

Concho River Watermaster Advisory Committee – Meeting Minutes
July 23, 2025

Co-Chair Steven Hoelscher called the meeting to order at 13:33 at which time roll call was conducted, and a quorum was determined.

Everyone including Concho River Watermaster Advisory Committee (CRWAC) members, TCEQ staff, and visitors introduced themselves. In attendance included:

CRWAC Members

Tom Thompson, City of San Angelo
Tommy Hiebert, City of San Angelo
Shane Kelton, City of San Angelo
Steven Hoelscher, Mainstem Concho River
Stuart Seidel, South Concho River
Billy Gassiot, Middle Concho River
Jack Pool, Dove Creek

Visitors

David Kerce
Timmy Kinney
Lenny Kinney

Absent

Brenda Gunter, City of San Angelo
Daniel Valenzuela, City of San Angelo
Scott McWilliams, Upper Colorado River Authority
Brad Dannheim, City of Paint Rock
Todd Schwertner, Mainstem Concho River
James Furr, Spring Creek

TCEQ Staff

Kim Nygren
Kathy Alexander
Molly Mohler
Angela Sander
Larry Butler
Thomas Ammons

The committee reviewed the July 17, 2024, meeting minutes. Tom Thompson made a motion for approval of the minutes. Tommy Hiebert seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Angela Sander discussed that all CRWAC members were reappointed and received their reappointment letters with terms expiring in August 2027.

Molly Mohler discussed the recommended revisions to the bylaws, including consistency across all watermaster programs, clarification that the CRWAC meetings are not subject to open meetings requirements, whose responsibility it will be to record and prepare meeting minutes as well as some administrative changes. Watermaster staff will still post meeting agendas in advance of the meeting. Also discussed, was last year's request to staggered terms which was added to the bylaws for CRWAC members. City of San Angelo CRWAC members will have terms expiring in odd years and the remaining CRWAC members will have terms expiring in even years. David Kerce had a question regarding open meetings. Ms. Mohler explained the language was not clearly defined in bylaws and we are not subject to the Open Meetings Act. Tom Thompson asked if CRWAC could have an emergency meeting if needed. Ms. Mohler explained the bylaws require 72-hour advanced notice. Jack Pool called a motion to accept the changes to the bylaws, motion was seconded by Stuart Seidel, and motion passed unanimously.

Steven Hoelscher discussed elections of officers for the new term. A nomination was made for the re-election of Steven Hoelscher as Co-Chair. A nomination was made for Tom Thompson for the additional Co-Chair position. A nomination was made for the re-election of Stuart Seidel as Secretary. CRWAC members voted, and the motions passed unanimously.

A review of FY26 proposed budget was conducted by Kim Nygren and Angela Sander. Ms. Nygren explained that the Watermaster programs maintain a six-month operational balance for the program. The fiscal year starts in September with invoices mailed in October and majority of funding is received in January. The current fund balance is \$177,674.64 as of September 1, 2024. We are projecting that the balance will be \$165,919.15 as of September 1, 2025. The six-month target is \$129,858.66 so we are over the six-month operational budget. Excess money in the fund balance is used to purchase a new vehicle when needed. Currently we do not need a new vehicle but when we do, collecting money over a period of years allows us to minimize major increases to the operating budget. Our collection rate is about 100% so we only charge the cost for what we need.

Mrs. Nygren explained salary increases. Salaries increase as folks accrue time with us (longevity) and set aside some money for salary enhancements during the year. We are expecting an approximate \$7000 increase partly due to hiring a more senior Watermaster Specialist to fill our vacancy. Next section of budget includes Fringe, Insurance/Retirement, SORM, and SWCAP fees totaling an approximate \$3,500 increase. The reasons for the increase are due to these fees being based on salaries and we see fluctuations in the cost of fringe in which the state charges the agency. Another major increase is under the operational budget pertaining to rent. We asked the agency to audit rent costs and describe their methodology for calculating rent costs. Ms. Nygren explained that the agency looks at the total number of agency employees in the building and what percentage of employees there are in the Watermaster program. The TCEQ San Angelo Office lease is \$114,494 per year. There are 18 staff, of which 2 are Concho Watermaster staff; therefore, our rent cost is \$12,722. Assessment does not include the TCEQ San Antonio Office lease associated with Angela Sander as South Texas and Concho Watermaster which is being covered under the South Texas Watermaster assessment.

