MEETING MINUTES

SOUTHWESTERN TRAVIS COUNTY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Regular Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, October 8, 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 Wednesday, October 8, 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 Wednesday, October 8, 2025. Five directors were present at the meeting constituting a quorum, including President Scadden, Director Phillips, Director Leva, Director Davis, and Director Urie. Also present were General Manager Lane Cockrell, District Regulatory Compliance Specialist Virginia Smith, District Administrative and Hydrogeology Assistant Barbara Reyes, District Volunteer Pete Golde, Cole Ruiz and Andres Castillo with Lloyd Gosselink, and Zach Hernandez and Lyle Williams with Bee Cave Drilling. The following individuals participated remotely by videoconference call: Audrey Cooper with Lloyd Gosselink, and Danna Oakes on behalf of Cypress Ranch WCID No. 1.

2. **Announcements**
   General Manager Cockrell reported that Mr. Charlie Flatten is the new general manager at the Barton Springs-Edwards Aquifer Conservation District, and that Laura Thomas has been promoted to general manager of the Hays Trinity GCD.

3. **Public Comments**
   No public comments were presented under this agenda item.

4. **Consent Agenda**
   Director Urie moved to approve all items on the consent agenda (listed below). Motion seconded by Director Phillips. Motion carried 3 Ayes – 0 Nays – 2 Absent – 2 Abstaining. Directors Leva and Davis abstained, as they were not present at the September 10, 2025 board meeting.

   a. **Approve Minutes of September 10, 2025 Regular Board Meeting**
   b. **Approve September 2025 Financial Report**

5. **Discussion and Possible Action**

   a. **Update on District Drought Stage and Conditions**
      General Manager Cockrell reported that the District's current declared drought stage is D1 Moderate Drought and presented a map reflecting drought conditions as of September 30, 2025, according to data from the U.S. Drought Monitor. Mr. Cockrell reported that after early July rainfall

eased drought conditions in the District and parts of the Hill Country, conditions in the District have since intensified. Mr. Cockrell reported that according to the most recent U.S. Drought Monitor map (map date: September 30, 2025),10% of the District is now in severe drought (D2), 66% in moderate drought (D1), and the remainder is classified as abnormally dry (D0). Mr. Cockrell recommended remaining at D1 due to hydrologic conditions and drought outlook. President Scadden reiterated that the Board of Directors previously authorized staff to declare a new drought stage between board meetings upon reaching a trigger threshold specified in District rules. No action was taken under this agenda item.

b. **Requests for Reduced Setbacks or Spacing for Proposed New Wells**
General Manager Cockrell presented two requests for reduced setbacks to the Board for consideration. The first request was for a proposed new domestic irrigation well to be located at 4916 Honey Daisy Way. 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 District staff recommend requiring the proposed well to be sited at least 50 feet from neighboring property lines. President Scadden moved to approve the staff recommendation to require a setback of at least 50 feet from neighboring property lines for the proposed new well at 4916 Honey Daisy Way. Motion seconded by Director Davis. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays – 2 Absent.

Next, General Manager Cockrell presented a request for a proposed new domestic well to be located at 4137 Bee Creek Road. Mr. Cockrell presented a site plan showing the proposed well location and provided a summary of the application and applicable requirements. District staff recommended approving a reduced 50-foot setback where a 100-foot setback is not feasible, while maintaining a minimum 100-foot setback from neighboring property lines wherever possible. Director Davis moved to approve the staff recommendation, requiring a 50-foot setback where a 100-foot setback is not feasible and maintaining a 100-foot setback from neighboring property lines where possible for the proposed new well at 4137 Bee Creek Road. Motion seconded by Director Leva. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays – 2 Absent.

c. **Update on RFQ for Bookkeeping and Other Professional Services**
President Scadden thanked Pete Golde for his years of volunteer service to the District and reported that the District is seeking professional bookkeeping services to accommodate Mr. Golde's request to transition his bookkeeping duties to an outside bookkeeper. General Manager Cockrell reported that the District published an RFQ for professional bookkeeping services on Monday, October 6, 2025, with a deadline for submittals of October 22, 2025. Mr. Cockrell reported that the Board Finance Committee will complete their internal review of proposals by October 31, 2025, allowing additional time if needed for interviews. Mr. Cockrell reported that the committee plans to recommend a firm for board consideration at the November board meeting. No action was taken under this agenda item.

