

## MINUTES

### CAPITAL AREA GROUND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

*September 16, 2014*

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The Capital Area Ground Water Conservation Commission met at 9:30 a.m. on September 16, 2014 in the U.S. Geological Survey conference room at 3535 S. Sherwood Forest Blvd., Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Dennis McGehee.

The following members were present: Ronnie Albritton, Trey Argrave, Dale Aucoin, Brian Chustz, Russell Hicks, Barry Huggins, John Jennings, Amelia Kent, Dennis McGehee, Julius Metz, Matthew Reonas, and Dan Tomaszewski.

Others attending the meeting were: Anthony Duplechin and Shawn Scallan, Capital Area Ground Water Conservation District; John Lovelace, U.S. Geological Survey; Roy Waggenspack, Owen & White; Joey Hebert, Georgia-Pacific; Mark Walton, former Commissioner; Don Dial, former CAGWCD Director, Megan Terrell, La. Attorney General's Office; Bruce Duhe, Layne Christensen; Henry Graham, Louisiana Chemical Association; and Dr. Frank Tsai, LSU.

Mr. Reonas made a motion that the minutes of the June 17, 2014 meeting be approved. Mr. Aucoin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### **I. Report from the Administrative Committee**

At the request of the Chairman, Dennis McGehee, Ms. Amelia Kent reported on the meeting that was held September 16, 2014 at 8:30 a.m. Following is a summary of items discussed at the meeting and further discussion and action at the regular Commission meeting at 9:30 a.m.

1. Copies of the Financial Conditions as of August 31, 2014 were distributed for review and comment.

2. Ms. Kent reported that the Commission currently has a contract with Mr. Robert Schmidt, Adams & Reese, to establish a trust fund for postemployment health benefits. The contract will expire on January 31, 2015. Mr. Schmidt discussed with the Administrative Committee an overview of the trust fund. He talked about the structure of the fund and how it affects the Commission. He stated once the trust is established any accounting fees would be billable to the trust. Mr. Schmidt stated that since the Commission has fewer than two employees that the fund would not be impacted by the Affordable Care Act. Mr. Schmidt stated that a trustee would need to be selected for the trust fund along with a plan administrator. Mr. Schmidt will email the Commission a draft of the trust fund one week prior to the December 2014 meeting to the Administrative Committee for review.

3. Ms. Kent reported that the Commission received a letter from Baton Rouge Water Company requesting that water well pumpage fees be waived for their scavenger well. It was requested at the Commission's June 2014 meeting that a letter be sent to the Louisiana Attorney General's office requesting their advice on this matter. Ms. Megan Terrell, La. Attorney General's Office, replied that since the groundwater being produced from the scavenger well

does not meet the conditions necessary to be put to beneficial use at this time, that the Commission may choose to waive the pumping charges. Mr. Jennings stated that the Commission needs to be aware that any potential future use of scavenger wells are individual cases so the waiver is specific only to this well and should any usage of the water to this well change then the Commission would need to reevaluate the waiver. The Commission requested that Baton Rouge Water Company provide the Commission with quarterly pumpage reports and quality of the water for the well. Mr. Reonas asked what would be the total estimated annual fees from this well. Mr. Duplechin stated that it would be \$900-\$1,000 per year. Mr. Reonas asked Megan Terrell if granting the waiver was within the Commission's statutory authority. Ms. Terrell stated that yes, there is a section of the Commission's statute that authorizes the Commission basically to undertake any steps necessary to prevent the intrusion of saltwater. She stated that there is no explicit authority to grant a waiver, but that particular provision is broad enough to allow granting the waiver. Ms. Terrell stated that the other question here is to determine whether the ground water is for beneficial use. She stated that the definition of beneficial use/purpose in the statute contemplates use of water after it has been produced. She stated that the water produced from the scavenger well is being discharged into the Mississippi River because of the chloride content; therefore, this is not for beneficial use. Ms. Terrell recommended that the water quality be reviewed periodically so that if the water becomes useful then the Commission may want to consider lifting the waiver. Mr. Reonas asked if Ms. Terrell's letter to the Commission is on file. Mr. Duplechin stated that yes the letter was on file and that he would email the letter to the Commissioners. Mr. McGehee stated that if Baton Rouge Water Company ever finds a use for the water then they would approach the Commission and the waiver could be lifted. Mr. Jennings made a motion to approve the exemption from pumpage fees for well #033-1424. Mr. Huggins seconded this motion and it passed unanimously.

