MEETING MINUTES

SOUTHWESTERN TRAVIS COUNTY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Regular Monthly Meeting

Thursday, July 16, 2026, 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, July 16, 2026, 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, July 16, 2026. Five directors were present at the meeting constituting a quorum, including President Scadden, Director Davis, Director Leva, Director Phillips, and Director Urie.

   Also present were General Manager Lane Cockrell, District Regulatory Compliance Specialist Virginia Smith, District Administrative and Hydrogeology Assistant Barbara Reyes, District General Counsel Cole Ruiz, Lyle Williams with Bee Cave Drilling, and Charlie Flatten and Lillian Sachitano with the Barton Springs-Edwards Aquifer Conservation District.

   The following individuals participated remotely by videoconference call: Audrey Cooper with Lloyd Gosselink, Tina Cooper with Austin Alliance Group, Alex Thompson with Bee Cave Drilling, Michael Miller, Sydney Weitkunat with Travis County, Carson Gilchrist with Save Our Springs Alliance, and Danna Oakes with Cypress Ranch WCID No. 1.

2. **Announcements**

   President Scadden announced that Director Tim Van Ackeren submitted his resignation from the Board of Directors and thanked him for his service to the District. The Board wished Director Van Ackeren well.

3. **Public Comments**

   No public comments were presented under this agenda item.

4. **Consent Agenda**

   President Scadden requested that item B be removed from the consent agenda for further discussion. Director Leva moved to approve items A and C on the consent agenda (listed below). Motion seconded by Director Phillips. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays.

General Manager Cockrell and Tina Cooper with Austin Alliance Group provided additional information regarding changes to the June 2026 Financial Report under item B. Director Davis moved to approve the June 2026 Financial Report as corrected. Motion seconded by Director Phillips. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays.

a. **Approve Minutes of June 18, 2026 Special Board Meeting**
b. **Approve June 2026 Financial Report**
c. **Approve Payment of Outstanding Invoices**

5. **Discussion and Possible Action**

a. **Resignation of Director Van Ackeren, including acceptance of the resignation, consideration of resulting Board and committee vacancies, potential appointment of committee replacements, and next steps to fill the Board vacancy**

President Scadden reported that Director Van Ackeren submitted his written resignation from the Board of Directors effective July 10, 2026. President Scadden thanked Director Van Ackeren for his years of service and dedication to the District. The Board wished Director Van Ackeren well. President Scadden moved to accept Director Van Ackeren's resignation from the Board of Directors. Motion seconded by Director Leva. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays.

General Manager Cockrell proposed purchasing commemorative gifts to thank Director Van Ackeren and Pete Golde for their long-term service to the District, noting that the District has previously purchased commemorative bookends for long-serving directors. After discussion, the Board approved purchasing a commemorative gift for each of them, with a maximum value of $150.00 per gift. Director Davis also proposed preparing thank-you notes from the Board and District staff.

President Scadden reported that Director Van Ackeren's resignation created vacancies on the Board Finance and Administrative Committee and Board Search Committee.

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 July 9, 2026, according to data from the U.S. Drought Monitor. Mr. Cockrell reported that 85% of the District is currently under moderate drought (D1) and 15% is abnormally dry (D0). Mr. Cockrell reported that recent rains in the Hill Country have improved drought conditions in portions of the District.

Director Davis reported that unfortunately the Hamilton Pool watershed remains dry and that the western portion of the District has received less precipitation.

President Scadden asked whether the District could incorporate water-level data from its monitoring well network into future drought-stage assessments in addition to U.S. Drought Monitor data. Mr. Cockrell described the data staff currently consider when making drought-stage recommendations, which are specified in District Rules, and noted that the District does consider monitoring-well data. He also noted that year-overyear declines in the Trinity Aquifer would make it difficult to establish a groundwater-level-based trigger methodology for District drought stages.

The Board discussed the possibility of revised drought methodology to better reflect conditions in the Hamilton Pool Management Zone and western portion of the District. President Scadden requested that District staff and General Counsel determine whether a rules amendment would be needed to address these potential changes.

