

NORTHWEST KANSAS GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT 4
February 21, 2024

1. OPEN MEETING, ATTENDANCE AND AGENDA

The February 21, 2024 board meeting was opened at the Colby Event Center, Colby, Kansas by President, Brett Oelke.

Board members present for some or all the meeting were:

Jeff Deeds, Nate Emig, Karen Flanagin, Lynn Goossen, Dylan Loyd, Shane Mann, Ted Nighswonger, Brett Oelke, Brent Rogers, and Marsha Shilling.

Board members absent: Jerry Binning.

Others present for some or all of the meeting were: Eryn Freeman, Shannon Kenyon, Jody McCain, Colter Stoll – GMD 4 staff; and Jake Kling – GMD 4 attorney; Kelly Stewart – DWR; Keadron Pearson – KWO; and Darran Rudnick – K-State.

Changes to the agenda were noted:

Add 8. d. **Audit**

2. CONSENT AGENDA

Shane Mann moved that the consent agenda be accepted as amended. The motion was seconded by Dylan Loyd and passed unanimously by voice vote (no “nay” votes.)

Lynn Goossen moved the minutes of the January 10, 2024 board meeting be accepted as presented. The motion was seconded by Karen Flanagin and passed unanimously by voice vote (no “nay” votes).

Brent Rogers moved that the financial reports and expenditures for the month of January be accepted as presented. The motion was seconded by Marsha Schilling and passed unanimously by voice vote (no “nay” votes).

3. OPEN FORUM

Several board members traveled to Midwest Feeders in Ingalls, Kansas. They are interested in a LEMA, and wanted information on how SD-6 came to be.

4. AGENCY REPORTS

Kelly Stewart reported that Stockton field office started annual measurements in December, but were deterred by weather in January. They finished up this month, and

are getting back out to normal field work. He reported that Brownie Wilson has sent out preliminary water table data.

Kelly wanted to remind everyone that Water Use Reports are due March 1st. He noted that approximately 60% of reports have been filed on-line so far.

Kelly has been in touch with Chris Beightel regarding progress on WRIS mobile. He hopes to be able to test it out in May.

Kelly noted that anti-reverse gears are a provision in the MYFA application, on the Attachment A; He noted that if you have had a penalty (overpump), you may also be subject to installing anti-reverse gears.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks has started the draw down process on Sheridan Lake for eventual dredging.

Keadron Pearson reported that the Ogallala Summit will be taking place March 18th & 19th in Liberal, Kansas. This is the third time for this summit that involves diverse participants and partners from across the 8-state Ogallala Aquifer region and beyond.

The next KWA meeting is scheduled for April 17th in Garden City, Kansas. The time has not been set, so be sure to check the KWO website.

The third annual KS/CO Water Quality Summit meeting is scheduled for April 18th & 19th in Deerfield and Garden City.

The next WISE event is scheduled for May 29th, which will focus on the GMD 1 Footprint, and include a bus tour via Highway 96 from Scott City, Kansas to Tribune, Kansas.

Water has been the major topic of the legislature this year, and the Kansas Water Office has links to on their website to get informed on the status and testimony for all bills, as well as House/Senate Committee information, and the link to watch the 2024 Legislative Session live.

In her address to the KWA last month, Governor Kelly tasked them with devising policy on Kansas water issues.

Darrin Rudnick with K-State was in attendance to introduce himself to the board, and learn more about GMD 4. Darrin was a key figure in creating the University of Nebraska TAPS (Testing Ag Performance Solutions) program. One of his assignments for K-State is to implement the program in western Kansas.

5. MANAGERS REPORT

a. January/February Updates

January 19th was a conference call with the Division of Conservation on the RCPP grant. Shannon is hopeful that the irrigation specialist positions will be tailored to our needs and not what NRCS thinks we need. She was hoping to have more information on the grant by this time.

On January 19th Shannon also had a call with Jim Butler of KGS on the AEM Mapping that looks to occur the last two weeks of June. We are finalizing a map depicting the mapping areas, which she distributed. We will also be coordinating closely with KGS on public outreach to occur closer to May.

Shannon went to Topeka on January 23rd to present our Annual Legislative Report to the House Committee on Water (HWC). It was very well received. While she was there, she participated in the RAC legislative visits and worked with Representative Titus on language for HB 2634 that was submitted to the HWC on January 30th. HB 2634 is the bill that will allow for the LEMAs to be actual five-year accounts and allow the certified water quantity to be over pumped.

January 24th was the KWA meeting. Governor Kelly came and tasked the KWA with devising policy on Kansas water issues. The KWA is planning to hire a consultant and have more meetings about the Ogallala in the coming months. There was an Ogallala Committee meeting following the KWA meeting where several statements from RACs were addressed.