Angela Sander proceeded to explain the rest of the operational budget. Professional/Temp Services is being allocated for our Watermaster accounting database to fund our contractor. Her contract ends in FY26 so although there is no increase this year, we more than likely will see an increase next fiscal year. The contractor is shared amongst all four Watermaster programs and the assessment is based on the number of water right accounts for each program. The Concho Watermaster program has the fewest accounts, so the bulk of the contract is paid by the other three Watermaster programs. There is a \$241 increase for Travel In-State due to hotel rates and meal reimbursement rates increasing for the agency. Training increased by \$350 due to hiring a new Watermaster Specialist and offering training to him or the Assistant Watermaster. Postage increased by \$650 for FY26. In FY25 we only assessed \$300 because it was a biennium year and we rolled over unused funds from FY24 which allowed us to pre-pay for postage in FY25 resulting in a lower assessment cost. This year we are assessing \$950 for postage. Historically we have kept the postage assessment at \$650, but USPS rates have increased every year causing us to increase our assessment. Phone/Utilities are increasing by \$200 due to AT&T rate increases which covers agency issued cell phones and iPads. There is an increase in Consumables by \$300 for

FY26. In FY25 we only assessed \$100 because it was a biennium year and we rolled over unused funds from FY24 which allowed us to use those funds in FY25 resulting in a lower assessment cost. Therefore, we are going back to the usual \$400 assessment for consumables in FY26. The rest of the operational budget is not increasing in FY26. Other Operating Expenses include fire extinguisher inspections and business cards. Fuel is for two state agency trucks. Rent-Machine & Other includes cost of sharing the rental cost for the photocopier and postage machine. Facilities, Furniture, & Equipment includes vehicle maintenance, furniture, and equipment.

Molly Mohler proceeded by stating that the overall FY26 operating budget is \$273,746.48 and the municipal assessment rate is \$0.9771 per acre-foot. Ms. Mohler explained the percentage breakdown in the FY26 assessment. Salaries are 63.3% of the overall budget. Fringe, Insurance/Retirement, SORM, and SWCAP are 18.58% of the overall budget. Operating expenses are 18.13% of the overall budget.

Co-Chair Steven Hoelscher asked the members if there was any more discussion on the budget. Tom Thompson made a motion to approve the budget. Jack Pool seconded, none opposed so the FY26 budget passed unanimously.

Angela Sander and Larry Butler provided the Watermaster Program report and updates. Angela Sander discussed diversion requests, timely submittals, and water penalties. She went into detail on 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §304.15 which outlines submissions of declarations of intent to divert prior to diverting water and 30 TAC §304.16 which lays out the water penalties for watermaster programs.

Other:

Molly Mohler stated this year's meeting minutes will be drafted and sent out via email to CRWAC members for approval by electronic vote rather than waiting until next year's in-person meeting.


Future Meetings:

The next regular meeting of the committee will be in July 2026.

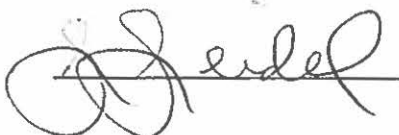
Adjourn:

Tom Thompson made a motion to adjourn, and the motion was seconded by Shane Kelton. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 15:09.

THESE MINUTES WERE SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL TO THE COMMITTEE FOR REVIEW. MOTION RECEIVED BY JACK POOL, SECONDED BY TOMMY HIEBERT, AND FINAL APPROVAL OBTAINED BY MAJORITY VOTE ON THIS, THE 30TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2025.

 , Co-Chair

 , Co-Chair

 , Secretary