

## Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting

1:00 pm, Friday, January 13, 2017  
Northwest Kansas GMD #4, 1290 W. 4th, Colby, KS

**DRAFT**

### Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Sid Metcalf (Chair)	Oberlin, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2019	No
Brian Baalman	Menlo, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2017	No
Shannon Kenyon	Colby, KS	Groundwater Management	2019	Yes
Gary Fisher	Atwood, KS	Local Government	2017	Yes
Mike Frakes	Morland, KS	At Large Public 2	2017	No
Jered Johnson	Colby, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2017	No
Ken McCarty	Rexford, KS	Agriculture Industry	2019	No
Mike Schultz	Brewster, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2019	Yes
Justin Sloan	Colby, KS	Agriculture 2	2017	No
Tyson McGreer	Colby, KS	Public Water Supply 2	2017	Yes
Ian de Waal	Saint Francis, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2019	No

### Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Steven Walters	KDA/DWR
Ray Luhman	GMD No. 4
Richard Rockel	KWO

- Welcome and Introductions:** A quorum was not present, four of the eleven Committee members were present. The meeting began at 1:15 p.m. by members that were present.
- Review of January Meeting Minutes:** Notes from the January meetings were reviewed, no issues or modifications were noted as being needed. No motion could be made for approval of the minutes.
- Groundwater Management District No. 4 Annual Meeting and Water Talk Series:** Shannon Kenyon provided an update on the GMD No.4 Annual Meeting and Water Talk Series, that it went well and received a good response from folks. That if do in future years there may not be a monthly meeting held during the event as some people wanted to hear talks and were unable to. Was good attendance by the Precision Agriculture Program's students and the college setup the venue well. Was good attendance at the meetings, with district-wide Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA) discussions and several seats on the GMD No. 4 board voted on.
- Update on GMD No. 4 Local Enhanced Management Areas (LEMA):** The Committee received an update on the GMD No. 4 district-wide LEMA request that was submitted to the Chief Engineer of the Division of Water Resources on April 10, 2017. Shannon Kenyon and Ray Luhman, Manager GMD No. 4, provided an update on the proposed LEMA, that it was for irrigation only but was encouraging cities and other uses to take steps to conserve water. It was stated that there was a new LEMA map posted on the GMD No. 4 website, a copy of which is below.

Several members of the Committee provided statements of support and the need to take action to address the issues of the region. Ray Luhman added that the LEMA plan is not the resolution to all the issues of the district, but is a start to address the issue, that it will change attitudes, behaviors, and get people thinking more about water for the future.

Tyson McGreer and Shannon Kenyon both shared stories of producers being proud and talking about growing good crops on much less water than they historically have. Tyson added cities are looking at options to incentivize the switch to lower water use grasses. Ray shared some interactions he'd had with producers looking to reduce inputs to increase cash flow and returns from their crop production.

The Chief Engineer David Barfield spoke about the renewal for the Sheridan 6 (SD6) LEMA and his planned review process for the district-wide LEMA. That there was a hearing scheduled for the SD6 LEMA on May 31, 2017 at 10AM in Hoxie, Kansas. David gave the Committee a description of the hearing process and how the review would take place. In regards to the district-wide LEMA, David gave the Committee a description of what he would be looking at in his review and how timing would work out for a 2018 enactment. Was a brief discussion about where the hearing should be held for the district-wide LEMA.

- 1. Legislative, Funding, and Vision Update:** Ginger Harper of the Kansas Water Office gave an update on legislative actions and a funding update. Some main points were the Legislative education day where around 100 legislators were given updates on the water issues of the state and funding needs, the establishment of the Water and Environment Committee and their work so far this session on water related bills, and the need for a more secure funding stream for the state's water projects since the current method of funding water projects through the weather dependent water marketing program is not a secure source.

Ginger stated that there is an increased focus on restoring the \$8,000,000 per year in State Water Plan funding that the Kansas Legislature has failed to contribute the last few years, in their effort to address state budget issues. There has been around \$75,000,000 in statutorily required funding withheld by the Kansas Legislature to address budget concerns under the last four Kansas Governors. It was stated that no funding plans made it out of the Water and Environment Committee or were being discussed further by the Kansas Legislature to address the state's water issues.

Mike Schultz asked what opinions Legislators had in regards to a \$0.05 per 1000 gallon fee on irrigation use, Ginger stated there hasn't been a lot of desire for new fees until the state and Legislature fund the state portion of \$8,000,000 through the State General Fund and Economic Development Initiatives Fund. There was a discussion amongst the Committee about fees paid into the State Water Plan and fees paid by regions.

- 6. Chairman and Vice-Chairman positions:** Was discussion amongst the Committee about filling the Vice-Chairman role and renewing Committee member terms that end in 2017. Was decided that information would be sent to the Committee and a conference call would be held to discuss further since a quorum was not present to take action.
- 5. Committee Update for May 17-18 Kansas Water Authority Meeting:** The Committee discussed items that should be highlighted in a report to the Kansas Water Authority.
- 6. Division of Water Resources update on proposed regulation changes, Water Conservation Area and impairment statute changes:** Steven Walters of the Division of Water Resources provided an update on the changes to the consumptive use calculation that is used when changing the use made of water of a water right. That there are proposed changes to the penalty regulations, and a hearing is set for May 22, 2017 for the changes. That water use

reporting penalties will stay the same for this year, for next year they would go to \$250 for a water use report not received by March 1 and \$1000 if not received by June 1. Steven added that around 20% of the years water use reports were submitted using the online water use reporting system.

