

**Citizens Advisory Panel  
June 13, 2006  
Meeting Summary**

**Attendance:**

Howard Peak	Ben Youngblood
Gene Dawson Jr.	Steven Schauer
Orlando Cisneros	Dr. Ed Roy
Dave Barton	Susan Wright
Jerry Green	Marianne Kestenbaum
Nettie Hinton	Eiginio Rodriguez
Rene Cortez	Luci Cockrell
Richard Araujo	Evelyn Bonavita
Joe Fulton	

**Excused:**

Dr. Weldon Hammond	Gerald Mullin
Andy Johnston	Tony Navarrete

**Absent:**

Eddie Gonzalez	Jack C. Jordan
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**SAWS Staff:**

Calvin Finch	Janelle Okorie
Michelle Eisenhauer	Rene Gonzalez
Joseph Rippole	

**Board Member:**

Doug Leonhard

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Howard Peak at 6:00 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Peak asked if there were any changes to the minutes. Mr. Green moved to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved for the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Water Resource Committee Update (Open Discussion)**

Mr. Finch introduced Mr. David Johnson, the new VP of Customer Service. Mr. Finch mentioned that the main topic at the WR Committee was the pending drought restrictions. He noted that Ms. Karen Guz gave a briefing on the process that the system will follow if the city does go into restrictions. Ms. Bonavita asked Mr. Finch if he could brief the committee on the restrictions. Mr. Finch talked about stage I, II and III restrictions. Mr. Rodriguez also asked if there were any issues with new landscaping. Mr. Finch explained that SAWS gives variances, which are 3 weeks for new landscapes. Mr. Peak asked if the sub-committee working on the surcharge had a copy of the charge for the group. Mr. Finch asked Ms. Hinton if she had a copy of the charge, but she said that she did not.

**LCRA Benchmarking Review (Open Discussion)**

Dr. Roy opened the discussion by asking the group to review the revised draft of the benchmarking from the previous meeting. He then asked the group for any comments. Mr. Peak asked if there were going to be any community outreach events in this area since all of the past outreach events had been in the Region K watershed. Mr. Rippole stated SAWS plans on starting its outreach program in July of this year, and that the public meetings would be focused on Bexar county and the counties that would be affected by the proposed alternative routes of the pipeline.

**3. Will the project's conclusions be based on sound and reliable data, scientific knowledge, and engineering capability; has supporting documentation been provided?** Mr. Dawson mentioned that there were not a lot of project conclusions at this time, but the project action plan is based on sound scientific methods. Dr. Roy had the comment of changing the second sentence in the response from staff from "all results are based on sound, reliable data" to "all studies must use sound and reliable data". Mr. Finch stated this project has more technical advisory committees than all of the other projects put together. Dr. Roy asked if SAWS had significant input into the selection of experts, expert panels, and consultants. Mr. Rippole stated that he was not on the project when the advisory panels were created, but there was a need for a replacement in which SAWS was involved in the selection.

**4. Is this project consistent with the ecological needs of the affected areas; is the project sound ecologically?** Mr. Rippole stated that the bay health is a requirement under the legislature. It is a requirement of the agencies involved to do everything they can to protect the bay health. Mr. Cortez wanted to make sure that the System was not going to be held responsible for a species that is already in decline by pursuing this project. Mr. Finch stated that these issues are especially appropriate in Matagorda Bay since the bay has been manipulated by letting sea water into the bay. Mr. Rippole also added that the bay has changed because of the diversion channel that was created 10 years ago. Mr. Schauer stated noting the estimated completion dates of the studies might be helpful for future review of this benchmarking by future committee members. Ms. Hinton stated that it might also be useful to name the responsible participants doing the studies for future clarification. Mr. Dawson pointed out the summary presentation of the project provided the study timeline and identifies the consultants responsible for each study, and that the committee should not let the benchmarking document float around independently without it being attached to the project summary that the benchmarking is based on. Ms. Bonavita stated that the studies have been started, and that the guidelines have already been built into the studies, and cannot go into the study groups and make changes at this point. Mr. Rippole added that the study period program was developed back at the kick off at the very initial steps of the project. It took two years to develop that using both in house SAWS and LCRA staff the SRP panel plus the consultants to develop a study plan that would sustain development of the project for 7 to 10 years. However we still have the opportunity to get in as they develop the continuing taskforce for continuing work to get in and tweak those to make sure that there is specific issues that need to be addressed we can start working those issues into those taskforce to be evaluated. We cannot get them to drop a study and start a new one, unless we can prove there is a valid need to do that. Dr. Roy asked the group unless they had a specific point to make on one of the 7 topics, that the group move on to the next question.

