

**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**November 3, 2011**

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The November 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Natural Resources Advisory Committee was held in the Houston-Galveston Area Council Conference Room A at 3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, Texas. The meeting began at approximately 1:35 PM. Chairman Dennis Caputo presided.

**NRAC voting members present (17):**

Kathy Burris	Andy Icken*	Ronald Schultz
Glenda Callaway	Glenn Laird	Linda Shead
Dennis Caputo	Carole Lamont	Brian Shmaefsky
Leroy Dettling	Ted Long	Jin Ye
Ron Drachenberg	John O'Connell	Pudge Wilcox
Ramesh Gunda	Ellis Pickett	

**NRAC voting members not present (18):**

Carolyn Bilski	Steve Hupp	Tom Northrup
Jeff Brennan	Andrew Isbell	Robert Rayburn
Patrick Buzbee	Jim Joyce	Orval Rhoads
Marilyn Christian	Jim Kachtick	Gerald Roberts
James Dannenbaum	Brett Kolaja	Don Sarich
Nicole Hausler	Cathy McCoy	Lori Traweek

\*Andy Icken delegated Jebediah Greenfield as his representative for the meeting. Bob Allen delegated Latrice Babin as his representative for the meeting. Delegated representatives can vote on Committee business; non-delegated representatives count toward quorum but cannot vote.

**Current Vacancies:**

Current vacancy for "Other Cities" representative slot previously held by Brett Kolaja.

**NRAC advisory member (1)**

Bob Allen\*

**H-GAC Staff Present (8):**

Jeff Taebel, Justin Bower, Jeff Murray, Rachel Powers, Todd Running, Aubin Phillips, Kelly Porter

**Others Present(8):**

Carl Masterson, Brad Brunett, Josey Williams, Kay Wilcox, Lori FitzSimmons-Evans, Michael Bloom, Charles Peters, Brian Koch.

**Welcome and Roll Call**

Dennis Caputo welcomed those present and Justin Bower conducted the roll call.

**Certify Quorum**

Justin confirmed a quorum.

**Approve Meeting Report**

Kathy Burris moved to accept the minutes with corrections, and Ron Drachenberg seconded the motion. The amended minutes passed unanimously.

**Bylaws Revision**

A proposed bylaws revision was introduced to add Harris County Pollution Control, and correspondingly increase the total number of representatives for the NRAC. This was a first reading, and will be read again at the next meeting. The name for the Harris County Public Health Services Department was changed to reflect the Glenn Laird moved to approve the first reading with the correction, and Glenda Callaway seconded. The Revision passed the first reading.

**Subcommittees**

***Parks & Natural Areas***

Linda Shead gave the subcommittee report regarding the 2011 Parks and Natural Areas Awards and detailing the different projects that were selected for each category. The awards will be presented at a meeting on January 17, 2012.

**Staff Presentations**

(Staff Presentations were moved up on the agenda without objection from the Committee).

***Coastal Communities Planning Assistance – Jeff Murray***

Jeff gave a description of a new outreach effort under the 604(b) project to identify and address needs of small coastal communities to mitigate stormwater and nonpoint source issues. In reponse to questions, Jeff indicated H-GAC will be aiming at small communities with existing governmental or organizational structure, but without MS4 permits.

**TCEQ Solid Waste Implementation Pass-through grants – *Justin Bower, for Erin Livingston***

H-GAC will be accepting applications for the FY12/13 grants, which will be evenly distributed between small and large projects, between Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> and Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011.

**Cedar Bayou Watershed Protection Plan Public Engagement – *Justin Bower***

H-GAC is engaging the public of the Cedar Bayou watershed in a watershed protection plan. Justin indicated more information could be found on [www.cedarbayouwatershed.com](http://www.cedarbayouwatershed.com), and invited organizations to take part in the process.

**Trees in Drought pamphlet – *Justin Bower, for Chuck Wemple***

Justin made pamphlets available regarding keeping trees alive in drought.

**Topics of the Day**

The topic of the day was the **impact of the drought conditions on agriculture**. Chair Dennis Caputo gave a brief introduction to the topic, regarding the extended drought predictions, and the sometimes overlooked impact on agriculture and the local economy.

**Drought Impacts on Agricultural Producers – *Mr. Brian Koch, TSSWCB***

Brian gave an overview of the drought conditions and their impacts on agricultural producers. Decrease in rice farming is one of the major impacts of drought conditions, as available water rights are curtailed or scarce. Cattle sale and destocking has been rampant throughout the state, as lack of rain has made feed too expensive or pastures too depleted. These issues have short term economic impacts, but also impact the long term sustainability of these commodities. The lack of rain has also hampered efforts to protect water quality. Brian answered questions regarding the impact on specific commodities, and the manner in which the conditions impacted what efforts were put in place.

**Drought Impacts in the Brazos River Basin and Statewide– *Mr. Brad Brunett, Brazos River Authority***

Brad described the general impacts of the drought on many aspects of the Brazos River Basin, including reservoir capacity, agriculture, and long term outlooks. The drought has had an appreciable impact on reservoir levels, and exacerbated surface water supply issues. These issues will have a long-term impact on water supply as well as the acute current situation. Brad answered questions regarding the ability of the system to bounce back, and the changes the current conditions have made for operations and production in the basin.

## **Roundtable Discussion**

### **The following items were brought up by the members:**

- 1) **LNG** – several members discussed the status of liquid natural gas production, and the potential to discuss it at a subsequent meeting.
- 2) **Glenda Callaway** – Glenda suggested we discuss water conservation for a subsequent meeting topic. She also announced several meetings: 1) The Regional H Water Planning Group meets on 12/7/2011 at 10AM at SJRA offices, and 2) The Bay and Basin Advisory Stakeholder group will meet in the same location at 1 PM.
- 3) **Rainwater Harvesting** – Pudge Wilcox requested that rainwater harvesting be a potential future topic.
- 4) **BIG I-Plan** – Rachel Powers gave an update on the BIG I-Plan, indicating the Commission is due to approve the I-Plan for public comment on January 11<sup>th</sup>.
- 5) **Dennis Caputo** – Dennis indicated that the nomination and policy committees need to be formed and meet prior to the next meeting. Staff will contact all the members to gauge interest.
- 6) **Glenda Callaway** – Glenda suggested a population growth, especially as it relates to water projections, would be a good topic.

### **Next Meeting Date**

The next regularly scheduled meeting date is Thursday, February 2, 2012, at 1:30 PM.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.