

## **Meeting Rules for the Brazos River and Associated Bay and Estuary System Basin and Bay Expert Science Team**

### **Meetings are Public**

While not subject to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act, the BBEST will conform to the intent of the Act to ensure adequate public notice, participation and transparency of the group's actions.

Meeting agenda packets, presentation materials, and meeting minutes (following approval by the BBEST) will be posted to the group's website.

### **Administrative Support, Agendas and Record Keeping**

The TCEQ provides administrative support to the BBEST to include:

- Scheduling of meetings, arranging meeting locations, performing appropriate meeting support to conduct an efficient meeting.
- Preparing and posting agendas in conjunction with the BBEST members, preparing meeting minutes, distributing meeting agenda and support materials to BBEST members and interested parties and organizations who request notification of meetings.
- Maintaining website on which meeting notices and other material on the business of the BBEST will be posted.
- Providing guidance to the Chair, Vice Chair, and committee membership on agenda items.
- Managing all records on the business of the BBEST including agendas and minutes; contact databases of BBEST membership.

As soon as the date, time and location of a meeting are set by the BBEST, TCEQ staff shall place the meeting notification on the website. Prior to adjourning each meeting, the Chairs will provide an opportunity for committee members to request items for future consideration by the BBEST. Upon agreement of the members on the suggested agenda items, the Chairs will coordinate with TCEQ staff to schedule the items to be placed on upcoming meeting agenda.

### **Meeting schedule and location**

All attempts will be made to secure a meeting schedule that will accommodate a majority of the membership.

To facilitate the work of the BBEST, the Chairs may establish a work group/subcommittee of BBEST members and technical experts to gather more information on a topic or to formulate recommendations for consideration by the full BBEST.

The Chairs will ask for volunteers from the BBEST to serve on the appointed work group without a limitation on the size of the work group. The Chairs will request that a member of an appointed work group volunteer to ensure that the discussions at the work group meeting are accurately recorded. Meeting minutes are prepared at the discretion of the subcommittee chairs.

Work group recommendations must be presented to the full BBEST for consideration and decision.

### **Public Participation in the Meetings**

The public will be allowed to speak at the beginning and end of each meeting when recognized by the Chairs and, at their discretion, on specific agenda items.

### **Quorum**

A quorum of the BBEST is defined as a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority of the voting membership.

If a quorum of the BBEST is not achieved, the Chairs may ask those in attendance if they wish to proceed with items on the agenda, such as informational briefings, but no decisions on an issue or votes can be taken without the presence of a quorum.

### **Voting**

The BBEST shall attempt to make decisions based on consensus. Consensus is a decision-making process built by indentifying and exploring all members' interests and by assembling a package of agreement which satisfies these interests to the greatest extent possible. A consensus is reached when all voting members agree that their major interests have been taken into consideration and addressed in a satisfactory manner so that they can support the decision of the group. The process of building a consensus involves the development of alternatives and the assessment of the impacts of those alternatives.

Consensus does not necessarily mean unanimity. Some members may strongly endorse a particular solution or decision while others may accept it as a workable agreement. A BBEST member can participate in the consensus without embracing each element of the agreement, or necessarily having each of his/her interests satisfied to the fullest extent. In a consensus agreement, the members recognize that, given the combination of gains and trade-offs in the decision package and give the current circumstances and alternative options; the resulting agreement is the best one the voting members can make at this time.

If it appears to the Chairs that consensus cannot be reached, then the Chairs may entertain a motion to have the BBEST suspend the attempt to reach consensus on

the proposal under consideration by the BBEST. The vote to end the consensus process must receive a simple majority among the BBEST members. The Chairs shall only call for the vote if 75% of the voting membership is in attendance at the meeting. If the vote to end the consensus process is approved, then the Chairs will entertain motions on the specific proposal to be placed for a vote by the BBEST. Discussion and action on each motion would be facilitated in accordance with parliamentary procedure. For a motion to be approved, it must receive a simple majority of the full BBEST voting affirmatively.

### **Amendment of Meeting Rules**

These Rules may be amended by an affirmative vote of 75% of the full voting membership of the BBEST at a properly called and posted meeting. The agenda shall include a caption regarding the proposed section of the meeting rules proposed for amendment.

*Formally adopted and made effective on April 19, 2011.*