

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE WATER ADVOCATES

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Mario's Pizzeria & Ristorante

Minutes—February 5, 2018

Present: Bob Wessely, Elaine Hebard, John Brown, Carolyn Kennedy, Judith Phillips, Elizabeth Chestnut, Zoe Economou, Rip Anderson, Marcia Fernandez and Mike Marcus.

Call to Order – Presence of a quorum was noted and the meeting was called to order at approximately 6:15 p.m.

Approval of Agenda: Ms. Hebard requested that item 4.a. be moved to be a part of item 4.f. and then made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Ms. Phillips seconded the motion, and the agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Hebard made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2017, meeting, Mr. Brown seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Business Items:

b. Report, Discuss, Advise – State Water Plan Update status: Ms. Hebard noted that the NM First Town Hall on Water was attended by approximately 200 people. The NM First process eliminates nuance but does have results at the end. The ISC has been provided with the results but has not yet publicized further activities. Mark Sanchez is now Chair of the ISC.

c. Report, Discuss, Advise – House Memorial 1 activities: The Governance Study Group (GSG) has been working on three task documents: (1) The main problems to be addressed through water planning (making the case for planning); (2) Text of proposed legislation; and (3) Update of the Regional Water Planning Handbook. A review copy of the drafts is expected to be done by early March, with final drafts to be done by July 1, which will be provided to the legislature. More volunteers are needed to complete the task. Computer video conference meetings are held about every two weeks. It was also noted that HM74 has been introduced in the legislature. It focuses on the Ogallala, but also has language concerning the need to revamp state water planning and thus is duplicative of HM1, which was passed last year. Mr. Wessely has sent a letter to the legislature outlining concerns.

Mr. Wessely announced a break at 6:35 p.m., and the meeting resumed at 6:50 p.m.

d. Report – Vote on Conversion from “Assembly” to “Advocates”: Mr. Wessely announced that the email vote was 15-0 in favor of changing “Assembly” to “Advocates” and approving the new Mission/Purpose statement.

e. Define, Assign to Subcommittees – Next Steps on Water Advocates Conversion:

(1) *Establishing Target Policies (new or existing) for the Advocates to address:* The Board needs to identify what are its best priorities and what it is advocating for. One priority is ensuring long-term Compact compliance. During discussion, however, the Board agreed that the first step is educating the public, with emphasis on education concerning the Compact. Education subtopics include the following: What is it?; What does it matter?; Understanding the water budget; Saving water for whom?; How necessary is growth to economic development?; What are the risks to the public of noncompliance?; How does climate change relate?; and What are endangered species implications? While education is an important component, it is not the primary goal. As we develop targeted policies, we need to focus on tangible victories. See Ms. Hebard's note following these minutes for additional information.

(2) *Approach to Seeking Allies – Who? How?:* In the discussion it was suggested that Bosque School would be a good ally, and that at the Retreat a list was compiled of possible allies (pasted in below), which could and should be added to. Ms. Fernandez noted that most all of these entities have a web presence and that research should be done of the information contained on the various websites.

(3) *Approach to Taking Advocacy Action:* In the discussion, several Board members suggested that this item be deferred until item (1) was done.

(4) *Approach to Establishing Social Media and Internet Presence:* It was agreed that students should be approached to undertake this task. \$1,000 is available for this purpose. Ms. Fernandez will contact Virginia Necochea of CESOSS to inquire whether any of her students would be interested, and Ms. Hebard will contact UNM Water Resources Program students.

(5) *Administrative Matters – Bylaw Revisions, Registrations, etc.:* Ms. Kennedy will gather the necessary materials and, as the Board felt it was too cumbersome, edit the new Mission/Purpose statement for clarity. An edited version of the Mission/Purpose statement and a markup of proposed changes to the bylaws will be circulated to the Board and placed on the next agenda for approval. Only when we have a publicity plan should we roll out our new name.

f. Discuss – Next Convocation:

(1) *Identify Purpose:* Topics discussed were Compact, Climate Change and Drought and their impacts on the public. Several Board members felt strongly that the word “Compact” should not be used in the title, as it would be boring and off-putting. “Drought” and “climate change” impacts were thought to be better keywords to get the general public’s attention. Ms. Hebard thought that item 4.a. (WaterSMART Basin Study) should be part of the next Convocation as the MRGWA has made a substantial commitment to it, and it would fit in with the Convocation topics discussed.

