NEW MEXICO WATER DIALOGUE---Minutes of the Meeting, September 12, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 by Vice President Aaron Chavez. Other board members present were Eileen Dodds, Conci Bokum, Sharon Hausam, John Brown, Bob Wessely, Wade Holdeman, Patrick McCarthy, and Simeon Herskovits. Joining by phone were Dael Goodman, Alex Puglisi, Jeffrey Samson, John Leeper, and Don Diego Gonzales.

There were no announcements.

Approval of the Agenda: Additions include a discussion of credit card fees under item 6-b, public announcement of the annual meeting under 6-d, and the newsletter and board information under 7-a. The agenda was approved as amended.

Approval of the Minutes of the August meeting: Sharon requested that the August minutes include the following clarification: Under “Administrative Tasks”, that she has not received the revised website final format for her review and comment, therefore she has not been able to provide input.

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission presentation: We were joined by the new ISC Director, Rolf Schmidt-Peterson, and Lucia Sanchez, ISC Water Planning Program Manager, for a discussion on a follow-up to statewide water planning. He opened with a brief history of water planning in New Mexico, including such things as the failure of regional water planning to become a funding priority for the legislature and the lack of follow-up on projects after plans were completed. He said he is currently involved with outreach to the media, the legislature, and to the public in general thru the Governor’s Water Policy Statement initiative. He admitted that he is understaffed, and that his office’s budget has been flat for the last 8 years. He hopes to change both of those situations by mid-2020.

He is working to develop a 50-year water plan, as directed by the Governor, that involves risk-reward trajectories including climate change and drought. He acknowledged there is a gap analysis with hydrology, and there are deficits in the capabilities of people to do projects on the ground; we are losing educated resources to other states.

He will be developing a “vision-piece” first, then future goals, in an effort to complete a 50-year plan by the end of the Governor’s first term. He plans to work with the regions to review what they see now and what they want for their future, but he does not want it to become a list of capital projects. He will also work on water planning and resource management for laymen in an effort to involve local communities. After documents are in place, he will then approach the legislature for funding in segments over the next several years.

He acknowledged the problem of “Santa Fe management” approach, and hopes to get local governmental entities more involved from the bottom up. He acknowledged however, that the Common Technical Platform is now part of the Office of the State Engineer’s water rights documents, and as such, is legal and binding on their decision process.

Lucia addressed the Regional Water Plans, saying there will be a process to update them, and add to or subtract from them as plans change. She said they “got the message” that better data is needed, as well as better access to data resources and inventories of resources available for use. She stressed that we all need to advocate for legislative funding, and there is a possibility of some federal funding as well. She said she wants to have meetings around the state to meet with stakeholders.

At this point, the WD told Mr. Schmidt-Peterson about our past success with getting statewide participation at the Sevilleta meetings in 2010 and 2015. Further discussion set forth the idea of holding a similar meeting with the ISC and the WD hosting, possibly in May, 2020, after the legislative funding process is completed, to determine where we might go from here, and who in each region may be able to start an implementation process for the existing plans.

Further discussions addressed the AWSA Gila/San Francisco project, which should have a draft environmental impact statement by December 2019. Rolf said there will be a technical meeting of the NMISC in Socorro on October 25th, with a field trip to the project sites in November. The public is invited, subject to space availability.

26th Annual Statewide Dialogue Meeting, January 9, 2020: Patrick has supplied a detailed outline of suggested topics and speakers around the theme of “Resilience”. It was discussed that we need to represent the diversity of the state in our choice of speakers and topics, and include the ecological, social, and cultural standpoints in the presentations.

A PDF of Patrick’s preliminary outline is included with these minutes, and he suggested keeping his numbers 2 and 3. Added to his outline under item 2 were the Data Management Project and the Santa Fe Water Reuse Strategy. We also discussed inviting the ISC to fold their 50-year plan into the presentations.

There were two action items: 1) Patrick and Conci will work on the format and suggest speakers for review and discussion at the next WD board meeting.. 2) Conci and Eileen will draft a preliminary notice and title of the meeting for public distribution.

Further suggestions for panels and discussion included “what has already been done”, “what needs to be done”, a keynote address on “what resilience means”, the Data Management Act, the Governor’s Water Task Force, and what the ISC is doing. Decisions will be made at the October meeting.

Administrative Tasks:

1. Website Update: Jeffrey had a conversation with Rose Hessmiller last Friday as to what we want on our website. When we’ve decided, she said she’s willing to train some of us to do the upkeep of the site with postings to the main tabs. She stressed that any major changes are out of her scope. Rose has Sharon’s diagram and outline and said she can do most of those things, including adding a broad catch-all tab called “Board Material” for things not included elsewhere. Dael agreed to help also. Jeffrey will set up a meeting with Rose, Sharon, Dael, and himself to finalize the design.
2. Board Information: It was suggested that the final minutes of board meetings be distributed to the entire board after edits are made by those attending the meetings. It was agreed that the secretary will supply the draft minutes to those present within 72 hours of the meeting. It was further agreed that those in attendance have 72 hours in which to make corrections. Failure to respond will constitute acceptance of the minutes. Minutes will then be posted on the website and sent to all members of the board via e-mail.
3. McCune Grant Request: Conci is doing the submission paperwork for the McCune grant. It is due by September 13th. She will write a similar letter to the Healy Foundation as well.

Our next meeting will be October 10th at 10:00 a.m. at the Wood offices.

There being no further business to come before the board, it was moved and seconded to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.