

Meeting Summary Notes
H-GAC's Clean Rivers Program
Basin Steering Committee Meeting
Conducted Via ZOOM on Thursday, January 19, 2023

The first of two 2023 meetings of the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Clean Rivers Program (CRP) Basin Steering Committee (BSC) was Thursday, January 19, 2023, via the ZOOM virtual meeting platform. Todd Running, Water Resources Program Manager, conducted the meeting. Kendall Guidroz and Rachel Windham facilitated the meeting with support from staff covering various topics. The meeting was called to order at 1:30 PM.

Attendance List: (See attached list for additional details)

Stacey Carr, Danielle Cioce, John Ellis, Lucy Flores, Celina Gauthier Lowry, George Guillen, Kristin Lambrecht, Paul Nelson, Jenny Oakley, Jason Pinchback, Christian Rines, Christian Rines, Susanna Scott, Jamie Shakar, Linda Shead, Maria-Theresa Sigua, Shane Simpson, Darryl Tate, Jenna Wadman, and Kyle Wright.

H-GAC Staff Present:

Todd Running, Jean Wright, Brian Sims, Jessica Casillas, Kendall Guidroz, Rachel Windham, and Jonathan Morris.

Welcome

Host, Todd Running, and Facilitators, Kendall Guidroz and Rachel Windham, opened the meeting at 1:30 PM with a welcome and then gave instructions on how the meeting would be conducted, and how individuals could ask questions and participate in ZOOM discussions. Running gave a brief outline of the agenda for the meeting and conducted a roll call among those who were visible in the meeting's participant window. The ZOOM meeting was recorded with transcripts provided for follow-up.

Public Comment

Running asked if there were any public comments, for which, no one spoke up.

Presentations

Running gave a presentation to the attendees regarding the *draft* FY2024-2025 Scope of Work and the *draft* FY2024-2025 Budget. Both were submitted to TCEQ on 12/15/2022. Running highlighted some of the goals of each which included keeping administrative costs at or below 10%. Task 1 also includes staff training of which some are required and others are elective; field monitoring training of location partners; subcontract management and training of local partners; and quarterly progress reports. Task 2 addresses quality assurance which requires development and maintaining the Multi-Basin QAPP, also includes conducting the Regional Monitoring Workgroup meetings; conducting field audits; funding NELAP Proficiency Tests and accreditation costs. Task 3 addresses water quality monitoring. This includes conducting the

annual Coordinated Monitoring Meeting and updating the Coordinated Monitoring Schedule with sites selected for monitoring each year; plus, conducting various types of monitoring such as routine, 24-hour, or site characterizations at those sites. Task 4 is all activities related to data management such as manage all monitoring data from receiving, to verifying and validating data from all local partners, formatting and submitting to TCEQ's SWQMIS database; maintaining TCEQ approved water quality data on the H-GAC web site and maintaining the Water Resources Information Mapping (WRIM) tool; and upgrading and maintaining GIS data management and analysis capabilities. Task 5 requires H-GAC to produce the annual Basin Highlights Report (BHR) with the annual data analysis and updating H-GAC's 'Frog Chart' which provides a brief snapshot of water quality in each segment. This report is posted to H-GAC's web site as well. Task 6 includes all public outreach and stakeholder participation conducted throughout the year plus, promoting and conducting Texas Stream Team volunteer monitoring program throughout the region.

The FY2024-2025 Budget includes an increased base allocation over the 'normal' allocation levels of the past. This is the first increase since the early 2000's. The new total allocation is \$2,115,373 for the biennium. This budget covers a percentage of 22 different staff members or 6 Full-Time Equivalent staff members that cover all six tasks in the Scope of Work plus, administrative support staff. This budget all covers the continuation of contracts with four subcontractors.

Senior Planner Brian Sims gave a presentation about the 2023 BHR being developed this year. This BHR will be a Watershed Characterization of the following three segments/subsegments: Greens Bayou Above Tidal (1016), Greens Bayou Tidal (1006) and Halls Bayou (1006D). The draft is due in mid-February and the final is due in May. The goal of this report is to describe key sources that are likely to impact water quality and provide a collection of 'one the ground', local knowledge for other TCEQ program areas to use when prioritizing monitoring efforts. Sections of the report include reviewing data, mapping land use, mapping wastewater treatment facilities and permitted On-site Sanitary Sewer Facilities (OSSF), tracking watershed events, reviewing information from site visits, and communicating with monitoring personnel, stakeholders and local residents. The draft is due on February 15th. The final is due May 15th.

Jean Wright, Senior Planner and Monitoring Coordinator, gave a short presentation on Water Quality Monitoring in the region. She reported that Coordinated Monitoring Meetings were conducted the last week of March 2023, with an individual meeting with each local partner. Staff and local partners will be investigating whether any monitoring sites are located within a 'vulnerability communities' area to decide if those areas are adequately represented. With TCEQ input, H-GAC may be able to move some of the 24-hour Dissolved Oxygen monitoring efforts to different locations in the region. The Coordinated Monitoring Schedule for FY2024 will begin September 1, 2023.

Other Business and Announcements

Running wrapped up by inviting meeting attendees to share meeting announcements.

Dr. George Guillen announced that EIH would once again be participating in National Rivers & Streams Assessment coming up this summer.

Dr. Jenny Oakley also announced EIH would be hosting a SWQM training opportunity again from March 14-17, 2023. The first day is strictly water sampling and flow measurements. The other three days are about biological monitoring – nekton, habitat, benthics, and how to fill-out paperwork and submit data to TCEQ. Everyone has the option to take either one day or the complete four-day course.

Wright announced the second BSC meeting of 2023 would be held on Wednesday, May 31, 2023.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:34 PM.