



## MEETING MINUTES

### SOUTHWESTERN TRAVIS COUNTY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

##### *Regular Monthly Meeting*

**Thursday, November 20, 2025, at 9:30 AM**

A quorum of the Southwestern Travis County Groundwater Conservation District Board of Directors held a regular monthly board meeting on Thursday, November 20, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. at the District's office at 8656 W. Highway 71, Building A, Suite 224, Austin, Texas 78735. The meeting was open to the public and a videoconference remote participation option was provided; instructions for accessing the remote videoconference were provided with the Public Notice of Meeting.

**1. Call to order, declare meeting open to the public, take roll and declare quorum status**

President Scadden called the public meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2025. Six directors were present at the meeting constituting a quorum, including President Scadden, Director Phillips, Director Leva, Director Davis, Director Urie, and Director Van Ackeren. Also present were General Manager Lane Cockrell, District Regulatory Compliance Specialist Virginia Smith, District Administrative and Hydrogeology Assistant Barbara Reyes, District Volunteer Pete Golde, Andres Castillo with Lloyd Gosselink, and Lyle Williams, Alex Thompson, and Joe Shafer with Bee Cave Drilling. The following individuals participated remotely by videoconference call: Ty Embrey and Audrey Cooper with Lloyd Gosselink, Danna Oakes on behalf of Cypress Ranch WCID No. 1, CJ Benett with Bullock, Bennett & Associates, LLC, Laura Thomas, General Manager for Hays Trinity GCD, Tina Cooper with Austin Alliance Group, Ann Potter, and Jeff Walker.

**2. Administration of Oath of Office**

General Manager Cockrell reported that the directors re-elected at the November 4, 2025 general election (Directors Huber, Phillips, Urie, and Van Ackeren) have completed their Oaths of Office in compliance with the Texas Constitution and Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code. Therefore, no action was taken under this agenda item.

**3. Announcements**

President Scadden reported that he previously discussed with Travis County the possibility of District staff periodically presenting to the Travis County Commissioners Court on groundwater issues and District activities. Travis County staff indicated that semiannual presentations would be helpful to keep the Commissioners informed and up to date on the District's work.

**4. Public Comments**

No public comments were presented under this agenda item.

**5. Consent Agenda**

Director Davis moved to approve all items on the consent agenda (listed below). Motion seconded by Director Phillips. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays – 1 Absent – 1 Abstaining. Director Van Ackeren abstained, as he was not present at the October 8, 2025 board meeting.

- a. **Approve Minutes of October 8, 2025 Regular Board Meeting**
- b. **Approve October 2025 Financial Report**

**6. Discussion and Possible Action**

a. **Election of Board Officers**

President Scadden noted that the Board typically elects officers following the regular director election held in November of odd-numbered years. He reported that the current officers are President Scadden, Vice President Davis, Treasurer Urie, and Secretary Van Ackeren. General Manager Cockrell reported that Director Urie requested to step down as Treasurer to allow another director to serve. Director Urie briefly outlined the Treasurer's responsibilities, including maintaining the District's bank signatory card and reviewing regular financial statements. Following further discussion, Director Urie moved to elect Director Scadden as President, Director Davis as Vice President, Director Leva as Treasurer, and Director Van Ackeren as Secretary. Motion seconded by Director Phillips. Motion carried 6 Ayes – 0 Nays – 1 Absent.

b. **Update on District Drought Stage and Conditions**

General Manager Cockrell reported that the District's current declared drought stage is D2 Severe Drought and presented a map reflecting drought conditions as of November 11, 2025, according to data from the U.S. Drought Monitor. Mr. Cockrell reported that according to the most recent U.S. Drought Monitor map (map date: November 11, 2025), 43% of the District is in severe drought (D2), and the remainder is classified as moderate drought (D1). Mr. Cockrell recommended remaining at D2 due to hydrologic conditions and drought outlook. Director Davis reported that the Hamilton Pool Management Zone to the west is experiencing very dry conditions, and that Hays Trinity GCD is currently under D-4 Exceptional Drought. No action was taken under this agenda item.

c. **Requests for Reduced Setbacks or Spacing for Proposed New Wells**

General Manager Cockrell presented one request for a reduced setback to the Board for consideration and thanked the applicant and builder for attending the meeting. The request was for a proposed exempt domestic well to be located at 814 Windy Shores Loop. Mr. Cockrell presented a site plan showing the proposed well location and provided a summary of the application and applicable requirements. Mr. Cockrell reported that the dimensions of the property prohibit compliance with the District's standard 100-foot setback requirement and that staff recommend approving a reduced property line setback of no less than 50 feet, provided all setbacks from potential

sources of contamination are maintained and the proposed well is completed in a different aquifer than the existing neighboring well, with written approval from the neighboring well owner required if the well will be completed in the same aquifer. Ann Potter, the applicant, provided public comments under this agenda item, and reported that she is happy to comply with District staff's recommendation. Jeff Walker provided public comments under this agenda item, and reported that the developer of this subdivision worked with Apex Drilling to drill many of the nearby existing groundwater wells, and that they would have records regarding which aquifer the neighboring well was completed in. Director Van Ackeren moved to approve the staff recommendation, requiring a property-line setback of no less than 50 feet, provided all setbacks from potential sources of contamination are maintained and the proposed well is completed in a different aquifer than the existing neighboring well. Motion seconded by Director Davis. Motion carried 6 Ayes – 0 Nays – 1 Absent.