Director Phillips moved to authorize District staff to lower the declared drought stage to D1 once conditions meet the threshold established in the District Rules. Motion seconded by President Scadden. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays.

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

General Manager Cockrell reported that there are no requests for Board consideration this month.

No action was taken under this agenda item.

d. **Proposed work order for INTERA to evaluate potential impacts of proposed groundwater production associated with operating permit applications**

General Manager Cockrell reported that in May the Board authorized President Scadden and District staff to work with INTERA to develop a work order to support staff's technical review of certain operating permit applications. Mr. Cockrell reported that he and President Scadden received a draft work order in June and requested revisions to the scope.

Mr. Cockrell presented a revised work order under the District's existing Master Services Agreement with INTERA. Mr. Cockrell reported that the work order would provide targeted technical review of larger or more complex permit applications to assist staff workload and expedite application processing. President Scadden reported that INTERA would prepare memorandums documenting its findings and could participate in permitting hearings upon request.

Director Davis moved to accept the Work Order with INTERA and authorize General Manager Cockrell to execute it. Motion seconded by Director Urie. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays.

e. **Update on the District's FY2026 Texas Water Development Board Groundwater Research, Science, and Data Collection Grant Proposal**

General Manager Cockrell reported that the Texas Water Development Board ("TWDB") approved approximately $275,000.00 in grant funding for the District's Trinity Aquifer Monitoring Wells project under the FY2026 Groundwater Research, Science, and Data Collection Grant Program, representing the full amount requested. Mr. Cockrell reported that staff are working with TWDB to provide information needed for them to develop a draft grant agreement and proposed sending the draft agreement to District General Counsel for review before execution by President Scadden, as previously authorized by the Board.

Mr. Cockrell reported that the funding will allow the District to drill two new Lower Trinity Aquifer monitoring wells with piezometers open to the Middle Trinity Aquifer, and to perform coring, geophysical logging, geochemical analysis, and aquifer testing. He reported that the District will share data from the monitoring wells with TWDB.

No action was taken under this agenda item.

f. **Establishment of retirement accounts for District employees**

General Manager Cockrell reported that the District's FY2026 budget includes a line item for a 3% retirement contribution for eligible employees and that the District's revised personnel policy allows the Board to approve contributions for regular full-time employees when funding is available. Mr. Cockrell reported that he is working with Austin Alliance Group to evaluate options for establishing retirement accounts for District staff. Mr. Cockrell reported that he met with a retirement account provider to discuss the District's needs and available options, and that staff anticipate presenting a proposal at the next regular meeting to facilitate account initiation and potential District contributions before the end of the fiscal year.

President Scadden reported that he had also contacted Fidelity regarding available account options.

No action was taken under this agenda item.

g. **District Priorities for 90th Legislative Session**

General Manager Cockrell provided an update on discussions regarding potential priorities for the upcoming 90th Texas Legislative Session. Mr. Cockrell reported that staff continue to work with the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance policy team and other stakeholders to refine legislative priorities and strategies and identify potential collaborators. Mr. Cockrell reported that the Board and staff have identified two primary legislative priorities, including amending Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code to allow groundwater conservation districts to differentiate between essential and non-essential groundwater uses in areas with limited groundwater availability, and amending the District's enabling act to increase the District's production fee cap.

Director Davis asked whether Chapter 36 currently allows districts to impose special permit conditions that differentiate between essential and non-essential groundwater uses during drought conditions. General Counsel Cole Ruiz reported that Chapter 36 does not expressly authorize districts to prioritize or differentiate between different beneficial uses, and the District could face challenges under current law. Mr. Ruiz noted that many districts across the state have expressed interest in similar amendments.

Mr. Cockrell also reported on discussions regarding granting all groundwater conservation districts in Texas full authority under Chapter 36, which would allow them to levy property taxes. Director Urie asked how many groundwater districts in Texas lack taxing authority. Cole Ruiz reported that most districts created after 2000 have taxing authority, and the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts tracks districts' funding mechanisms.

