

Technical Committee Meeting Minutes
Capital Area Groundwater Conservation Commission
September 21, 2023

I. Call to Order

Tom Seagraves – Capital Area Groundwater Conservation Commission (CAGCC) Technical Committee Chairman

II. Roll Call

Gary Beard – Capital Area Groundwater Conservation District (CAGCD) Executive Director
Present: Mr. Dawson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Means, Mr. Savoy, and Mr. Seagraves.
Absent: Mr. Engemann and Ms. Fields

III. Establishment of a Quorum

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman
Chairman Seagraves declared a quorum with 5 members present.

IV. Invocation

Gary Beard – CAGCD Executive Director
Mr. Beard gave the invocation.

V. Pledge of Allegiance

Gary Beard – CAGCD Executive Director
Mr. Beard lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

VI. Recognition of Guests

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman
Brett Furr – Taylor Porter, Pat Kerr – BRWW; Max Lindaman – USGS; Roy Waguespack – Owen and White; Scott Bergeron – interested party; Jonathan Leo – Commissioner; Anna Gilbert – Owen and White; Sarah Paine – Exxon; Wayne Waguespack – interested party; Kevin Gravois – PEC; Kristyn Rodriguez – Taylor Porter; Michael Lane – BRWW; Josh Koza – BRWW; Dennis McGehee – BRWW; Ryan Clark – Halff & Assoc.; Roland Jackson – Parish Water; and Dr. Frank Tsai – LSU

VII. Amendments to the Agenda

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman
No amendments to the agenda.

VIII. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting, July 18, 2023 (action required)

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman
Motion by Mr. Means and second by Mr. Dawson to approve the July 18, 2023 meeting minutes, as presented. Motion approved. No objections. Motion passed.

IX. Executive Director's Report

Gary Beard – CAGCD Executive Director
A. USGS Modeling Effects of New Wells on the Aquifer, Max Lindeman, USGS

1. Chairman Seagraves gives some background on the last meeting and why Mr. Beard asked USGS and LSU to present analysis of the wells and effects on the aquifer. Mr. Lindaman with USGS presented a slide presentation showing the drawdown as a result of the proposed wells to see the effect on saltwater intrusion occurring.
PC well in 2,000ft- removed from any intrusion problems- risk low.
PC well in 1,500 ft- drawdown higher than first but removed from intrusion area.
Zachary 2,800 ft- drawdown is less than 2.3ft, infrastructure upgrade would mean zero risk if the other goes offline.
WBR Gas and Utilities well 1,200ft- drawdown is high.
BRWC 2,400ft – intrusion problems, 400ft-no intrusion but high in chemicals not good for potable, 600ft – higher saltwater plume, 800ft- no simulation, 1,000ft-no monitoring wells in this area to simulate, however plume has moved in that direction as far can tell, good target for monitoring to model the plume, 1,200ft- drawdown near 5ft, 1,500ft-

Public comment

- A lengthy discussion took place from Board members, Baton Rouge Water Company representatives, USGS, LSU and the public.
- Pat Kerr BRWW asked Max, “are you modeling the well permits at their full capacity?” If so, this is not the way they would be operated, especially if they are replacement wells. Max said he can only simulate what’s listed in the well application, because it could be less or more and there could be offsets.
- Chairman Seagraves said at the technical committee meeting last month BRWW wasn’t brought up. Mr. Furr brought up that it may be a replacement but wasn’t able to commit to that. No information was given to the committee to determine limitations.
- Pat Kerr said there is nothing in the permit application or the rules of the Commission that talk about anticipated use, concerned about using that because as population grows, we will need to use more, hopefully less. We gave you the information you asked for. I am not talking about an increase in production other than in an acute situation such as the drought we are currently in.
- Jonathan Leo said can you clarify -you are saying the proposed new well at its max capacity would be replacing not necessarily one particular well in the same zone but rather replacing one or more other wells that are no longer in use. The cumulative result of withdrawal of pumping from this well along with others would be zero.
- Pat Kerr said stating that accurately, he cannot commit that there won’t be an increase in the future. Mr. Hollis convinced BRWW needs 15% capacity of wells they will not be using for instances like this drought. This well is one of those reserve wells. We are moving away from the fault, from the saltwater plume and this well is part of that. Mr. Kerr said he has written testimony and requested we enter this into the record. Mr. Beard replied he would have the testimony written into the record. Mr. Kerr said he would go to the shallower sands.
- Chairman Seagraves asked if treating the brackish water vs. transporting fresh water would be an option. He asked if BRWW could move north.