Steven discussed the proposed changes to the Water Conservation Area statute and how flexibilities would be built into a management plan, reducing the need for term permits and adding more ease of use for producers.

Ray Luhman added that the proposed consumptive use changes aligned well to other groundwater management districts, but that GMD No. 4 may develop their own regulation to address consumptive use in the district to better address issues within the district.

7. **Public Input:** No public input was received.

8. **Future Meetings:**

- a. Kansas Water Authority: May 17-18, Garden City, KS
- b. Upper Republican RAC: TBD April 2017 (Poll will be sent out)



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### Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Kelly Stewart	KDA/DWR
Ray Luhman	GMD No. 4
Dave Flemming	Cheyenne County
Richard Rockel	KWO
Dan Wells	KDHE
Ann Miner	Prairie Museum
Tanya Gerstberger	NRCS

- Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman, Sid Metcalf. All present provided self-introductions. A quorum was present, six of the eleven Committee members were present.
- Review and Approval of July and October Meeting Minutes:** Notes from the July and October meetings were reviewed, no issues or modifications were noted as being needed. Shannon Kenyon motioned for approval and Mike Schultz seconded, minutes were approved by vote.
- Water Talk Series Update:** An update was given of the final agenda and details for the February 1, 2017 Water Talk Series that is to be held with the GMD No. 4 annual meeting. Topics to be covered are: irrigation technology, regional goals, Limited Irrigation crop insurance, economics of water conservation, and the NW Technical College Precision Agriculture program.

**Membership:** Sid Metcalf (Chair), Oakley, KS; Brian Baalman, Menlo, KS; Shannon Cain, Colby, KS; Gary Fisher, Atwood, KS; Mike Frakes, Morland, KS; Jered Johnson, Colby, KS; Ken McCarty, Rexford, KS; Mike Schultz, Brewster, KS; Justin Sloan, Colby, KS; Tyson McGreer, Colby, KS  
**KWO Planner:** Richard Rockel, 785-296-3185; [richard.rockel@kwo.ks.gov](mailto:richard.rockel@kwo.ks.gov)

4. **Priorities for legislature:** The Committee was asked what items they would like to see highlighted during this year's Legislative Education Session and if any would like to attend and meet with their legislators. Chairman Sid Metcalf will represent the Committee. No additional items were raised by the Committee to be highlighted.
5. **Blue Ribbon Funding Task Force (BRFTF) Update:** The Committee was provided the latest proposal from the BRFTF, which included proposed projects and information on the 0.5% sales tax proposal. Mike Schultz asked why there was no irrigation use fee being proposed, discussion was had amongst the group and it was noted that an irrigation fee was discussed by the BRFTF but was not chosen.
6. **Northwest Kansas Water Technology Farms:** Currently appears to be funding for four NW Kansas Tech Farms, with Northwest Kansas Groundwater Conservation Foundation support for soil moisture probes and state Water Plan funds for additional items. A grant application was submitted to the Dane G. Hansen Foundation which requested funding to complete 10-15, no decision has been received as of this date.
6. **GMD No. 4 Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA) Update:** An update was given on the development of the district-wide LEMA and the series of public informational meetings that were held. Shannon Kenyon stated that people are viewing it as something that needs to be done and that a draft request would be sent to the Division of Water Resources soon. Mike Schultz stated that folks he has spoken with are receptive to the plan and hasn't heard much negativity towards the plan.

The Sheridan 6 LEMA advisory board voted to renew the SD6 LEMA for another five years. The advisory board voted to allow up to five acre-inches to be carried over to the new LEMA period, to allow those that did not exhaust or conserved some of their current LEMA allocation to use the water in the future if needed. The SD6 advisory board will request the same LEMA structure and requirements for the renewal.

The question was brought up of if LEMA allocations from the district-wide LEMA would be able to roll over, Ray Luhman said he thought the large allocations given to some water rights may prevent roll over in it, but that the LEMA advisory panel may allow/discuss rollovers prior to renewing the LEMA.

Shannon Kenyon gave an update on the LEMA public meetings that were held. Said that folks were more positive than in the spring meetings, that they could see their concerns were considered and modifications were made to the LEMA plan based on concerns that were heard. Ian de Waal said it seemed people were more accepting of this LEMA plan.

7. **Division of Water Resources update on proposed statute changes and Water Conservation Areas:** Kelly Stewart provided an update on proposed changes to the Water Conservation Area and impairment statutes. Gave some information on impairment and that have avoided impairment claims so far in Northwest Kansas, but are some areas where they could happen at current declines.
8. **Public Input:** Cheyenne County Noxious Weed Removal – Dave Flemming from Cheyenne County shared information with the Committee on the ongoing project to remove tamarisk and Russian olive plants from land within ½ mile from the banks of the South Fork Republican River, in a continued effort to increase streamflows in the Republican River. Mr. Flemming stated that the project is a 75/25% split for funding, with the landowner providing 25% and that his group was looking for funds to further support their project.

Water Ways Smithsonian Exhibit at Prairie Museum of Art and History – Ann Minor from the Prairie Museum of Art and History provided the Committee and update on the Water Ways exhibit that will be held at the museum in Colby August 12- September 24. That the museum is making their own water exhibit and wants to document the water story for the area. The museum is looking to have the traveling exhibit and is working with college and other local groups to coordinate. Mrs. Minor stated the museum would like assistance with the grand opening, exhibits, and presentations.

### 8. Future Meetings:

- a. Kansas Water Authority: May 17-18, Garden City, KS
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