No action was taken under this agenda item.

h. **Update on Board vacancy**

General Manager Cockrell reported that two individuals have expressed interest in filling the two vacant at-large positions on the Board of Directors. Mr. Cockrell reported that Mr. Jonathan Grammer of the Pedernales Canyon area and Mr. Holland Van Ackeren of the Crumley Ranch Road area have completed the District's Expression of Interest Form. Mr. Cockrell reported that staff will coordinate with the Board Search Committee to schedule interviews with the interested candidates and report back to the full Board at a future meeting.

Mr. Cockrell also noted that the Board may appoint eligible individuals to fill Board vacancies under Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code, and that if the vacant position is not scheduled for election for more than two years at the time of appointment, the Board must hold an election for the unexpired term at the next regular Directors' election.

No action was taken under this agenda item.

i. **Update on Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with Travis County**

General Manager Cockrell reported that the District has received reimbursement from Travis County for its first five FY2026 invoices and has submitted a sixth invoice covering June 2026 expenses. Mr. Cockrell summarized the remaining funding available under the current agreement and reported that approximately $16,000 in unspent funds from the FY2025 agreement may be available as rollover funds under the current agreement. He reported that he is coordinating with Travis County staff to confirm the process for accessing those funds.

No action was taken under this agenda item.

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

General Manager Cockrell reported that the contested case remains abated while settlement discussions continue. He also reported that the West Travis County Public Utility Agency was scheduled to consider and potentially act on the line extension to serve the Mirasol Development at its July Board meeting today, and reported that he will update the Board regarding the results.

No action was taken under this agenda item.

6. **Board Committee Reports**

a. **Finance and Administrative**

No action was taken under this agenda item.

b. **Legislative**

Director Davis and District General Counsel Cole Ruiz reported that concerns regarding water use by data centers have become a significant topic during the legislative interim.

No action was taken under this agenda item.

c. **Science**

No action was taken under this agenda item.

d. **Outreach**

No action was taken under this agenda item.

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

f. **Search**
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 in June 2026. He reported that the District received four well registrations, one new well drilling authorization application, and one new long-term water utility service connection. Mr. Cockrell also reported that FY2026 groundwater production to date by reporting permittees totaled approximately 421.5 acre-feet (137.3 million gallons).

No action was taken under this agenda item.

b. **Groundwater Science and Monitoring Program**

General Manager Cockrell presented recent groundwater-level monitoring data.

President Scadden requested a status update on implementation of Archangel Catholic School's special permit conditions regarding rainwater harvesting. Mr. Cockrell reported that he will contact the permittee and provide an update at a future meeting .

No action was taken under this agenda item.

c. **Public Outreach and Education**

General Manager Cockrell reported that the District's website received 1018 unique visitors in June. Mr. Cockrell also provided an update on the interactive map on the District's website, which now includes wells from the TWDB groundwater database.

Barbara Reyes provided an update on the District's social media pages and reported that drought updates are posted to Instagram.

No action was taken under this agenda item.

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

General Manager Cockrell reported that the most recent Lower Colorado River (Region K) Regional Water Planning Group meeting was held June 24, 2026, at the LCRA Service Center. Mr. Cockrell reported that the District was invited to participate in Travis

County's Groundwater Forum to discuss shared challenges facing groundwater supplies in Travis County. Mr. Cockrell also reported that a County-to-County Groundwater Availability Working Group meeting will be held virtually on July 20, 2026, and that the next GMA 9 joint planning meeting will be held on September 29, 2026, at the Cow Creek GCD offices in Boerne, Texas, following the close of the 90-day public comment period. Mr. Cockrell reported that the District's auditor had completed the FY2025 financial audit and that the final report will be presented to the Board in August.

No action was taken under this agenda item.

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

   a. **Regular July Meeting**

   President Scadden reported that the next regular Board meeting will be held on Thursday, August 20, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. at the District's office.

   Mr. Cockrell reported that agenda items will include the FY2025 financial audit results and the draft FY2027 budget.

9. **Adjournment**

   Director Davis moved to adjourn the open meeting at 11:50 a.m. Motion seconded by Director Phillips. Motion carried 5 Ayes – 0 Nays – 1 Absent.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS THE 20th day of August, 2026.

Michael Leva

Michael Leva, Secretary Treasurer