- Pat Kerr replied this method would be expensive but if they must do this they will.
- Rachael Lambert said Fire Chief Kimble is concerned about fire protection because their water comes from BRWW. She said the Chief- said it would also affect their insurance rating and the safety of the public.
- Scott Bergeron asked, “ how would the model change if a few of the wells near the plume were turned off?”
- Max Lindaman said predicting what pumpage would be in the future will be difficult, if we reduced pumping near the fault, drawdown would be less and grading could be presumably be less.
- Ken Dawson said the data from the Commission as to the best place to draw water is the best information to make a good decision. This is prudent on making decisions moving forward. The science must be placed in there. We need to look from a modeling standpoint where the best place is to put a replacement well in the future, therefore, all things are satisfied along with the needs of the public.
- Jonathan Leo said modeling can only be as good as the quality and quantity that the data invested is. One of the reasons this Commission voted for meters on all wells in the District is to know how much water is being taking from the aquifer to determine saltwater intrusion. We are required to get as much data as we can – for now and for the future.
- Pat Kerr said BRWW has learned a lot through the process in the last few years such as shortcomings in our data. We are investing in metering every single well with meters we believe will be accurate. Max was talking about modeling annual production. Mr. Kerr said he will renew his offer to the commission to give them the necessary data. We need this aquifer to be here in 2050. Biggest benefit from our new meters is managing the health of our wells in real time, can reduce our chlorine that we use to treat our water.
- LSU Modeling Effects of New Wells on the Aquifer, Frank Tsai, LSU
- Dr. Tsai presented his modeling explaining where the wells are and what the impacts there would be.
- If we use the provided future pumping rates, it will impact the behavior of the curves but not the difference of the two curves.
- Mixed well- drawdown of 24ft at the screen, 5ft near DSS fault, less than 1ft at 1000ft sands and less than 3ft at 1500ft sands, cone of depression span is 17 miles.
- Ventress- 96ft drawdown at site and 2,000ft sands, around 3ft near DSS fault, no impact to upper and lower aquifers, cone of depression 14 miles
- Lakeland- didn't have their model finished, they will give to us by the end of week.
- Zachary- need two screens at this location, both around 4ft drawdown, negligible impact to upper and lower-, and 1-mile cone of depression
- WBRNG is very close to the BR fault, screen one 24ft drawdown, screen two 15.7ft drawdown, decrease groundwater levels at EB781 (saltwater monitoring well) 4ft, create a 20ft drawdown at BR fault and 4ft at DDS fault, cone of depression 16 miles.
- BRWW is the third largest pumping rate in the region for 2400ft sands, leaky window 60- need monitoring well in area, 20ft drawdown at site, drawdown 5ft near BR fault,

12ft drawdown DSS fault, cone of depression 15 miles, create a 6ft drawdown at saltwater well EB794 and 2ft drawdown EB804B.

