

**Minutes of the Edisto RBC Meeting
Wednesday, April 20, 2022**

Meeting was held in-person and virtually via the Zoom application

Members Present: John Bass, Danny Burbage, Hugo Krispyn, Alta Mae Marvin, David Bishop, Hank Stallworth, Jason Thompson, Brandon Stutts, Alan Mehrzad, Amanda Sievers, Laura Bagwell, Alex Tolbert, Johny Haralson, Landrum Weathers, Jeremy Walther, Mark Aakhus, Kirk Bell, Eric Odom, Will Williams and Joel Duke

Members Absent: Jerry Waters, Trey McMillan, JJ Jowers, Jr (Richard Ness, alternate, present)

Planning Team Present: John Boyer, Scott Harder, Tom Walker, Rob Devlin, Leigh Anne Monroe, Jeff Allen, Andrew Waters, Chikezie Isiguzo, Andy Wachob, Joe Gellici, Matt Petkewich, Greg Cherry and Andrea Hughes

Total Present: 44

1. Call to Order, Approval of Agenda, and Approval of March 16 minutes.

Hank Stallworth called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. He reminded everyone the meeting is being recorded. He announced we have a quorum of Council members.

Hank reviewed the agenda that had been previously submitted to the council. Hugo approved the motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Alta Mae Marvin. Approved unanimously.

Hank asked for motions to approve the minutes from the March 16 meetings. Danny Burbage approved the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Jason Thompson. Approved unanimously.

2. Public and Agency Comment

John invited members of the public or agency partners to submit comments. There were no comments submitted from the public or agency participants.

3. Old Business/New Business

Alta Mae Marvin gave a report on debris collecting in Edisto River. She represents the Edisto Canoe and Kayak Commission. Is any state agency responsible for keeping rivers navigable? How do people in other areas manage river debris for recreational use? They have several areas that are almost non navigable right now in the Colleton/Dorchester region. She said she is aware of some grants available but they are limited to government agencies.

Hugo responded that this is a common issue he gets contacted about from recreational users. He reported that some state license fee funding is available to the counties for recreation paddling support. However, it is hard to find contractors to do this work due to liability and worker safety issues. Hank reported that funds from the Water Rec Fund at DNR can be used for this purpose. It's up to local legislative delegations to request this funding, so members should contact one of their representatives for funding requests to DNR. He suggested the RBC may want to address these kind of stewardship issues moving forward.

Jeremy Walther asked if this is the proper venue for this conversation for this group, since we are focused on water quantity. Hank responded that part of this group's mission is to address issues about the way we use the river. Amanda said that Orangeburg has used a contractor named Dorado Services from Florida for this type of work. John reminded the group that the RBC may make recommendations regarding this type of use issue.

John reminded the RBC that the Groundwater Technical Advisory Committee will be meeting in May. If the RBC has any questions for the Groundwater TAC, submit them to Scott Harder. The meeting has not been scheduled yet.

John reported that he has not been able to contact member Trey McMillan, who has now missed five meetings. He reminded the group that the RBC agreed they could hold a vote on removal of members who missed more than two meetings. David Bishop said that based on the previous discussion, we had agreed to vote to remove the member. A motion was made by David Bishop to remove the member and was seconded by Jason Thompson. The motion passed unanimously. John reported that we do not have a viable alternate for Trey at this point.

John reminded the RBC that a third of the members have a two-year commitment, which will be expiring this June. The planning committee hopes 2-year members will agree to extend their term commitment until the plan is completed and adopted. Two-year members can also petition to re-apply if they want to. Some members may want to finish the plan but not reapply for another term. All two-year members in attendance agreed to remain through the completion of the plan. Hank asked John to poll all of the members individually after the meeting to confirm their decision and also touch base with the 2-year members not in attendance.

John reviewed the remaining schedule. He suggested we may need to start meeting longer in order to finish the plan according to the revised schedule. He asked the members if they are willing to extend the meeting times. There was consensus that the meetings could be extended beyond the current 9 a.m.- 1 p.m. time frame. John said the request is for the RBC to plan on meeting until about 2 or 3 p.m. moving forward. Hank encouraged members to allow more time so we can finish by November.

4. Update on Edisto River Basin Plan Chapters

John reported that the working versions of Chapters 2, 3, and 4 are underway but are not yet ready for review by the RBC.

5. Groundwater Management Strategies, Monitoring and Conditions

John Boyer presented three objectives for RBC Groundwater Management recommendations:

1. Consider potential recommendations for groundwater management strategies.
2. Review existing monitoring networks and consider recommendations for enhanced monitoring.
3. Consider potential recommendations for groundwater conditions.

John Boyer and Matthew Petkewich (USGS) gave a presentation on the three groundwater objectives outlined at the beginning of the presentation with potential recommendations for the RBC to consider.

Discussion: What is the impact of agricultural water conservation and efficiency strategies?