**d. Discussion of RFQ Responses for Bookkeeping Services and Selection of Firm With Which to Contract.**

President Scadden thanked Pete Golde for his years of volunteer service to the District and reported that the District issued an RFQ for bookkeeping services in October, and that the District received one response from Austin Alliance Group. President Scadden reported that District Staff and the Board Finance Committee conducted an in-person interview with representatives from Austin Alliance Group, and that Austin Alliance Group has experience providing bookkeeping and human resources services to other groundwater districts in Texas. Director Van Ackeren and Director Urie expressed support for engaging Austin Alliance Group. Tina Cooper provided public comments under this agenda item and reported that Austin Alliance Group is grateful for the opportunity to work with the District. Director Davis moved to approve the Board Finance Committee's recommendation of engaging Austin Alliance Group, and to authorize President Scadden and General Manager Cockrell to negotiate and execute a professional services contract with Austin Alliance Group. Motion seconded by Director Leva. Motion carried 6 Ayes – 0 Nays – 1 Absent.

**e. Auditor Engagement for FY 2025 Financial Audit**

General Manager Cockrell reminded the Board that, at the September regular meeting, staff were directed to negotiate an audit agreement with Montemayor Britton Bender Carey, P.C., for the FY 2025 financial audit with a fee not to exceed \$10,000. He reported that the firm was unable to accept a fee below \$11,000. Mr. Cockrell advised that the Board could either approve the FY 2025 engagement with Montemayor Britton Bender Carey, P.C., at \$11,000, or authorize staff to issue an RFQ to solicit proposals from other firms. President Scadden noted that Austin Alliance Group may be aware of other auditors with groundwater district experience, but that the time required to secure a new firm at this stage could be prohibitive. Director Urie expressed support for issuing an RFQ for auditing services for FY 2026. Director Urie moved to approve the engagement with

Montemayor Britton Bender Carey, P.C., for the FY 2025 financial audit at a fee of \$11,000. Motion seconded by Director Phillips. Motion carried 6 Ayes – 0 Nays – 1 Absent.

**f. Holiday Office Hours and Potential Closures**

General Manager Cockrell reported that the District's Personnel Policy follows the Travis County holiday schedule for office closures, while allowing the Board discretion to approve additional closures as needed. He noted that the District office will be closed on November 27–28 for Thanksgiving, December 24–25 for Christmas, and January 1, 2026, for New Year's Day. Mr. Cockrell recommended that the Board also consider closing the office on December 29, 30, and 31, the three business days between Christmas and New Year's Day. Director Van Ackeren moved to approve the additional closures of December 29–31, in addition to the Travis County–approved holidays. Motion seconded by Director Urie. Motion carried 6 Ayes – 0 Nays – 1 Absent.

**g. Interlocal Cooperation Agreements with Travis County**

General Manager Cockrell reported that the District received a draft FY 2026 interlocal cooperation agreement from Travis County on November 14. District staff met with Dr. Rebecca Smyth, Travis County Hydrogeologist, and Julie Joe, Assistant County Attorney, to discuss questions and proposed revisions, and a revised draft was received on November 19. Mr. Cockrell summarized the proposed agreement, which would provide \$200,000 in total funding: \$50,000 for groundwater science and monitoring, \$125,000 for personnel expenses, and \$25,000 for other expenses. The agreement also includes approximately \$16,000 in unused rollover funds from the FY 2025 agreement and provides for automatic annual renewal for up to five additional one-year terms, through September 30, 2031, subject to annual funding approval by Travis County. Mr. Cockrell noted that no Board action is required at this time, as Board Officers and District staff were previously authorized to negotiate and execute the agreement. President Scadden thanked Travis County for its support of the District, and Director Davis suggested sending a letter of appreciation to the County. No action was taken under this agenda item.

**h. Update on Clancy Utility Holdings, LLC Contested Case Hearing**

General Manager Cockrell reported that there were no substantive updates to the Clancy Utility Holdings, LLC, contested case matter at the State Office of Administrative Hearings, this matter is still abated. No action was taken under this agenda item.