5. Ms. Kent reported on the progress of the Commission's website. The proposed website was available to view by all Commissioners. Some comments were received on the website. The Administrative Committee made recommendations, and the staff will submit those to Dovetail Studio. The website will hopefully be up and running by the December meeting.

### **III. Report from the Technical Committee**

At the request of Mr. McGehee, the report of the Technical Committee was made by Director, Anthony Duplechin, and minutes of the meetings were distributed (attached). Following is a summary of topics discussed at meetings on September 9, 2014 further discussion and action at the regular Commission meeting on September 16, 2014.

1. Mark Walton gave a report on the work the ad-hoc group had done since the last Technical Committee meeting. The group has met three times and is investigating numerous scenarios for the placement of a scavenger well in the "2,000-ft" sand. Several potential locations have been identified, but limited information on sand thickness at the sites makes it hard to commit to any one site. It is hoped that Dr. Tsai's proposed project will help solve this dilemma.

2. Mr. Walton then presented a recap of pumping rates from the “2,000-foot” and “1,500-foot” sands to monitor compliance with agreed on reductions and/or commitments, stating that reported pumpage was within limits.

3. Dr. Frank Tsai gave an overview of a workshop he is proposing titled: “Managing Baton Rouge Groundwater”. The symposium would be held in conjunction with the December Technical Committee meeting, and would include modules on:

- a. Complexity of the Baton Rouge Aquifer System: Knowing Our Aquifers
- b. Saltwater Intrusion Problems and Modeling of the "1,200-foot" sand, the "1,500-foot" sand, the "1,700-foot" sand and the "2,000-foot" sand
- c. Groundwater Planning and Management: Extraction, Injection, and Reduction
- d. Conclusion: Challenges

Director Duplechin said he feels that this would be a very worthwhile endeavor. As there are several new members of the Commission either on-board or coming on-board, and that there are still misconceptions about groundwater in the Capital area. He hopes that, with enough advance publicity, there will be a good turnout, not only by the Committee members, but also by the public. Mr. Aucoin requested that Dr. Tsai provide a detailed agenda for the workshop so that this could be passed along to the public as soon as possible. Dr. Tsai stated that he will get that to the Director soon. Mr. Tomaszewski inquired about the length of each presentation. Dr. Tsai reported that he has suggested that the talks be approximately 30 minutes each. Mr. Duplechin stated that he will pursue getting a bigger venue to host the workshop. Mr. Reonas stated that the Louisiana DNR has two rooms, Griffon and LaBelle, that may be available for the workshop. Mr. Reonas offered to check on this.

4. Commissioner McGehee then gave a brief intro of the proposed Board of Regents project that Dr. Tsai would like the Commission to consider providing financial assistance. The proposal is entitled “Conjunctive Management of the Baton Rouge Aquifer System for Saltwater Intrusion Mitigation.” The project goal is to develop a conjunctive management framework that takes advantage of the Baton Rouge multi-aquifer system to mitigate saltwater intrusion. The conjunctive management framework will utilize several hydraulic control techniques to mitigate saltwater encroachment.

The project will utilize optimization techniques and newest LSU high performance computing facilities. The conjunctive management framework will serve as a scientific tool to assist policy makers to solve the urgent saltwater encroachment issue in the Baton Rouge area. If successful, the research results would stabilize water companies as well as industries in East Baton Rouge Parish and neighboring parishes by reducing their saltwater intrusion threats, which in turn would sustain Capital Area economic development.

There was discussion as to the applicability of this project to the Commission's work, especially finding a suitable location for a scavenger well in the "2,000-foot" sand. Dr. Tsai felt that such information would be available as a result of work on the project. Dr. Tsai is asking for approximately \$20,000 a year for 3 years, either from the private sector or the Federal government. He said that the Board of Regents considers CAGWCC a private entity. Dr. Tsai reported that he has a deadline of October 31, 2014.

Ms. Kent reported that the Commission has the funds available for this project and that the Administrative Committee feels that this is a worthy endeavor. Mr. Huggins suggested that the Commission fund all or part of the project that industry does not provide. Mr. Aucoin stated that some of the industries have been approached with supporting some of the funding for the saltwater intrusion problem; however, there has been no approval for funding from the industries at this point. Mr. Aucoin requested that the Commission give industry a few more weeks to review Dr. Tsai's proposal to determine if they want to contribute financial assistance for it. Mr. McGehee stated that the Administrative Committee has agreed to fund all or part of the project and that the Commission should go ahead and make a resolution to that fact. He went on to say that if industry agrees to help with the funding later that can be put into the wording of the resolution. After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Jennings made a resolution to send a letter of support to Dr. Frank Tsai's proposal to the Louisiana Board of Regents and that the Commission will provide "gap" funding up to \$20,000 a year for three years, depending on securing additional funding sources from other entities. Ms. Kent seconded this motion and it passed unanimously.