d. **Proposed Revisions to District Personnel Policy**
General Manager Cockrell noted that proposed revisions to the District's Personnel Policy regarding benefits and paid time off were presented for initial feedback at the September board meeting. Mr. Cockrell then provided a presentation to the Board regarding each proposed change to the policy. Mr. Cockrell explained that the current policy limits eligibility for paid holidays, vacation, and sick leave to full-time employees working more than 30 hours per week, which has

created challenges since some staff regularly work just above or below that threshold. To apply the policy more equitably, Mr. Cockrell proposed extending eligibility for paid holidays, vacation, and sick leave to all regular employees working at least 20 hours per week, with benefits awarded proportionally based on average hours worked. Mr. Cockrell also proposed expanding parental and bereavement leave for regular employees. Mr. Cockrell noted that the current fiscal year's budget includes, for the first time, an employer contribution to staff retirement plans, and that the District's Personnel Policy should be updated to address employer retirement contributions. Mr. Cockrell reported that the proposed revisions would provide employer contributions for regular employees working at least 20 hours per week, subject to available funding and Board approval.

Director Urie asked whether employer contributions would be deposited into 401(k)s or individual IRAs. General Manger Cockrell reported that Hays Trinity GCD issues direct payments to eligible employees' individual retirement accounts not sponsored by the Hays Trinity District and noted that administration and tax implications will need to be considered. President Scadden suggested having each eligible employee establish their own IRA so the District is not responsible for account administration. Mr. Cockrell agreed and reported that he will continue working with Pete Golde to determine the best approach. President Scadden asked about the timeline for the District's 3% employer contribution for FY 2025 and whether distributions made after the end of the fiscal year should be attributed to the previous or current year. District bookkeeper Pete Golde confirmed that distributions could be made from the FY 2026 budget to avoid reopening the FY 2025 books, and that future distributions may roll over to the following fiscal year, also noting that budgets can be amended as needed to address any discrepancies.

Mr. Cockrell provided an overview of the proposed changes to the District's parental leave policy. Mr. Cockrell explained that the revisions would provide up to 8 weeks of paid leave for a birthing parent or 4 weeks for a non-birthing parent, proportional to typical weekly hours worked. Mr. Cockrell noted that the current policy allows parental leave only through accrued sick leave and that, as a small employer, the District is not required to offer unpaid Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave. Following further discussion, President Scadden moved to a approve the proposed revisions to the District Personnel Policy, including other discussed changes. Motion seconded by Director Urie. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays – 2 Absent.

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

General Manager Cockrell reported that the District received a draft engagement letter from Montemayor Britton Bender Carey, P.C., to audit the District's fiscal year 2025 financials. The firm initially proposed a fee of $12,000, which was reduced to $11,000 (approximately 75% of its standard rate) after discussion. President Scadden proposed approving an engagement of up to $10,000 and authorizing staff to continue negotiations to confirm the firm's acceptance of that rate. Following discussion, President Scadden moved to authorize General Manager Cockrell to negotiate and engage Montemayor Britton Bender Carey, P.C., to conduct the fiscal year 2025 audit for an amount not to exceed $10,000. Motion seconded by Director Davis. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays – 2 Absent.

f. **Interlocal Cooperation Agreements with Travis County for FY 2025 and FY 2026**

General Manager Cockrell reported that the District submitted its last invoice under the fiscal year 2025 Interlocal Cooperation Agreement (ILA) with Travis County, leaving $16,158.15

unspent, which will likely roll over to the fiscal year 2026 agreement. Mr. Cockrell reported that he, along with Directors Scadden and Huber, met with Travis County Commissioner Howard and her staff to discuss the fiscal year 2026 ILA and funding needs, and that District staff have scheduled a follow up meeting with County staff. Mr. Cockrell also reported that Travis County's fiscal year 2026 budget was approved last month. To avoid delays, Mr. Cockrell proposed authorizing Board Officers and himself to execute all necessary agreements and documents with Travis County to secure funding for fiscal year 2026. Director Davis moved to authorize Board Officers and General Manager Cockrell to execute all necessary agreements and documents with Travis County to secure funding for fiscal year 2026. Motion seconded by Director Phillips. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays – 2 Absent.

g. **Update on Clancy Utility Holdings, LLC Contested Case Hearing**
Cole Ruiz reported that the parties to the Clancy Utility Holdings, LLC (Clancy) contested case at SOAH agreed to continue the abatement to allow Clancy to continue its work to secure surface water supply through West Travis County PUA. No action was taken under this agenda item.