Landrum Weathers asked if these projections used the same scenarios as the SWAM model? He would like to see recommendations based on a moderate growth projection with a 15% adjustment as a more realistic 50-year scenario. He thinks we need to take into account improved practices and efficiencies over that time. John asked the group if they were comfortable with asking USGS to run Landrum's recommended projections. There was discussion about running Landrum's recommendation for all scenarios. Scott Harder reminded the group that the planning scenario is the high-growth scenario. Further discussion revolved around the impact of land-use projections. Andrea reported that the model takes into account land-use change projections. After further discussion, Jason proposed that the model look at a 20% adjustment in groundwater recharge in the model to account for land-use changes. Scott Harder reminded the RBC that it needs to make sure it is planning for severe droughts so we can cover demand in those extreme dry conditions. Several suggested groundwater scenarios were noted for a future presentation and discussion at an ERBC meeting.

Discussion: What is the impact of transitioning a portion of the pumping from the Crouch Branch aquifer to McQueen Branch aquifer in Calhoun County region to adjust for a high-demand scenario?

Discussion: What is the impact of transitioning a portion of the pumping from the McQueen Branch aquifer to the (shallower) Crouch Branch aquifer in Lexington County?

Landrum began discussion by asking if we are going to be make recommendations on a certain percentage or just make more general recommendations. David Bishop replied that without actual numbers the recommendations are unlikely to be adopted. This led to general discussion about the desired scope of the RBC recommendations, i.e. whether they should focus on desired outcomes for specific areas or the Edisto Basin as a whole. Discussion focused on the role of RBC, with several members expressing confusion about the scope of groundwater

recommendations. Scott Harder replied that he anticipated this confusion because the PPAC might not have anticipated some of the issues being considered by the RBC. He suggested we need further clarification from PPAC regarding scope of RBC recommendations for groundwater management strategies. However, Scott added that to drop the groundwater recommendations seems to violate the spirit of the PPAC framework because it entails planning for both surface and groundwater.

After further discussion the RBC agreed by consensus on the following steps:

For next meeting, Matt Petkewich will run:

- 15% reduction in agricultural use using the moderate and high-growth models
- Testing sensitivity of recharge by increasing 20%.
- Modeling groundwater recharge for Calhoun County with all future withdrawals coming from McQueen Branch aquifer.

John Boyer noted this is five new projections requested for the next meeting. Matt said that information/modeling is doable for the next meeting. However, John reminded members that running new projections takes considerable time and effort, and in order to finish the plan according to the revised timetable, we need to limit the amount of requested new modeling.

2. Discussion of Monitoring in Groundwater Areas of Concern

For details of presentation, see presentation slides (distributed at meeting).

Technical Plan Recommendations for Consideration on Monitoring (from presentation):

- Suggested Recommendation: Request SCDNR work with SCDHEC, USGS and other partners to enhance monitoring capabilities in Crouch Branch aquifer of Calhoun County and McQueen Branch of Lexington County where model simulations indicate the potential for water levels to drop below the top of the aquifer.
- Suggested Recommendation: Request SCDNR work with SCDHEC and USGS to carve out a regional groundwater model covering the potential groundwater areas of concern and:
1. Further calibrate the model to local land conditions, including seasonal drawdowns;
2. Evaluate seasonal drawdowns through 2070 using the planning scenarios.

Discussion centered around the scope of RBC monitoring recommendations. Should recommendations address specific areas for enhanced monitoring or for the Edisto Basin broadly. Based on the discussion, the following modified recommendations were presented.

- Modified recommendation #1: Recommend SCDNR work with SCDHEC, USGS and other partners (e.g. property owners, well, owners, Capacity Use Areas) to enhance monitoring capabilities in areas where model simulations indicate potential for water levels to drop below the aquifer.

- Modified Recommendation #2: Recommend SCDNR work with SCDHEC and USGS to carve out a regional groundwater model covering the potential groundwater areas of concern and: 1. Further calibrate the model to local land conditions, including seasonal drawdowns: 2. Evaluate seasonal drawdowns through 2070 using the planning scenarios.

John asked for a straw vote on adding these draft recommendations as modified to the plan's proposed final recommendations. All members agreed in an informal straw vote. We will make a final vote on these recommendations when we make final votes on all plan recommendations in a few months.

Break: The group went to break from 11:15 - 11:30.

Discussion 3. Possible Groundwater Condition Recommendations

For details of presentation on this discussion, see presentation slides (distributed at meeting).

Examples of Possible Groundwater Conditions (presented by John):

- Maintaining groundwater levels at or above a fixed elevation over a planning period.
- Preserving certain volume of groundwater in storage
- Maintaining water levels in the Gordon, Crouch Branch and McQueen Branch qualifiers above the top of each aquifer (or a certain distance above the top of each aquifer to maintain a buffer)

Discussion again centered on questions about the appropriate scope for the plan's groundwater condition recommendations. In conclusion, John Boyer noted that the discussion seemed to indicate that the RBC does not want to identify specific groundwater condition recommendations but instead focus on a "desired future condition" approach in our final recommendations.

