At 9:03 a.m., Vice President Krienke recessed the regular Board meeting and called the public hearing to Order to receive public comment regarding the District's proposed revised Management Plan. The public hearing commentary was duly recorded by Court Reporter, Dana Moreland.

Vice-President Krienke recessed the public hearing at 9:29 a.m. and reconvened the public hearing at 9:39 a.m. Vice-President Krienke closed the public hearing at 9:40 a.m. and reconvened the regular Board meeting.

The General Manager introduced Julia Stanford who was recently employed by the District as a Conservation Outreach Specialist.

1 – Public Comment

No Public Comment was made to the Board.

2 – Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda was discussed by the Board and consisted of: the review and approval of the Minutes of the regularly scheduled January 9, 2018 Board Meeting; the review and approval of un-audited District expenditures for January 1, 2018 through January 31, 2018, including the General Manager's expense and activity report; and the review and approval of payment to Lemon, Shearer, Phillips & Good, P.C. for professional services and out-of-pocket expenses from January 1, 2018 through January 31, 2018, in the amount of \$4,956.02.

Zac Yoder moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Gene Born seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Board.

Action Agenda 3a - Consider the homestead exemptions for 2018.

The General Manager stated that during the January 9, 2018 meeting, the Board questioned how the 10% or \$10,000 for a general homestead exemption was applied. Mr. Walthour reported that residential homestead exemptions are covered under Texas Tax Code, Subtitle C, Chapter 11 (Taxable Property and Exemptions). According to the Texas Comptroller, Texas offers a variety of partial or total (absolute) exemptions from appraised property values used to determine local property taxes. A partial exemption removes a percentage or a fixed dollar amount of a property's value from taxation. A total (absolute) exemption excludes the entire property from taxation. Taxing units are mandated by the state to offer certain (mandatory) exemptions and have the option to decide locally on whether to offer others (local option).

Mr. Walthour stated that a general residential homestead (homestead) can be a separate structure, condominium or a manufactured home located on owned or leased land, as long as the individual living in the home owns it. A homestead can include up to 20 acres, if the land is owned by the homeowner and used for a purpose related to the residential use of the homestead.

Mr. Walthour further stated that any taxing unit, including a city, county, school district or special district, has the option of deciding locally to offer a separate residence homestead exemption for persons age 65 or older in an amount not less than \$3,000. An entity may set a higher exemption amount. To qualify for the mandatory and local option exemption for persons age 65 or older, the owner must be age 65 or older and live in the house. If the age 65 or older homeowner dies, the surviving spouse may continue to receive the local option exemption if the surviving spouse is age 55 or older at the time of death and lives in and owns the home and applies for the exemption.

Mr. Walthour also stated that a disabled person (Disability Social Security) must meet the definition of disabled for the purpose of payment of disability insurance benefits under the Federal Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Act. An eligible disabled person who is 65 or older may not receive both a disabled and an elderly residence homestead exemption but may choose either.

Mr. Walthour further stated that a Disabled Veteran's homestead exemption is based on an amount determined by the percentage of service connected disability up to 100 percent of the property's value.

The Board has historically approved homestead exemptions as follows:

- The greater of 10 percent of the taxable value or \$10,000 for a Homestead;
- \$100,000 – for persons 65 or over;

- \$100,000 - Disability Social Security; and,
- The maximum percentage for Disabled Veterans.

The General Manager recommended that the Board continue to adopt the above-listed homestead exemptions.

Bob Zimmer moved that the Board adopt the following homestead exemptions for 2018:

- The greater of 10 percent of the taxable value or \$10,000 for a Homestead;
- \$100,000 – for persons 65 or over;
- \$100,000 - Disability Social Security; and,
- The maximum percentage for Disabled Veterans.

Zac Yoder seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Board.

Action Agenda 3c - Consider approval of Water Well Permits as active and complete wells.

The General Manager reported that District Rule 2.13 provides, after the site inspection is complete, and it is determined that the Well (and all Wells within the Groundwater Production Unit) are in compliance with the Rules of the District and the Well Permit application, the General Manager shall submit the Well Permit to the Board for final compliance approval.