On January 31st, Lynn Goossen and Shannon were invited to attend a Crop Insurance/Water Management Summit in Manhattan. There were many influential people in the room to discuss the problems with crop insurance. Collin Olsen with RMA was there to listen and participate in our discussions. There were very good conversations about communication and current issues.

On February 2nd, the HWC had a hearing on HB 2459 that Shannon submitted testimony on in opposition. HB 2459 would have prohibited a change in point of diversion if safe yield could not be met. Most of our district is over-appropriated so a change in point of diversion in much of our district would have been prevented. There were no proponents of the bill as expected and it didn't make it out of committee.

On February 5th, Colter, Lynn, Shane, and Shannon all ventured to Topeka for the annual GMD Legislative retreat. Shannon went with Lynn and Shane to the HWC as they were holding the hearing on HB 2634 which is the bill GMD 1 & GMD 4 submitted on the LEMAs. Shane and Shannon both testified orally. Proponents of the bill included GMD 4, GMD 1, Kansas Livestock Association, Kansas Corn, and Kansas Farm Bureau. Neutral testimony from DWR. They worked the bill on February 8th and it left the committee unanimous. As of now, it sits on the floor of the House.

The afternoon of February 5th was the GMD Roundtable discussion followed by the legislative reception. Same questions we've had every year in the past about the LEMA during the roundtable and the legislative reception was very well attended. .

The morning of February 6th was the KGMDA meeting. Great discussion was had on the by-laws and needing steel tapes for well measurements. An agency roundtable concluded the meeting.

Also on February 6th there was a meeting on revamping the Kansas Water Congress that Colter attended. He reported that the Kansas Water Congress wasn't making much traction to reform.

February 14th was the Thomas County Conservation Annual Meeting that Shannon attended.

Shannon made her third trek to Topeka on February 19th, in order to testify before the HWC against HB 2695. The bill would allow a majority of eligible voters in a GMD or an area for a proposed exclusion or inclusion of a district to petition the Chief Engineer to extend or reduce the territory in a GMD.

This year, Graham County did not get the assessments on the tax rolls. They ended up cutting a check for the assessments amount. As of the meeting, we had not received any phone calls regarding a special assessment notice from producers in the area, so we do not know how they plan to take care of it on their end.

Brownie Wilson had sent preliminary water level data this morning. Shannon distributed handouts showing this preliminary data.

b. Future Opportunities

February 28th is the DOC Local Working Group at the GMD 4 office. Shannon plans to attend if available.

When HB 2634 makes it out of the House, Shannon will be going back to Topeka to testify in support of it in front of the Senate.

There is an Ogallala Summit in Liberal March 18th and 19th. Shannon will be attending with Colter and Lynn.

6. FIELD REPORTS

Colter has checked 63 wells, and has finished the 5-5-11 yearly checks. Otherwise, Colter has been in the office with producers entering Water Use Reports, and has

worked on changes in place of use. He noted the Dodge went back in for work, due to a check engine light, and a problem with fueling.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. GMD 4 LEMA
Nothing to report.
- b. SD-6
Nothing to report.
- c. Other LEMA Developments
Nothing to report.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Management Program
As recommended by the House Water Committee Post Legislative Audit, a formal review of the Management Program document needs to be done. Shannon and Jody have started the process of the dates, staff personnel/board updates that need changed yearly. It is time to update the LEMA and map updates along with the information regarding the 2023- 2027 LEMAs information.
- b. Annual Meeting
Shannon went over the duties of the board members for the annual meeting: Brett – Lead the Meeting, Dylan - Election, Jeff – Minutes, and Lynn – Financial Report

The meeting was recessed at 11:32 a.m. until after the Annual Meeting.

The meeting resumed at 2:35 p.m.

- c. Election of Officers

Ted Nighswonger moved for a unanimous ballot to keep the officers the same: Brett Oelke – President, Nate Emig – Vice President, Lynn Goossen – Treasurer, and Jeff Deeds – Secretary. The motion was seconded by Lynn Goossen and passed unanimously by voice vote (no “nay” votes).

- d. Audit
Jody presented the 2023 Audit to the board. Copies are available at the GMD 4 office.

Lynn Goossen moved to approve the 2023 Audit as presented. The motion was seconded by Ted Nighswonger and passed unanimously by voice vote (no abstentions or “nay” votes).

9. OPEN SESSION – Public Questions/Comments:

It was noted that Governor Kelly has issued a declaration of March 12, 2024 as Kansas Water Day.

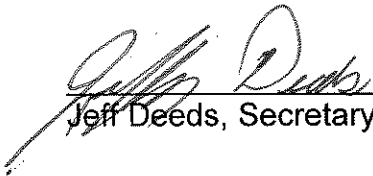
10. SCHEDULING FUTURE MEETINGS:

The next board meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2024 at 9 a.m. C.D.T. at the GMD 4 office.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business and no objections the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:



Jeff Deeds, Secretary