



**LOWER RIO GRANDE AUTHORITY (LRGA) MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2004 - 9:00 A.M.
Rio Red Classroom - Texas A&M Citrus Center
312 North International Blvd.
Weslaco, Texas**

Presiding: Bobby Sparks, President

Mr. Bobby Sparks, President, called the meeting to order, and it was ascertained that there was a quorum present. A copy of the roll call sheet is attached to these minutes for verification.

The Chairman then proceeded to agenda item 2. - Consider Approval of Meeting Minutes of January 8, 2004, and asked for any changes or amendments. There were none, and **Mr. Gordon Hill made a motion to approve them. Ms. Sonia Kaniger seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

President Sparks then moved to agenda item 3. - Financial Report and recognized Mr. Joe Barrera, Secretary-Treasurer. Mr. Barrera informed the Board that there had been no activity, and the amount in the treasury was \$37,517.03. **Mr. Gordon Hill then made a motion to approve the Financial Report as presented. Mr. Jimmie Steidinger seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

There were no requests for public comment, and the President moved to agenda item 5. - Consider Ratification of Executive Committee Action RE: Resolution of Support for Hidalgo Cameron County Irrigation District No. 9, and asked Mr. Jo Jo White, Manager, Cameron Co. Irrigation Dist. No. 9. Mr. White informed the Board that the resolution was in support of that district's funding application to the Bureau of Reclamation and North American Development Bank for funding to facilitate infrastructure improvements. **Mr. Joe Barrera made a motion to approve this resolution, Mr. Jimmie Steidinger seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Following action on the resolution, President Sparks proceeded to agenda item 6. - Consider Budget Committee's Recommendation RE: FY 2004-2005 Budget for Submission At Annual Conference Meeting, and asked Mr. Joe Barrera, Chair, Budget Committee, to report. Mr. Barrera informed the Board that the Budget Committee (comprised of himself, Mr. Tito Nieto and Ms. Sonia Kaniger) had met on February 3rd and was recommending the following estimated items: total expense - \$47,100, income - \$50,031.42, and operating reserve - \$2,931.42. **Mr. Gordon Hill made a motion to approve the budget as presented and to recommend its adoption at the LRGA Conference meeting, Mr. Paul Heller seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.** Following action on the proposed budget, the Chairman moved to agenda item 7. - Report from TCEQ Watermaster, and asked Mr. Jones to report. Mr. Jones stated that Carlos

Rubinstein sent his apologies for being unable to attend, and explained that the updated information was provided by Mr. Rubinstein in the Binders. At this time, Mr. Jo Jo White reported that the El Morillo Drain which had been shut down, resulted in high salt levels in the river. He added that IBWC's assistance is needed with this issue, and Mr. Jones stated that he would be meeting with IBWC officials this week, and would bring the urgency of this issue to their attention.

Following discussion on the El Morrillo Drain, the Chairman proceeded to agenda item 8.A. - Master Plan Implementation, and recognized Mr. Bill Norris, NRS Consulting Engineers. A copy of the master plan budget was distributed to the Board (copy attached), and Mr. Norris reported that the TWDB had awarded \$200,000 in funding (in a phased approach) to the LRGA: Part would be available in 2004, and the other portion available in 2005. He added that the planning grant called for certain percentages of local match, and discussion occurred regarding various sources for the local match, such as Texas A&M University, local cities and economic development corporations, irrigation districts, rural water supply corporations, and other federal/state agencies, such as NADBank, Bureau of Reclamation, and Texas Parks & Wildlife. It was also mentioned that if municipalities were to become members of the LRGA, they would pay dues as well. Mr. Jones reminded the Board that the deadline for executing the TWDB Contract was April 21st. At the conclusion of Mr. Norris' report and following discussion, **Mr. Joe Barrera made a motion to approve the Master Plan, and to bring back an update on its status at the March, 2004 meeting. Mr. Jimmie Steidinger seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Following action on the Master Plan, Chairman Sparks moved to agenda item 8.B. - Summit on Water Supply Issues in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, and asked Mr. Ray Prewett to report. Mr. Prewett urged the Board to both register and assist in getting as many other registrants as possible.

The President then moved to agenda 8.C. - Water Market Project, and again recognized Mr. Jones. Mr. Jones reported that there had been no activity in the water market, and President Sparks proceeded to agenda item 9.A. - Legislative Update. He recognized Mr. Wayne Halbert, General Manager, Harlingen Irrigation District. Mr. Halbert informed the Board that the appointees to the other water authority (Rio Grande Regional Water Authority) had not yet been named; however that they were anticipated to be within the next few days. Discussion followed regarding conflicts that may arise once this new water authority is in place. At this time, the Board was informed that a press release regarding this water authority had been provided to the LRGVDC Board, and it was agreed to make this information available to the LRGA Board.

President Sparks then proceeded to agenda item 9.B. - Treaty Update, and reported that the new IBWC Commissioner appeared to be actively negotiating with Mexico officials regarding the repayment of water. He then moved to agenda item 9.C. - Regional Water Planning Committee. Following discussion, **Mr. Gordon Hill made a motion to schedule a meeting of the Committee for February 24th and to have the following three items on the agenda for action: 1) Resolution regarding the Mexico Water Treaty; 2) Direction/Solicitation for Local Match from municipalities and/or water supply**

corporations; and 3) Legislation Recommendations on LRGAs. Mr. Jimmie Steidinger seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Following action on the Water Planning Committee, the President moved to agenda item 10. - Consider Authorization to Advertise for RFQ's for Consultant RE: Master Plan, and asked Mr. Jones to report. Mr. Jones asked for approval from the Board to authorize staff to advertise if this RFQ were a requirement by TWDB. Following discussion, **Mr. Joe Barrera made a motion to authorize staff to advertise for RFQ's for the Master Plan Consultant, if necessary. Ms. Sonia Kaniger seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.** It was agreed to include this item on the agenda for the next LRGAs meeting. *A committee comprised of Mr. Joe Barrera, Ms. Sonia Kaniger and Mr. Paul Heller was appointed to study this item if necessary.*

The Chairman then proceeded to agenda item 11. - Discuss Scheduling Annual Conference and Agenda, and recognized Mr. Jones. Following discussion, it was agreed to schedule Tuesday, March 16th at Texas A&M Citrus Center Rio Red Classroom - Weslaco 2:30 p.m. for the LRGAs Board Meeting. **Mr. Jimmie Steidinger made a motion to schedule the March, 2004 Conference Meeting for that date. Mr. Gordon Hill seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Following action on the Conference date, **Mr. Gordon Hill made a motion to combine the LRGAs Conference and Board meeting, Mr. Jimmie Steidinger seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Under agenda item old or new business, Mr. Joe Barrera requested travel expense reimbursement for Board members who had traveled to Austin. **Mr. Jimmie Steidinger made a motion to approve reimbursement of travel expense for Mr. Joe Barrera, Mr. Jo Jo White, and Mr. Bill Norris. Mr. Gordon Hill seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Discussion the occurred regarding scheduling a press conference on the \$200,000 grant award from TWDB. **Mr. Gordon Hill made a motion to schedule a press conference on the grant award before the TWDB March Board of Directors meeting to approve the funding of \$200,000 for the Master Plan. Ms. Sonia Kaniger seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

There being no further business to come before the Board, President Sparks adjourned the meeting.

Bobby Sparks, President

Joe Barrera, Secretary-Treasurer