The General Manager reported that the District staff had processed 24 Water Well Permits which are ready for Board consideration and approval. These permits, listed in the table below, represent completed Wells that have been inspected and are in compliance with District Rules. The inspections verify that the Wells were completed as required by the respective Permits, including proper Well location, Well classification, maximum yield, and proper installations of check valves and flow meters. Copies of the individual permits were presented to the Board.

The General Manager noted that Director, Justin Crownover, had Well Permit number LI-9997 and Well Permit OC-9683 on the Well Permit Schedule.

Well	Class	Qtr.	Sec.	Blk.	Sur.	NS	EW
DA-6714	D	NE/4	11	5	FDW	869 N	25 6E
DA-9657	B	SE/4	44	4	CSS	439 S	457 W
DA-9658	B	NE/4	44	4	CSS	873 N	235 E
DA-9659	B	NE/4	44	4	CSS	550 N	449 E
DA-9660	B	W/2	44	4	CSS	850 S	110 W
HA-9995	C	NE/4	14	2	BS&F	775 N	106 E
HA- 10112	C	SW/4	28	12	CSS	862 N	218 W
HA- 10166	C	SW/4	3	1	SA&MG	451 S	424 W
HU- 4908	D	SE	-	-	J P PRICE	471S	844E
HU- 8674	C	NW/4	-	-	J Price	929 N	1185 W
LI-9997	D	SE/4	1170	43	H&TC	150 S	127 E
MO- 9728	B	NW/4	20	-	M-2	118 N	19 W
MO- 9756	C	NE/4	8	Q	H&GN	875 N	495 E
MO- 9757	C	SE/4	8	Q	H&GN	690 S	92 E
MO- 9767	B	NE/4	5	Q	H&GN	729 N	71 E
MO- 9768	D	NW/4	6	Q	H&GN	229 N	15 W
OC-9683	D	NE/4	110	4-T	T&NO	100 N	549 E
OC-9952	B	NW/4	15	12	H&GN	509 N	102 W
OC-9973	D	SW/4	10	12	H&GN	475 S	419 W

SH-9575	C	SE/4	8	1-C	GH&H	446 S	483 E
SH-9758	C	SE/4	433	1-T	T&NO	33 S	344 E
SH-10062	B	SE/4	97	1-T	T&NO	376 S	2 E
SH-10063	B	SW/4	98	1-T	T&NO	160 S	169 W
SH-10064	B	SE/4	97	1-T	T&NO	252 S	244 E

Bob Zimmer moved to approve Well Permit numbered LI-9997 and Well Permit numbered OC-9683 on the Well Permit Schedule, noting that the Wells are properly equipped and otherwise comply with District Rules. Mark Howard seconded the motion and it was approved by the majority vote of the Board with Justin Crownover abstaining from the vote.

Zac Yoder moved to approve all of the remaining Well Permits on the Well Permit Schedule, noting that the Wells are properly equipped and otherwise comply with District Rules. Mark Howard seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Board.

Action Agenda 3b - Consider District agriculture water conservation demonstration programs.

The General Manager presented the following reports regarding the Ag Committee Meeting, the Water Conservation Center, on-farm demonstration support, the 2018 Master Irrigator Program, and the Irrigation Conservation Initiative:

Ag Committee Meeting

On January 26th, Zachary Yoder and Danny Krienke of the AG Committee met with District staff and David Sloan regarding Pessl Instruments and what the company can offer in weather and field conditions monitoring equipment and analysis. The General Manager planned to evaluate the products as part of the District's demonstration program. District staff presented concepts for soliciting proposals for on-farm demonstrations as directed by the Board. The committee determined that it preferred to postpone the request for proposal process to a later date since the area is already beginning 2018 crop production activities.

The General Manager sought input from the committee regarding demonstrations at the North Plains Water Conservation Center and the potential of retaining Texas AgriLife under the guidance of Jourdan Bell to provide support for the District's agriculture demonstration programs.

North Plains Water Conservation Center

The General Manager met with representatives from CPS and farmer, Stan Spain, on January 8, 2018. The subject of the meeting was to plan future demonstration at the field and to discuss the use of products through the irrigation system.

