



**TACWA Meeting Minutes
Austin, Texas
March 31, 2017
9:00 a.m.**

The Texas Association of Clean Water Agencies (TACWA) meeting of March 31, 2017, hosted by the City of Austin and sponsored by Alan Plummer Associates, Inc., Hazen and Sawyer, Parsons.

- **Those in attendance included:** Raj Bhattarai – City of Austin; Thomas Monroe – City of Austin; Heather Oslund – City of Austin; Heather Cooke – City of Austin; Brian Washington Jr. – City of Austin; Kevin Guyton – City of Austin; Manuel Macias – City of Austin; Erin La Rue – City of Austin; Victor Wolf – City of Austin; Ariam Perez – City of Austin; Kendra Garrett – City of Austin; Ron Patel – City of Dallas; Magda Alanis – City of Houston; Jason Iken – City of Houston; Karen Menard – UTRWD; Ricky Clifton – GCWDA; Gordon Pederson – GCWDA; Denise Ehrlich – GCWDA; Leonard Levine – GCWDA; Patty Cleveland – Trinity River Authority; Cynthia Robinson – Trinity River Authority; Julie Nahrgang – TACWAVEAT; Farr Fakheri – Black and Veatch; Gary Green – Parsons; Mel Vargas – Parsons; Randy Palachek – Parsons; Lauren Gonzalez – APAI; Eddie Wilcut – APAI; Chris Pasch – APAI; Rex Hunt – APAI; Peggy Glass – APAI; Sam Irrinki – Weston; Gopal Guthikonda – CP&Y; Ashok Varma – Stantec; Greg Swoboda – Garver; Chamindra Dassanayake - Hazen and Sawyer; Ray Longoria – Freese and Nichols, Inc.; Mark Perkins – Perkins Engineering Consultants, Inc.; Janet Sims – Perkins Engineering Consultants, Inc.; Roman Grijalva – Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.; David Briggs – CDM Smith

Business Meeting:

- Raj Bhattarai welcomed all attendees to Austin
- Vice President Alanis opened the meeting, welcomed guests and thanked the sponsors, and then requested introductions from all the attendees.

Raj Bhattarai:

EPA is currently revising the nutrient screener survey “National Study of Nutrient Removal and Secondary Technologies: POTW Screener Questionnaire” based on stakeholder comments. According to EPA, the survey will no longer be mandatory, but voluntary. EPA expects to send the revised survey for review and approval by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) by early summer 2017. After OMB review and approval, the revised survey is expected to be published for



comments in Federal Register around July/Aug 2017. There will be a 60-day comment period on the revised survey. EPA plans to work with stakeholders, states, ACWA, NACWA, WEF and its member associations in conducting seminar and webinars. If all goes as planned, EPA expects to send the screener survey to POTWs by the end of 2017. It will be a simple on-line survey – POTWs will have 30 days to complete the survey. EPA plans to follow up with underrepresented states and areas in early 2018. According to EPA, Phase 2 of the survey that will consist of detailed survey of selected facilities will most likely be developed by mid-2018. EPA expects to receive comments on Phase 2 by late-2018 or early-2019, and send Phase 2 survey to POTWs by early- or mid-2019. According to the current schedule, EPA expects to have the final survey reports and findings around 2020-2021. There is a presentation about this at the Texas Water 2017 Conference here in Austin in a couple of weeks.

Julie Nahrgang:

The bills filed in the 85th regular Session of the Texas State Legislature will move to committee hearings. The high priority bills are those that are filed during the pre-filing, will have a committee hearing, and are sponsored by more senior or powerful lawmakers. These are comprised of SB 1-30 and HB 1-40. They provide a good breakdown and synopsis of the biggest issues facing Texans as determined by our lawmakers. In addition to bathrooms, property tax reform, government transparency, immigration and sanctuary cities, reproductive health and fetal tissue issues, CPS reform and funding, local control, and education are all proving to be high priority issues for Texas Lawmakers.

The 85th legislative session marked the second highest bill filing in history. With 6,654, the 85th legislative session was edged out only by the 7,324 bills filed in the 81st legislative session in 2009. Texans are enjoying economic growth that is far outpacing the national average, even with the downturn in oil and gas. Texas boasts the second biggest economy in the US behind only California and Forbes lists Texas as #1 state in economic climate. Texas is the second most populous state and also the 5th fastest growing state. And what does all of this mean? Simply put, economic and population growth creates more issues that our lawmakers are dealing with and show themselves in bills filed.

Priority categories of bills to watch are Biosolids and Domestic Septage, Discharge Permitting and Limitations, Water Reuse, WQ Catchall – pollution control, environmental racism, Contested Case, and Eminent Domain

Peggy Glass:

Representatives of TACWA and WEAT met with TCEQ staff to explore better approaches to standards for dissolved salts [Total Dissolved Solids (TDS), chloride and sulfates]. EPA is increasing pressure on TCEQ to include limits for dissolved salts in TPDES permits. This is a major problem for most permittees since there is not a practical way for them to reduce the salt concentration in their discharge. The TCEQ appreciates the problem and is open to exploring ways to change the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards and Implementation Procedures (IPs) so that receiving waters are protected, but the controls are achievable by permittees. However, TCEQ felt that it is too late to develop an alternative approach to be included in the revision process currently underway. They



suggested that an advisory committee be set up to develop an approach that would be included in the next standards revision—much like what has been done for nutrient standards. The TACWA/WEAT representatives encouraged TCEQ not to rule out accomplishing some step toward an improved approach during this revision, perhaps focusing only on the IPs and unclassified waters. A follow-up meeting will be held with TCEQ. TCEQ requested additional information on the TACWA/WEAT proposals that will be presented at the follow-up meeting.

Technical Presentations:

- Scalable Risk Management for Tunneling and Open Cut Construction – Joshua Farmer, P.E., Hazen & Sawyer
- Feasibility Study for a Regional Industrial Wastewater Treatment and Reuse Facility, Mont Belvieu, TX – Mel Vargas, Parsons
- TCEQ Water Quality Update – David Galindo, Director, Water Quality Division, TCEQ
- Water Efficiency – Not Just a Water Supply Issue” – Eddie Wilcut, Alan Plummer Associates, Inc.
- Legislative Update – Julie Nahrgang, Executive Director, TACWA and WEAT