**i. Update on Groundwater Management Area 9 (GMA 9) Joint Planning**

General Manager Cockrell updated the Board on the status of GMA 9 joint planning. He reported that he has been designated as the GMA 9 representative to the Region K Regional Water Planning Group, with Laura Thomas of Hays Trinity GCD serving as alternate. Mr. Cockrell reported that GMA 9's hydrogeologic consultant performed initial model runs for this planning cycle. Preliminary results using the existing GAM with updated pumping data indicate that, due to model limitations and differing

methodologies among districts, the model cannot support development of the local drawdown- and spring flow-based DFCs proposed by the District and Hays Trinity GCD. Given these constraints, he noted that the District may need to proceed with adopting DFCs similar to those used in prior planning cycles. Mr. Cockrell outlined the remaining schedule in the current DFC planning cycle: GMA 9 must propose DFCs in the spring; each member district will then hold a public hearing and adopt final DFCs; and GMA 9's consultant will prepare the final explanatory report by early 2027. President Scadden asked whether the monitoring wells used to track current DFCs reflect drawdown above or below 30 feet, and whether that information could support restrictions on future well drilling. Mr. Cockrell confirmed that water levels in the compliance wells currently exceed 30 feet of drawdown relative to 2008 reference levels. Mr. Ty Embrey noted that DFCs are one factor the Board should consider when acting on permit applications, and that some districts may exceed modeled available groundwater (MAG) in certain years while remaining below MAG in others, depending on precipitation and aquifer recharge. No action was taken under this agenda item.

## 7. Board Committee Reports

### a. Finance

No action was taken under this agenda item.

### b. Legislative

Mr. Ty Embrey reported that the Legislature is focused on a proposed groundwater export project in East Texas involving the Neches & Trinity Valleys GCD, which could result in interim charges related to groundwater issues. He noted that the Neches & Trinity Valleys GCD Board denied the export permit application and that the developer has since filed suit challenging the decision. No action was taken under this agenda item.

### c. Science

General Manager Cockrell reported that Director Phillips has been collecting water level and spring flow measurements from his neighborhood and plans to present the data at the next meeting. He also noted that the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) is finalizing the process for groundwater conservation districts to apply for groundwater science funding allocated during the recent legislative session. No action was taken under this agenda item.

### d. Outreach

General Manager Cockrell reported that he is coordinating with the Hamilton Pool Management Zone stakeholder group to schedule a follow-up meeting. No action was taken under this agenda item.

**e. Rules**

President Scadden reported that the Rules Committee will draft revisions to District Rules to implement recent legislative changes to Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code. No action was taken under this agenda item.

**f. Administrative**

President Scadden reported that the Administrative Committee will coordinate with District staff to schedule a meeting. No action was taken under this agenda item.

**8. General Manager's Report**

**a. Permit Applications and Well Registrations**

General Manager Cockrell presented a summary of permit applications and well registrations received by the District in October 2025. Mr. Cockrell reported one new well registration, two new well drilling authorization applications, one application to plug or cap an existing well, and three long-term water utility service connections for the month. Mr. Cockrell also provided a summary of the total permit applications and well registrations received during fiscal year 2025, noting a total of 61 well drilling authorization applications. Mr. Cockrell also reported that the District received applications to drill new non-exempt wells, including requests from DBLDNCAP Cypress Ranch, LLC to drill four new public water supply wells, and another from Lake Travis ISD to drill a replacement irrigation well. No action was taken under this agenda item.

**b. Groundwater Science and Monitoring Program**

General Manager Cockrell presented an overview of the District's monitoring wells and current water level data from selected sites. He reported that water levels increased several feet over the past month in the St. Stephen's and Beckelman monitoring wells. Water levels in the Reimers Ranch public water supply well remained relatively stable, attributed to its location in an area with higher recharge and less pumping. Mr. Cockrell also presented a hydrograph showing a significant increase in Middle Trinity-Cow Creek water levels at the District's Lakeside monitoring well in July, along with hydrographs from monitoring wells in the Hamilton Pool Management Zone. No action was taken under this agenda item.

**c. Public Outreach and Education**

General Manager Cockrell reported that the Barton Springs-Edwards Aquifer Conservation District contacted the District regarding a potential joint rainwater harvesting outreach event in the spring, and staff are coordinating on the effort. No action was taken under this agenda item.

**d. Other Informational Items of Board Interest**

General Manager Cockrell reported that he attended the *One Water in the Texas Hill Country* Conference on November 14 in Wimberley, hosted by the Hill Country Alliance

and the Cities of Boerne and Wimberley. He also reported that the next GMA 9 joint planning meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2025, at the Cow Creek GCD offices in Boerne, Texas, and that the next Region K Regional Water Planning Group meeting will be held on January 16, 2026, at the LCRA Service Center. Mr. Cockrell also noted that District staff continue to work on implementation of the District's My Government Online portal. No action was taken under this agenda item.

**9. Future Board Meetings and Agenda Items**

**a. No December Meeting**

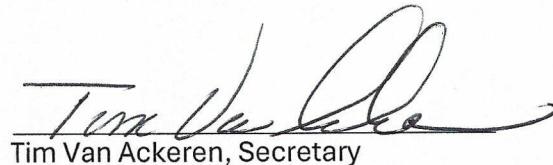
**b. Regular January Meeting**

President Scadden reported that the next regular board meeting will be held on Thursday, January 15, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. at the District's office. Mr. Cockrell proposed adding an agenda item to appoint new members to the Board Outreach Committee.

**10. Adjournment**

Director Davis moved to adjourn the open meeting at 11:25 a.m. Motion seconded by Director Van Ackeren. Motion carried 6 Ayes – 0 Nays – 1 Absent .

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS THE 15<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.



Tim Van Ackeren, Secretary