5. The Director introduced new Commissioner, Russell Hicks representing West Feliciana Parish and East Baton Rouge, DPW nominee, Tom Stephens.

6. Mr. John Lovelace, USGS, gave a brief update on the Baton Rouge model. He reported that they continue to work on the model simulating flow of saltwater intrusion in the "1,200-foot" sand. Calibrations have been completed. A hypothetical pumping scenario was completed showing increased industrial pumping in the sand. Also, seven additional hypothetical pumping scenarios were done in the "2,000-foot" sand showing various combinations of increases & decreases in both industrial and public supply pumping and locations of scavenger wells. A report on the scenarios should be complete in the next few weeks. Mr. Lovelace also reported that hard copies of the report, "Simulation of Groundwater Flow in the "1,500-Foot" Sand and "2,000-Foot" Sand, with Scenarios to Mitigate Saltwater Migration in the "2,000-Foot" Sand of the Baton Rouge Area, Louisiana" were delivered.

### **III. Director's Report**

Mr. Duplechin reported that in July he attended the National Water Resources Association's western water seminar. He stated that the District staff along with the Chairman

have met with Dovetail Studio concerning the website updates. He also reported that he coordinated meetings of the ad hoc group.

Mr. Duplechin reported that he taped a segment for the radio show, Third Place. The segment dealt with the groundwater situation in Baton Rouge. Others involved in the show were Mr. Hays Town and Mr. Hays Owen.

#### **IV. Chairman's Report**

Mr. McGehee called upon Barry Huggins to report on the Nominating Committee for 2015 officers. The Committee recommended Mr. John Jennings for the office of Chairman; Mr. Dale Aucoin for the office of Vice-Chairman; and Ms. Amelia Kent for the office of Treasurer. There being no further nominees from the floor, Mr. Albritton made a motion to accept the nominees. Mr. Chustz seconded the nomination and it passed unanimously.

Mr. McGehee stated that Commissioner John Jennings made a presentation at the Louisiana Water Resources Commission on July 30<sup>th</sup>. He gave a report on the ground water models and management activities of the Baton Rouge aquifer. Mr. McGehee thanked Mr. Jennings for giving the presentation.

#### **V. Other Business**

Mr. Duplechin reported that nomination letters have been sent out for all Board members whose terms expire December 1, 2014. Those members include: Brian Chustz, Russell Hicks, Amelia Kent, Dennis McGehee and Rosemary Rummler.

#### **VI. Public Comment**

Mr. Hebert asked if there was any update on Baton Rouge Water Company's scavenger well. Mr. McGehee stated that they are running monthly chloride levels on the Lula Street well. He reported that chloride levels are starting to drop at the scavenger well site. The readings were 860 and are currently 810, with the upper sand below 100. These readings are being done three times a week. He also stated that at well #19, Lula Street, the chloride is down to 149. This well has had readings around 160 for years. He stated that the water company feels that they have just relocated the cone of depression and is seeing reaction from this. He stated that it is still too early to assume that they are seeing reduction in chlorides at the Lula well due to the scavenger well. Mr. McGehee reported that it will probably be some time next year before any conclusions can be made. Mr. Dial asked if the scavenger well was north or south of the production well. Mr. McGehee stated that the scavenger well is 16 feet north of the production well due to the expertise of Layne Christensen.

#### **VII. Next Meeting**

The Chairman reported that the next regular Commission meeting of the Capital Area Ground Water Conservation Commission will be scheduled on Tuesday, December 9, 2014 at

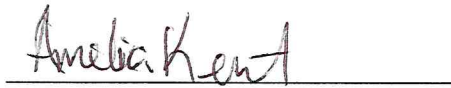
9:30 a.m. in the U.S. Geological Survey conference room. The next Technical Committee meeting will be Tuesday, December 2, 2014 at 1:30 p.m.

**VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Commission, Mr. Reonas made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Jennings seconded this motion and it passed unanimously.



Dennis McGehee, Chairman



Amelia Kent, Treasurer