h. **Update on Groundwater Management Area 9 (GMA 9) Joint Planning**
General Manager Cockrell provided an update on joint planning at GMA 9 and reported that the next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the Cow Creek GCD offices in Boerne, Texas. Mr. Cockrell reported that GMA 9 member districts will receive an update from the GMA's technical consultant on the status of groundwater modeling for this round of DFC joint planning. Mr. Cockrell noted that Charlie Flatten was the GMA 9 representative to the Region K Regional Water Planning Group, and that GMA 9 members will need to appoint a new representative given his departure from Hays Trinity GCD. As Mr. Flatten's alternate, Mr. Cockrell noted he would likely be nominated to represent GMA 9 at future Region K meetings. No action was taken under this agenda item.

i. **Update on Cancelled November 4, 2025 Directors Election**
General Manager Cockrell noted that the Board adopted an Order of Cancellation at its September meeting, formally declaring each candidate for the November 4, 2025 directors election unopposed and elected without the need to hold an election. Mr. Cockrell reported that after Election Day, each re-elected director will need to take the Oath of Office again, complete a Statement of Officer, and complete a final campaign finance report. Director Davis moved to authorize Board Officers and General Manager Cockrell to complete any remaining election-related filings or documentation as needed for the November 4, 2025 directors election. Motion seconded by Director Leva. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays – 2 Absent.

6. **Board Committee Reports**

a. **Finance**
Pete Golde noted that District expenses exceeded revenue in fiscal year 2025, as reflected in the approved September financial report, and noted the District entered fiscal year 2026 with less cash reserves than the previous year. Director Urie asked about unpaid fees owed to the District. General Manager Cockrell reported that unpaid fees are included in the revenue projections of the approved fiscal year 2026 budget. No action was taken under this agenda item.

b. **Legislative**

Cole Ruiz reported that the Texas Legislature has wrapped up their special sessions in Austin, but that groundwater will likely be an important topic during the interim. No action was taken under this agenda item.

c. **Science**
No action was taken under this agenda item.

d. **Outreach**
General Manager Cockrell reported that District staff are selecting a vendor to print the drought stage yard signs designed by Barbara Reyes . No action was taken under this agenda item.

e. **Rules**
No action was taken under this agenda item.

f. **Administrative**
President Scadden reported that he conducted General Manager Cockrell's annual performance review last month before the end of fiscal year 2025 and suggested the Board Administrative Subcommittee meet with Mr. Cockrell to discuss fiscal year 2026 planning. Mr. Cockrell reported that he completed performance reviews for District staff. No action was taken under this agenda item.

7. **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 September 2025. Mr. Cockrell reported 1 new well registration and 8 new well drilling authorization applications for the month. For fiscal year 2025, Mr. Cockrell reported that the District received a total of 61 well drilling authorization applications for new wells, 7 operating permit applications, and 17 well registrations. Mr. Cockrell also noted long-term water utility service connections were lower than projected, with 36 actual connections versus a projected 50. No action was taken under this agenda item.

b. **Groundwater Science and Monitoring Program**
General Manager Cockrell reported that District staff installed new telemetry units at several groundwater monitoring wells. Mr. Cockrell noted that the devices upload water level measurements daily from each well, which can be viewed and downloaded remotely. Mr. Cockrell presented graphs showing water level data from the District's Lakeside monitoring well (Lower Trinity and Middle Trinity aquifers) and the St. Stephen's monitoring well. No action was taken under this agenda item.

c. **Public Outreach and Education**
No action was taken under this agenda item.

d. **Other Informational Items of Board Interest**
General Manager Cockrell reported that the next Region K Regional Water Planning Group meeting will be held on January 16, 2026 at the LCRA Service Center. Mr. Cockrell provided an update on the implementation of the My Government Online permitting platform and reported

that the District can now accept electronic payments. Mr. Cockrell reported that an Intro to Rainwater Harvesting Workshop, presented by Hill County Alliance and Central Texas GCD, will be held on October 21, 2025 in Marble Falls. No action was taken under this agenda item.

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

   a. **Regular November Meeting**
   President Scadden reported that the Board had tentatively agreed to schedule its regular meetings later in the month to allow additional time to prepare, as suggested by District staff. He noted that the next regular board meeting will be held on Thursday, November 20, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. at the District's office.

9. **Adjournment**
Director Davis moved to adjourn the open meeting at 11:39 a.m. Motion seconded by Director Leva. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays – 2 Absent.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS THE 20th day of November, 2025.

Tim Van Ackeren

Tim Van Ackeren, Secretary