6. Review of Portfolios of Water Conservation and Efficiency Strategies

John Boyer reminded RBC members that the RBC needs to evaluate the feasibility of specific strategies distributed prior to meeting. He asked RBC members to review proposed strategies (Slide 43) and provide feedback to the planning committee (via John) before the next meeting. He asked members to focus on feedback regarding their specific area of expertise/resource-user type. The goal is to vote on adopting a portfolio of strategies at the May meeting, so please contact John with any recommendations or comments asap after reviewing the proposed strategies.

7. Surface Water Management Strategies and Conditions (working lunch)

For details of presentation, see presentation slides (distributed at meeting) and potential strategies (distributed in memo prior to meeting). Recommended strategies are listed on Slide 48.

Jason Thompson led discussion on his recommendations for the drought response strategy.

Break at 12:15 to get lunch. Meeting resumed at 12:20.

Jason asked for a straw vote on the proposed incremental low flow strategy (see presentation for specific proposal). There were 9 votes in favor, out of 18 members present (3 online members did not vote). After discussion Jason proposed making low-flow strategies only applicable to largest withdrawers (total permits above 60 mgm) to protect smaller withdrawers that can't afford other withdrawal options. He asked for a straw vote on this altered version: No votes were added for this proposal.

Discussion centered on equity of Jason's proposal. Jeremy Walther said he did not support the straw vote because he feels like the water availability of people in Charleston or coastal area is not pertinent to the limitations on water use in his region of Edisto because users in his region use less water than the Charleston/coastal areas. This led to a general discussion about whether plan recommendations should favor low-demand users over high-demand users, without resolution. Hugo said that the initial version of Jason's proposal is easier to understand, therefore it is his favored version. Hank adds that he supports the first version because it affects everyone equally.

John calls discussion to end at 1:11 due to time constraints. Discussion on Jason's proposal will continue at a future meeting. Jason asked people who didn't vote for his proposal to think about what level of surface water conditions they can endorse, if any.

8. Upcoming RBC Agenda and Schedule

John reviewed the proposed schedule to complete the River Basin Plan by the end of the year. (See draft schedule on Slide 53). He asks the group to plan for a 5 to 6 hour meeting in May. Therefore, the May meeting will adjourn approximately at 3 p.m. The next three meetings will have ambitious agendas in order to release the plan by the end of 2022, so John asks members to come prepared and able to attend for longer periods so we can address all remaining tasks.

Next meeting is Wednesday, May 18.

9. Meeting Conclusion

Meeting was adjourned at 1:16 p.m.

Minutes: Andrew Waters and Tom Walker

Approved: May 18, 2022

RBC Chat:

09:04:39 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
public comments?

09:04:53 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
agency rep comments?

09:05:27 From Amanda Sievers (Orangeburg Co) to Everyone:
Good morning!

09:05:33 From Mark Aakhus to Everyone:
Morning

09:07:53 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
good morning!

09:08:03 From Johny Haralson to Everyone:
Johny Haralson is on line-tks

09:08:04 From Will Williams to Everyone:
good morning

09:08:12 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
thanks all

09:10:51 From Amanda Sievers (Orangeburg Co) to Everyone:
Orangeburg Co contracted for debris removal services in the past

09:11:08 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
thanks i'll mention it amanda

09:11:50 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
who did they contract with amanda do you know

09:12:32 From Amanda Sievers (Orangeburg Co) to Everyone:
Dorado Services Inc, a FL based company

09:12:45 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
thanks!

09:17:58 From Amanda Sievers (Orangeburg Co) to Everyone:


09:20:50 From Mark Aakhus to Everyone:
i'm willing to stay on

09:26:28 From Alex's iPad to Everyone:
I agree with Jeremy. Stay on point. Don't extend meetings.

09:27:23 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
thank you

09:44:30 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
thanks alex

10:03:32 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
can everyone hear the conversation ok

10:03:58 From Eric Krueger to Everyone:
Pretty good -- it's much better with headphones, if you have them.

10:04:13 From Jeffery Allen (SC) to Everyone:
Some better than others - Scott needs to speak a little louder if possible.

10:04:35 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
ok i'll let john know thx

11:03:40 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
straw poll in support of these 2 points - any online members support?

11:16:37 From Mark Aakhus to Everyone:
yes

11:16:38 From Mark Aakhus to Everyone:
in favor

11:17:20 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
just a straw poll at this point. will be finalized at a later meeting

11:17:41 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
15 min break

11:18:22 From iPhone to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
Need to leave for dr appointment. Catch up with minutes.

12:13:48 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
12 mins for lunch

12:28:44 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
any straw votes for these as worded

12:28:46 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
?