On-farm Demonstration Support

The General Manager is scheduled to meet with Jourdan Bell, Assistant Professor, Agronomist, Texas A&M AgriLife, to open a dialogue regarding retaining Texas AgriLife under the direction of Dr. Bell for the District's on-farm demonstrations. Mr. Walthour reported that Dr. Bell splits her time between Research and Extension with Texas AgriLife.

Master Irrigator Program 2018

As of February 8, 2018, the District had 18 applicants for the Master Irrigator Program for 2018. The applicants are:

Willie Wieck;
Dorland Burton;
Clinton Born;
Kenton Laubhan;
Dennis Holubec;
Nathan Webb;
Dustin Sargent;
Sam Koehn;
Janet Reinart;
Frank Mininger;
Ridgel Koehn;
Linda Williams;
Dustin Borden;
Glen Green;
Everett Timmons;
Justin Ritchey;
Eddie Riggins; and,
Paul Breland.

Irrigation Conservation Initiative

The District is in the process of contacting the 29 qualified producers to remind them that they are eligible for the funding. The District has received some inquiries, but no applications for funding at this time.

The ICI is made possible by grants from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) for the purchase of irrigation efficiency equipment. The 29 qualified growers are each qualified to apply for up to a 50% cost share on equipment. Eligible equipment includes, soil moisture probes, plant stress monitors, on-farm weather stations, well cut-off systems, telemetry, and pivot monitoring and control systems. Other items not on this list may be cost shared at the District's discretion while funds are available.

The program is funded by two recent grants from the TWDB, totaling \$300,000. To be eligible for funding through the ICI, producers are required to attend a District approved educational program and then report certain crop and usage information pertaining to the cost-shared equipment. Attendance at one of the District's two field days qualified producers to apply for funds. Additional opportunities to qualify for the funding may be announced in the future.

Wenwei Xu, Corn Breeder, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Lubbock, Texas presented to the Board, the Results of the 2017 Field Survey for Fumonisin Contamination at the Water Conservation Center of the North Plains Groundwater Conservation District.

The Board recessed at 10:58 a.m. and reconvened at 11:09 a.m.

The General Manager stated that President Grall is interested in demonstrating variable speed irrigation and is working to obtain additional information regarding the same. A *YouTube* video was played for the Board about variable speed irrigation at the meeting. Mr. Walthour also stated that President Grall would like for Trimble to make a presentation to the Board at a later date about its variable speed irrigation.

Action Agenda 3d - Receive report regarding groundwater production reporting for 2017.

The General Manager reported, that as of February 6, 2018, the District had received 1,200 Annual Production Reports of the 2,885 reports mailed and e-mailed in late November 2017. Of those, 1,020 have been entered and processed by the District. Most of the owners/agents of the processed reports have received their Preliminary

Conservation Reserve calculations. District staff have begun the QA/QC on a few reports and are continuing to analyze and enter data.

The General Manager stated that the deadline to report Annual Production is March 1, 2018.

Action Agenda 3e - Consider compliance matters before the District.

The General Manager reported that District staff is investigating any questionable meter readings as needed for 2017 Production Reporting. Mr. Walthour further stated that Producers who have not reported their annual 2017 Production are being sent reminders the week of February 12, 2018. The General Manager also reported that the Todd Tamplin compliance matter had not yet been resolved because Mr. Tamplin had until February 1, 2018 to respond to the District's Settlement Offer.

Discussion Agenda 4a - Director Reports.

District Directors reported to the Board regarding meetings and/or seminars attended, weather conditions and economic development in each Director's precinct.

Discussion Agenda 4b - Committee Reports.

None, except as stated above.

Agenda 5 - Discuss Items for Future Board Meeting Agendas and Set Next Meeting Date and Time.


The General Manager reminded the Board that the date of its March regular meeting is at 9:00 a.m. on March 13, 2018.

Discussion Agenda 4c - General Manager's Report.

Steve Walthour presented the General Manager's Report, which included information concerning upcoming meetings and conferences, the General Manager's activity summary and the District activity summary.

Agenda 6 - Adjournment.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Vice-President Krienke declared the meeting adjourned at 11:52 a.m.


Daniel L. Krienke, Vice - President


Bob B. Zimmer, Secretary