NEW MEXICO WATER DIALOGUE---Minutes of the Meeting, July 13, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 by President Jason John. Other Board members present: Aaron Chavez, Eileen Dodds, John Brown, Sharon Hausam, Stacy Timmons, Paul Tashjian, Jeffery Samson, Don Diego Gonzales, and Michael Benson. Joining by phone: Alex Puglisi, Simeon Herskovits, Gary Esslinger, Dael Goodman, and John Jones.

Visitors: Elaine Hebard, Lucia Sanchez (ISC), and Kate Ziegler (WD Board member-designate).

Announcements: Bob Wessely is having medical problems with a bacterial infection in his arm and is undergoing treatment. He will be recovering for an extended period.

The American Groundwater Trust conference was held yesterday in Albuquerque. The stated goal of the conference was to provide an informational exchange about groundwater issues. Stacy and Eileen attended, with Stacy presenting Tech’s Groundwater Mapping Program to the attendees. There were 64 registered attendees, most of which were associated with hydrological or geological firms, or with law firms specializing in those fields. Presentations were very technical in nature, but were well-received.

Approval of the Agenda: Items 3 and 4 under Ongoing Business were reversed to accommodate the speakers’ time schedules. It was moved and seconded to approve the Agenda as changed. Motion carried.

ONGOING BUSINESS

1. Approval of the Minutes of the May 18, 2017 Meeting: It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.
2. Approval of the Financial Statements: Financials through May 31, 2017 were presented. There was no discussion. It was moved and seconded to approve the financials. Motion carried.
3. Presentations:
4. State Water Plan Charter: Lucia Sanchez, Water Planning Program Manager from the ISC, presented the 2018 NM State Water Plan Charter to the Board. A copy is included with these minutes. This Charter is intended to provide a framework for state water planning, and is expected to provide a balance for science, policy, and law, and to improve communication among the participants. The intent of the Charter is to act as a tool in writing new laws, but will not attempt to change existing laws. The ISC, in conjunction with New Mexico First, is planning a 2-day Town Hall meeting in December to review the State Water Plan, and will include a discussion on the data deficiencies we dealt with in rewriting the Regional Plans. Other topics of discussion will be comparative analyses from seven surrounding states as to their dealings with supply-demand deficits, and analysis of the RWP regional boundaries for possible realignments.
5. Agustin Plains: Joint presentation by Stacy and Eileen discussed the history and the geology-hydrology of the Agustin Plains. The history of the Augustine Plains Ranch, LLC’s drilling application is included with these minutes. Eileen explained this part of the presentation, including the fact that a successful community-based organization continues to drive the protest.

Stacy then presented an overview of the San Agustin Plains hydro-geology study done by NM Tech. It is included with these minutes.

Findings include: 1) water in the pumping area is well over 5000 years old, thus showing no appreciable modern recharge to the aquifer, 2) there is not enough data to show what this massive

amount of pumping will do to the Plains, 3) there is no idea how this pumping will affect the quality of groundwater, and 4) there isn’t really enough information currently available to show that a large water transfer like this should even go forward.

Tech is continuing to monitor wells on the Plains, and Stacy is requesting that more residents allow Tech to monitor additional wells, particularly on the western side of the Plains.

1. Update on Board Membership: Kate Ziegler from the Northeast Region is with us today and has expressed interest in joining the Board. It was moved and seconded to have Kate join the WD Board. Motion carried.

Eileen reported not being able to find anyone from the Southwest Region. Contacts in Silver City have been unsuccessful in their search. Elaine suggested contacting Kara Nader in Deming, and she will send contact information to Eileen.

Michael will speak with John Leeper as to his interest in joining the Board.

1. Annual Meeting: Michael reported that the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center has requested $1.00 more per plate of food, and a $500.00 deposit. It was moved and seconded to authorize Jason to sign the contract for the new amount and the deposit. Motion carried.

The theme for the meeting is undecided, but suggestions include topics related to water rights. After lengthy discussion, the topic was tabled until the August meeting when we can meet with Lucy Moore to define the annual meeting. The next meeting is tentatively set for August 10th, depending on Lucy’s availability.

1. State/Regional Water Plans—HM 1 Taskforce: Elaine was asked by John to give the report in the absence of Bob Wessely. The appointment of a new interim ISC Director has pushed back the schedule. Deborah Dixon has left the ISC, and John Longworth has been appointed interim director.

HM1 calls for a volunteer Task Force to be convened to develop a proposal to improve the state’s water planning process. Recommendations by the Task Force will be presented to the interim legislative committee next year, for potential legislation to be drafted no earlier than for the 2019 legislative session.

Resulting from a Dialogue-sponsored retreat of water planners, a group, including Board members, have written six issue papers which are posted on the Dialogue website, along with other material developed in preparation for the convocation of the Task Force. Elaine mentioned the invitation letter to be sent within the week to an e-mail list of 2100 people statewide, asking recipients to join in this effort. A copy of the letter is included with these minutes. Go to <http://nmwaterdialogue.org/new-mexico-water-dialogue/library/water-governance> for more information.

1. Newsletter: Tabled until the August meeting.
2. Updates from Board Members: None

The next meeting will be August 10th, subject to Lucy Moore’s availability. Location TBA.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.