2. Chairman Seagraves said, “we used business as usual methodology, even without approval we are seeing continued decrease in water, continued increase in salts, what does this mean?”
3. Dr. Tsai said TWIG is predicting the best use of water in the next 15 years, the grade is really small in a 50-year span about 3 meters drop.
4. Chairman Seagraves – according to your model, we are still pulling out more and dropping the levels?
5. Dr. Tsai- yes, based on this scenario, there are others with nonrestricted use and with restricted use which changes the model.
6. Chairman Seagraves said this is concerning, no action still results in lower water levels for the aquifer.
7. Jesse Means asked if Istrouma was looking at three different levels, why didn’t we see this? (2400 ft, 1700 ft, 1500 ft. and 1200 feet) Ms. McNamara said the original application did not include this information, therefore, Dr. Tsai did not have this information for his report.
8. Karen Gautreaux asked if we can we provide Dr. Tsai new choices for Istrouma.
9. Dr. Tsai said yes, he will rerun the model, but it will take about 3 days He said he should have this done by next week.
10. Chairman Seagraves asked Roy Waguespack, “ Are there options around this well?”
11. Mr. Waguespack said he submitted to have a well adjacent to another one that’s already there, they already know the quality of the water, they can’t run them simultaneously because they are in the same sites. WBR is one well failure away from losing their water system.
12. Patrick Hobbins said this is the property WBR owns, and funds are available. These are the things pointing them to this location, plus drought has exposed holes in the system.
13. Mr. Waguespack said they have land 2,000 ft to the north of that land they could use as an alternative.
14. Jonathan Leo asked, “would you expect drawdown to be less if it was at the northern end of the property?”
15. Mr. Waguespack said yes, the drawdown would be less.
16. Dennis McGehee explained to the Committee why BRWW chose this site and said it would be a replacement for Lula St. well if it fails. Should the Commission restrict wells not for public water supply? It’s well been established that the aquifer is best used for public water.
17. Pat Kerr said BRWW is proposing a well between the two faults and would exceed those faults if there weren’t solid barriers in the model. Mr. Kerr asked, “If this permit is denied, do you envision there being no additional wells in the 2,400ft sand?”
 - Dr. Tsai said he could not make this decision. He said it is up to the Commission. However, if you pump between the two faults, you will see the drawdown significantly, that’s a fact.
18. Pat Kerr said if BRWW cannot drill in the area between the two faults, then the Commission needs to determine how to move the lesser need users out of that area. He said the bottom line is BRWW needs this water. He thinks the DSS area is a protective area for the BR fault and will look at that.

B. Well Drilling Moratorium (action required)

1. Chairman Seagraves said that all the science and data that have been put together helps us to do the most with what we have.
2. Jesse Means suggested a moratorium in that zone with exception of direct replacement and emergency situations.
3. Chairman Seagraves said that would work for him, but he thinks net flow is the most important.
4. Rachel Lambert said she thinks it would be a liability if the Commission were to restrict any public water providers' use or tell them how to operate their system. She said if we are intent of moratorium maybe something along the lines of nonpublic use. There must be a specific term and goal. She said until we can use the data, we are capturing from our water meters and pinpoint margin of error there is still a matter of uncertainty. There should be no moratorium on public supply wells. Moratorium only on industrial. Then when we can quantify and make a determination of how much can come out of what sands.
5. Chairman Seagraves said if we grant the permit because we don't have any model to restrict it and then we see in the future we have made it a lot worse, it will be too late.
6. Rachel Lambert said if they were going to use it then lessen it, maybe a quarter, run half that time, drawdowns would be exponentially less.
7. Chairman Seagraves said that was his point, "How does the commission determine that and receive the data to make that determination? What do we do to ensure in the meantime?"
8. Ken Dawson said now we have more data than we ever had. We are looking at something that is going to meet capacity, how can we verify that this is certain and then provide this permit to move forward? Moratorium, I have concerns about it. We have the authority to have a recommendation on best location for future wells.
9. Jonathan Leo said he is in favor of the moratorium on any well permit applications being submitted within the two fault zones because of the data provided by LSU and USGS, which says to me as a commissioner of the district that there is a serious saline intrusion water quality and public danger. I cannot in good conscious as my role as a commissioner approve any new application permits within these zones, for the indefinite future to be as short of time as possible for this commission to acquire data and work with its permitted wells in good faith so we can begin to make distinctions based on properties of use that we currently don't have the ability to do.
 - Ideas: indefinite in duration because dependent on additional data from USGS and LSU – meter verified rates and volumes of withdrawal from every well in every zone – minimum kind and quality data we need to make decisions
 - Reevaluate the length and scope of moratorium no later than one year from today's date based on receipt of data and ability to make determinations on it.
 - Conditions on elements of restrictions- permitted pumping by existing users based on data, public supply is highest and best use of this water and should be prioritized as such.
 - Input from Fire Chiefs in the state what kind of redundancy and capacity they need and what are their concerns and priorities.