**5. How does the project insure water quality-does it meet the policy of no degradation of our drinking water?** Mr. Rodriguez asked about the water quality that SAWS would receive from LCRA. Mr. Finch stated that the water would be treated to the same level of quality that the Edwards supply maintains to make the integration as easy as possible. Mr. Peak stated that SAWS needs to be careful in stating that the water quality of other sources is going to be equal to other sources that SAWS currently uses. Mr. Fulton added that when he read the question he interpreted it as saying no functional degradation. He also said that SAWS needs to be careful with terms like "no degradation" because they are not defined. He said that someone is always going to say that the new source taste different. Mr. Rodriguez asked if there was an output or

treatment bi-product for this project. Mr. Finch said that there would be, but there would be less problems than a saltwater facility. The bi-product would probably be treated at our treatment facilities.

**6. Does the project honor the long-term hydrologic balance of aquifers (recharge = discharge while maintaining flexibility over the long-term); how is this documented?** Ms. Bonavita asked if the question pertained to the hydrologic balance of the Edwards or all other aquifers. Mr. Youngblood said that he thinks the SAWS board adopted a policy not to mine any aquifers. Mr. Green mentioned that was quite a stretch and Mr. Fulton added that there are not many sand aquifers that do not get mined. Mr. Youngblood stated that's why the statement of long-term was added to give SAWS the flexibility. Mr. Green stated that the Gulf Coast Aquifer is already having a problem with subsidence. Mr. Finch said that all of the points stated are important and should be addressed in the science, but at the very least we need to make our staff and the board aware that these are going to be among the issues. Mr. Rippole added that URS is doing the groundwater study for the project. He also mentioned that SAWS, LCRA and URS are working very close with the groundwater districts to meet their requirements for the permit and the study results. Mr. Rodriguez asked if the river recharges any aquifers in that area. Mr. Rippole said that they are looking at the deeper aquifers that feed more into the bay.

**7. Does this project adversely impact the aquifers involved; can mitigation resolve any impacts and at what cost?** Mr. Youngblood stated that this would pretty much receive the same answer as before. **Does this project adversely impact the surface water involved; can mitigation resolve any impacts and at what cost?** Mr. Finch said the basic tenor of surface water is that the water is collected during periods of time of excessive flow when everyone's water rights have been met. There were no comments for this question.

**8. Is this project in accord with SAWS 50-year Water Resource Plan?** The committee agreed it was. **Is this project in accord with the Region L Plan?** The committee agreed it was.

**9. Will this project support the economic growth of the SAWS service area in the foreseeable future?** Mr. Finch reminded the committee that the board approved the WR Plan which would allow the System to act as a water wholesaler and that the LCRA-SAWS Project would play a big role in supplying water for the whole county. Mr. Youngblood said that it sounds like SAWS plans to expand beyond what it is today. Mr. Schauer asked how the projections were being developed for economic growth and if SAWS was using the same projections as the other agencies or is each agency doing their own thing. Mr. Finch stated that all the agencies involved in the project were using the same projections. Mr. Finch said that this was not an easy decision for the Board of Trustees to make. He also added that SAWS is in the best position to handle the continued development of the county. Mr. Peak stated that there are other purveyors serving citizens of San Antonio that are not being able to provide for the customers they have right now. Mr. Dawson commented if this project comes online in 2020 and if we are lucky to get the 150,000 ac/ft yield for SAWS out of the project, we won't need that water. Looking at the projections and the other projects that we plan to have online we eventually need it, we use it for 10 years, and then we don't have it anymore. If we have spent money on a take or pay for 300,000 ac/ft for existing water supply, ASR, and the LCRA we have a yearly cost for 300,000 ac/ft when we are only using 200,000. So the actual cost of the 200,000 is much higher on a

yearly basis than doing it linear and saying we using 300,000 ac/ft a year. So that really says it really emphasizes why SAWS has to be the regional provider of water so we have a market for the rest of the water. Mr. Finch said as we progress these projects and they all remain viable then we have to make some hard decisions, but it also gives us some flexibility and takes pressure off resources. Mr. Peak mentioned that it was at a cost to the citizens of SA if because we are giving up the chance to pump cheap water so we can use more expensive water because we have it and we are going to lose it at some point. Mr. Peak also mentioned that when the committee gets to the end of this exercise someone is going to have to get to a point where all of the projects that are in the plan are coordinated in such a way that we don't run into these kind of problems that are being identified and that we are able some how to balance the various sources and costs. Mr. Finch stated that at some point we have to make some hard decisions, we have to determine what the ratepayers can afford, and the board has to decide how long we can develop water projects if our partners in the region decide they don't need the water or don't want to participate with SAWS. Ms. Wright asked a question about the SAWS service area. Mr. Finch said that the board sees it as being the whole county of Bexar. Dr. Roy said that in his opinion it refers to a changing region. Mr. Dawson said SAWS provides water within their CCN and under contracts for service. Mr. Leonhard said that he was pleased with the group's comments and wanted to thank everyone for their thoughts on the subject. He said that this is what the CAP was intended to be in his opinion. He said SAWS made the decision that we had the capability to provide for that growth so we are going down that path. Mr. Youngblood mentioned that last year staff came and briefed the committee on the Water Resource Plan Update, and that the committee agreed to support PS2. He also discussed the fact that if a water purveyor was to collapse that SAWS would only have to meet the delta between their water needs and their permitted Edwards water.