(2) *Schedule Approximate Dates:* Deferred. In this regard, it was noted that there will be a UNM program on water on May 17, 2018, to which all former State Engineers were invited, and that a Stormwater Conference will take place in Albuquerque on August 20-23, 2018. The Land & Water Summit by Xeriscape Council of New Mexico, *The ripple effect: Stormwater & Tree Canopy*, will be held on Feb 22 and 23, 2018.

A Subcommittee was appointed to further address items 4.e(1) and (3), as well as to prepare a proposed outline of the progression of subtopics to be addressed under item f(1), the next Convocation. The members of the Subcommittee will be Norm Gaume, Bob Wessely, Elaine Hebard and Lynn Montgomery.

g. Schedule – Next Board Meeting: The next Board meeting was scheduled for Monday, May 7, 2018, at Mario’s.

Officers and Directors Comments and Announcements: Ms. Kennedy has prepared an Interim Financial Report through 1/31/18 for FY18. The Board currently has assets on hand totalling \$24,307.73, including the two CDs.

Public Comments and Announcements: None.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.

Minutes by Carolyn Kennedy

Bob Wessely, President

Sunday, November 5, 2017 / 11:00 am to 4:00 pm

Retreat Results

Then we asked ourselves:

- (i) What do you see to be water-related concerns needing to be addressed in our area?
- (ii) Are the needs identified in Question 1 being taken care of by such groups?
- (iii) What do you see as current and emerging issues which might be addressed by the MRGWA?

- (ii) What other organizations are currently involved in water issues in our region?

Governmental

MRCOG's Water Resources Board

MRGCD

ABCWUA / Rio Rancho / Belen / Los Lunas / Bernalillo

AMAFCA / SCAFCA / ESCAFCA

SWCD - Ciudad, Coronado, Valencia Cuba

Local acequia associations

Federal agencies

ISC / OSE / NMED / Water Trust Board

Six MRG Pueblo Coalition on Water

Non-Governmental

NMAA

ESA Collaborative Program

Basin Study group

Rio Puerco Management Committee

HM1 Task Force / GSG

BEMP / Bosque School & UNM

Business Water Task Force

NM Water Dialogue

Land and Water Summit / Xeriscape Council

Nature Conservancy / Audubon

Quivera Coalition

Climate Change Groups (Transition ABQ, Citizens Climate Lobby, 350.org, etc.)

Citizen Action / Peace Center

Environmental Education Association of NM

Rio Grande Agricultural Land Trust

Jemez y Sangre -- plus agencies and groups in that planning region

Socorro / Sierra -- plus agencies and groups in that planning region

Additional Information from Elaine

At the meeting, I was quoting from Sierra Club's *Grassroots Organizing Training Manual*. While written in 1999, it was used effectively at a retreat I attended on February 3. More completely:

The Three Principles of Effective Organizing

Three basic principles of organizing that all grassroots organizing campaigns should be guided by.

I. Win Real, Immediate, and Concrete Improvements in People's Lives

While education may be an important component of the campaign, it should not be the campaign's primary goal. Focus on securing tangible victories. Identify the problems people face in their lives, and come up with practical solutions that are achievable.

2. Re-align Power Relationships by Building a Strong and Effective Organization

Increase our resources and political power to ensure that decision-makers will take heed. This will only happen as a result of careful, strategic planning, and a commitment to integrating specific organizational development goals into our campaign.

3. Empower People to Become Active and Effective in the Political Process, and in Their Communities

As organizers, developing new leaders is a fundamental element of our work. Learn to use the tools of democracy to achieve our purpose.

The Three Phases of Grassroots Organizing

First, we need to *engage* the community in its desire to protect what it values. It is not enough for people to merely agree with these noble goals; they need to get involved in demanding action to achieve them. We need to "create demand".

Second, we need to demonstrate that many support our goals as politicians will respond to community demand if, and only if, the community holds them *accountable*. Our challenge is that is not enough to merely denounce but to translate that support to action.

Third, we need to **work directly** with our leaders and our institutions to devise and implement solutions to the problems.

These three steps — creating demand, holding leaders accountable, and taking delivery on the solution — are each essential to winning victories.