10. Ron Savoy said this is a twofold avenue- business point of view and mission and goal of commission. Data presented telling us we have concerns out there regardless of the permit issue. He said the Commission is torn between the moratorium and what we need to increase our data and knowledge.
11. Rachel Lambert said it needs to be for a term and then could be extended if need be and restriction permits would have to get with most of the parishes and use by right is there.
12. Jonathan Leo said this is simply an articulation of conflicting usage and need for more data.
13. Karen Gautreaux said we are heavily engaged in groundwater resources act, in terms of public use - drinking water is number one, however, anyone that supplies public use must consider many various things. Our job is to make sure we have continuous public supply.
14. Jonathan Leo said, in response to “indefinite” he would be comfortable with it reading “one year, subject to reevaluation based on newly received data.”
15. Karen Gautreaux said the length of the moratorium is based on when we receive additional data that allows us to make these determinations – Can it be less than that if we get the data before then?
16. Jonathan Leo said he would hope the Commission receives the data and it allows us to evaluate public use. This is critical and which public uses we can consider restricting based on what we see from the data we are evaluating. There is no magic number, it’s a more holistic interpretation.
17. Dennis McGehee said there should be no moratorium on the table for replacement in kind.
18. Pat Kerr said starting now or in a year from now, is not going to affect the saltwater. It is incumbent on you to talk to all the Mayors, reps, senators, etc. He said if you put this on there, there will be someone that has a water quality issue and not be able to pull out of there. I ask for you to defer this moratorium before you educate the public.
19. Karen Gautreaux asked, “what about it says there is a replacement well?”
20. Pat Kerr said he would be happy to work with Dr. Tsai to make the parameters. If a well fails I can’t move enough water into that area, which is why we must put it back right there we can’t move it.
21. Substitute motion by Rachel Lambert to defer it to the next full committee meeting board meeting, if this doesn’t get a second amend Mr. Seagraves motion to include the definition of replacement wells that are north of that well they are replacing, making the effort to move away from the location of concern, would be accepted as replacement.
22. Motion by Mr. Seagraves and second by Mr. Means to amend Mr. Seagrave’s motion reflecting Ms. Lamberts comments to replace any in-kind or replacement well that is further north away from the plume than from the well its replacing. No objections. Motion passed. Means seconds.

Motion by Mr. Seagraves for the Technical Committee to recommend to the full board a moratorium on permitting any new wells between the Denham Springs/Scotlandville and Baton Rouge fault lines, now to be known as the salinity critical zone, until the Commission has all the data needed to make a more fully informed decision as to what restrictions need to be implemented and for how long.

- Motion amended by Mr. Seagraves to allow for replacement in kind or a replacement well that is further north away from the plume than from the well its replacing and the moratorium not to exceed one year where upon reevaluation will be made.
23. Roll call vote: Mr. Seagraves- yes, Mr. Dawson-yes, Ms. Lambert-no, Mr. Means-yes and Mr. Savoy – yes. 4-1 Motion passed.

C. New Well Permits

1. Water Works District 1 of Pointe Coupee

1.1. Mix Water Well No. 3 (**action required**)

- Motion by Ms. Lambert and second by Mr. Dawson to approve the Mix Well No. 3 permit application. Unanimous. Motion passed.

1.1. Ventress Well (**action required**)

- Motion by Ms. Lambert and second by Mr. Means to approve the well permit for the Ventress well. Unanimous. Motion passed.

1.1. Lakeland Well No. 2 (**action required**)

- There is no data for this vote. This will be brought up at the next meeting.

2. City of Zachary (**action required**)

- Motion by Ms. Lambert and second by Mr. Means to approve the City of Zachary well. Unanimous. Motion approved.

3. West Baton Rouge Natural Gas and Water (**action required**)

- Motion by Ms. Lambert to approve the WBR Natural Gas and Water well. No second. Motion dies.

4. Baton Rouge Water Works (**action required**)

- Motion by Ms. Lambert to approve BRWW well. No second. Motion dies.

5. Public comment: Kevin Gravois requested that we look at Lakeland well.

- Beard: this will be taken up at the next meeting.

MOTION by Mr. Seagraves and second by Mr. Dawson to defer WBR, BRWW and Lakeland well applications. No objection. Motion approved.

X. **Chairman’s Report**

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman

- None

XI. **Member Agenda Items**

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman

- None

XII. **Old Business**

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman

- Roy Waguespack asked, “can we get an update from CSRS regarding the monitoring well they got the contract for?”
- Mr. Beard said there will be testimony at the next technical committee meeting.

XIII. New Business

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman

- None

XIV. Commissioner Comments

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman

- None

XV. Announcements

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman

- None

XVI. Public Comment (Non-action items only)

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman

- None

XVII. Adjournment – (action required)

Tom Seagraves – CAGCC Technical Committee Chairman

Motion by Mr. Dawson and second by Mr. Means to adjourn the meeting. Unanimous. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.



Gary J. Beard, Executive Director