**10. *Is this project in accord with Texas & Federal water law or could it be subject to litigation?*** Dr. Roy stated that the staff response did not really answer the second part of the question which pertained to litigation. Mr. Rippole stated that there was no current or pending litigation. Mr. Fulton said that he guaranteed that the project would be litigated. Mr. Finch replied by saying that we are always subject to litigation. Ms. Bonavita said that the question only referred to Texas Water Law and that it might be best to include Federal Law since we will need federal permits to move forward.

**11. *Is this project equitable for all geographic areas served by SAWS?*** Mr. Finch stated that it has not been to long since our community had been very sensitive to where our water came from. He also mentioned with all of the projects that SAWS is looking at the board wants all of the customers to know that all of the water will be equal. Mr. Dawson stated that it was probably no accident that first projects BSR and Western Canyon came in on the Northside of the county. Mr. Fulton clarified that Mr. Finch was talking about Applewhite. Mr. Finch asked if the group wanted to weigh cost to desirability of the kind of integration. Mr. Peak stated as long as the water was of good quality it did not matter where it came from. Mr. Fulton stated that there would have to be multiple points of integration for the amount of water that would be delivered. Mr. Peak reiterated that the community at large is probably more interested in just having water rather than where it comes from. Ms. Hinton mentioned that there was a part of the SAWS staff response that seemed to be out of place for this question, and that if it is suppose to be there, clarification was needed. Mr. Green stated that most cities have cleaned up their water to make it taste better.

**12. Has a cost-benefit analysis been done on this project?**

In response to staffs answer Ms. Wright said that it meant no. She asked when will a real cost-benefit analysis be done, who will do it and how will it be initiated. Mr. Rippole responded he did not think the project was at the point to determine when exactly it will be done. Ms. Wright said maybe we can find the things to be in place before it can be done. Mr. Rippole said that we are in the process in doing some of those things with LCRA. Mr. Youngblood said a cost-benefit analysis identifies what the costs are, who bares the costs, what the benefits are and who gets those benefits. Without a plan that states how, when and who is going to do it is an issue that needs to be looked at. Mr. Peak commented that the committee has asked tonight, when will it be accomplished. Ms. Okorie stated that we could give a more concrete answer in terms of timeline. **Dr. Roy moved on the next portion of the question. Has a social and economic impact analysis been done on this project?** Mr. Peak stated that this would have the same answer as the previous question. **Dr. Roy moved on the next portion of the question. What is the cost per acre-foot for this project?** Mr. Youngblood stated that he felt Mr. Dawson's comments on (if we only get a certain number of ac/ft. but we only get them in a year when we only need a certain amount) how does that increase the ac/ft cost. Mr. Finch said that this is something that we have to keep on top of, and as changes take place the cost will be updated. **Dr. Roy moved on the next portion of the question. What is the effect on the ratepayers?** Mr. Dawson commented that it would be interesting to know the general impact to ratepayers, what this would do to rates and how we plan to implement this project. Mr. Finch replied that staff and the finance department is working on these types of issues right now.

**13. Overall, where does this project rank compared to other projects?** Mr. Youngblood stated that staff had provided a tech feasibility matrix in the past, and that this project ranked high on the risk factor of the feasibility. Mr. Peak said that the committee needs to see the costs associated to all the projects and also information on the projects that have been rejected so the committee can rate the projects against each other. Mr. Youngblood stated that there was a graph in the Water Resource Plan that plotted cost vs. technical feasibility that would help. Mr. Dawson thinks that this process worked very well. He also thinks the project is a very good project for Texas as well as San Antonio, but he does not see the immediate demand. The issue is who carries the cost of this project. Ms. Bonavita said that the SAWS board commitment to diversity is a big factor of the decision to move forward on this project. Mr. Peak agreed with Ms. Bonavita, but felt that he would be more comfortable if everybody would participate in this exercise, so the cost would be shared more equitably.

**Citizens to be Heard**

*Mr. Larry Hoffmann & Mr. Jack Finger signed up to talk to discuss issues with the LCRA-SAWS Project.*

**Schedule Next Meeting:** August 8, 2006.

**Adjournment:** With no further business to discuss, the Citizens Advisory Panel Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m., by Mr. Howard Peak.