Brazos River and Associated Bay and Estuary System
Basin and Bay Stakeholder Committee (BBASC)
Wednesday, August 4th, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
Virtual on Microsoft Teams

Minutes

Members Present: Dale Spurgin, Chair; Tom Michel, Vice-Chair; Horace Grace; Ken Kramer; Glenn Lord; Eddie Saucedo; Gary Spicer; Bruce Bodson.

Call to Order
Chair Dale Spurgin called the meeting to order and member attendance was taken.

Public comment
There were no public comments made at this time.

Approval of Meeting Minutes
BBASC members unanimously approved the August 16, 2017 meeting minutes.

Announcement of vacancies
Chair Spurgin informed members that there are 10 vacancies on the BBASC for the following stakeholder groups: free range livestock (2 vacancies), commercial fishing (1), municipalities (4), river authorities (1), recreational water users (1), and CAFOs (1). Additionally, Chair Spurgin mentioned additional vacancies to be considered for the following meeting, including agricultural irrigation (2) and environmental interests (1). These additional vacancies and any unfilled vacancies will be for nominations for 60 days.

Announcement of nominations
Three nominations were received for the following stakeholder groups: Tiffany Malzahn for river authorities; Pattie Carothers for recreational water users; and Jay Bragg for CAFOs. The nominees were provided the opportunity to present their qualifications to the group.

Action on nominations
Through majority vote, members confirmed all three nominees as the new representatives for the river authorities, recreational water users, and CAFOs stakeholder groups.

Legislative Session Update
Mr. Ken Kramer gave an update on the 87th Texas Legislative Session. The Texas Water Journal will be publishing overviews of the legislative session. House Bill 2225 passed which deals with the powers and duties of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) regarding the Texas Water Trust. The Texas Water Trust was established within the Texas Water Bank as a mechanism to allow a water right holder to dedicate all or a portion of their water rights for environmental flows. The bill gives TPWD the direction to actively promote the trust to protect environmental flows. Mr. Kramer also

acknowledged that the appropriations process did include funding to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) for environmental flow studies.

Texas Water Development Board Update

Dr. Mark Wentzel, TWDB, gave an update on recent studies that supported the Brazos BBASC, completely or shared across basins. The study of Statewide Synthesis of Environmental Flows Studies is nearing completion and the final report is due August 31st. The Environmental Flows Validation in Three River Basins study is investigating flow ecology relationships. There will be several webinars regarding this study in August for stakeholders and scientists. The contract is set to end by the end of August, but the report will likely be delayed into September. Another study related to the Brazos is Baseline Research for Refinement of Environmental Flow Standards in the Brazos Estuary, which was also delayed but TWDB is hoping to have a draft report soon. Once the draft report is received, TWDB will be looking for BBASC reviewers for the report. There were several other studies that were funded in the Brazos Basin, including estimating the attainment of environmental flow standards in the Brazos, Trinity, and Neches basins. The final report should be available by the end of August. Another project is the Suspended Sediment Sampling at Environmental Flow Measurement Points in Four River Basins and the study data is currently available on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) webpage.

Dr. Wentzel also informed members regarding the potential for future studies. The legislature approved funding for general revenue tied to strategies for TWDB including environmental impact and water resources data. The funding totaled $1 million over the biennium for each strategy (half a million for each strategy per fiscal year). The exact amount of funding that will be allocated for the SB3 adaptive management process was not yet established. TWDB will follow up with the BBASC groups for project ideas once TWDB has a plan for the funds.

Other Items

Chair Spurgin stated that the Brazos BBASC has leftover funds in the amount of $18,036.98 held at the West Central Texas Council of Governments in Abilene for any future expenses.

Chair Spurgin also mentioned that he appointed Mr. Kramer to be the representative for the Brazos BBASC on a virtual freshwater inflow workshop held in June 2021. Mr. Kramer explained the workshops were to update the 1994 publication *Freshwater Inflows to Texas Bays and Estuaries* with more recent data. The project is being led by the Harte Research Institute and it should take 2 to 3 years to update the publication. The researchers requested that if anyone has knowledge of any potentially beneficial studies to contact the researchers to make sure the updated publication is as thorough as possible.

Vice-Chair Tom Michel introduced his new alternate, Mr. Wayne Owen. Additionally, Chair Spurgin asked the group' opinion on whether BBEST member could serve concurrently on the BBASC. No members voiced any opposition, so Ms. Tiffany Malzahn planned to serve on both the BBASC and the BBEST, unless anything changes in the

future. Mr. Jay Bragg also suggested she name an alternate on the BBASC in case any time conflicts arise. Chair Spurgin also stated that he would review the rules to make sure there is no issue with the placement.

Next Meeting Date and Future Agenda Items
Ms. Jade Rutledge at Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) will send an announcement of the current vacancies to be open for 60 days. A doodle poll will be distributed to members to determine the next meeting date. Chair Spurgin noted that the next meeting would likely be planned for late October 2021 and agenda items could include updates on the ongoing studies, discussion of funding for future projects, and voting on any nominations to fill vacancies

Chair Spurgin mentioned that if the BBASC will be meeting more often, it may be a good idea to have a designated day for future meetings. Mr. Kramer asked about the format for the future meeting. Chair Spurgin said that it will depend on conditions during the next meeting, but he stated that there will likely be a hybrid type meeting with in-person and virtual options. Chair Spurgin stated that the group will need to be flexible in planning the next meeting.

Public comment
There were no public comments made at this time.

Adjourn