

PANHANDLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Minutes

June 25, 2015

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission was held on Thursday, June 25, 2015, at 1:30 p.m. in the PRPC Board Room, 415 South West Eighth Avenue, Amarillo, Potter County, Texas.

Judge John James presided.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Don Allred, Oldham County Judge
- Cleo Castro, Cactus
- Juan Cantu, Lipscomb County Commissioner
- Irene Favila, Hereford
- Bob Gober, Councilman, City of Canadian
- Ronnie Gordon, Hartley County Judge
- Dr. William Hallerberg, Canadian River Municipal Water Authority
- Paul Harpole, Mayor, City of Amarillo
- Ernie Houdashell, Randall County Judge
- John James, Collingsworth County Judge
- Harold Keeter, Swisher County Judge
- Dan Looten, Carson County Judge
- Jay Mayden, Childress County Judge
- Wayne Nance, Briscoe County Judge
- Karen Price, Pampa
- Walter "Four" Price, Texas State Representative, District 87
- Winston Sauls, Borger
- Phillip Self, Greenbelt Municipal & Industrial Water Authority
- Ricky White, Mayor, City of Friona

MEMBERS ABSENT:

- Brian Gillispie, Mayor, City of Spearman
- Saul Hernandez, Amarillo
- Dr. John Howard, Donley County Judge
- Zelda Lang, Councilwoman, City of Dalhart
- Sal Rivera, Sheriff, Castro County
- Amelia Salazar, Alderwoman, Palisades Village
- Kerry Symons, Mayor Pro-Tem, City of Perryton
- Nancy Tanner, Potter County Judge

STAFF PRESENT: Mr. Joe Price, Local Government Services Program Coordinator; Mr. Dustin Meyer, Local Government Services Program Coordinator; Mr. John Kiehl, Regional Services Director; Mr. John Schaumburg, Regional 9-1-1 Network GIS Coordinator; Mr. Shane Brown, Regional Emergency Communications and Preparedness Program Manager; Mr. Anthony Anderson, Local Government Services Intern; Ms. Cindy Boone, CPA, Finance Director; Ms. Rebecca Rusk, Executive Assistant; Mr. Gary Pitner, Executive Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Paul Simpson, Congressman Mac Thornberry's Office

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Judge John James called the meeting to order and noted that a quorum was present.

2. **INVOCATION**

Judge Don Allred gave the invocation.

3. **MINUTES**

Judge Don Allred moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on April 23, 2015, with two typographical errors corrected on Agenda Items 9 and 10. Judge Harold Keeter seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

4. VOUCHERS

Judge Jay Mayden moved to approve the vouchers for the months of April and May, 2015. Judge Dan Looten seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

5. PRPC EMPLOYEE GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL

Ms. Cindy Boone, CPA, stated that PRPC provides group health care coverage to its employees through TML as part of an overall benefit package. Regular full time employees and regular part-time employees who work 20 or more hours per week may participate in the plan with PRPC paying 100% of the premium cost. Employees may add dependent coverage to the plan at the employee's expense.

The current year plan has a \$1,000 deductible and then pays 80% of the costs in network up to a maximum of \$2,500 out of pocket. Once the network deductible and the out of pocket amount are satisfied, the plan pays 100% of eligible network charges. Out of network benefits have a \$1,250 deductible and then pays 50% of the costs.

Also, starting in 2014, PRPC implemented a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) and contributed \$200 in 2014 and \$120 in 2015 into the employees account. The employee can use these funds for any eligible medical expense and any of these unused funds will rollover into the next year.

For our 2016 fiscal year, TML has quoted PRPC a 20% increase to continue with the current medical plan. Staff asked TML to quote us some options to bring the rates down and the best option was a 10.17% increase which would increase the deductible to \$1,750, raise the office copay from \$25 to \$30, still pay 80% of in network costs but would lower the maximum out of pocket to \$2,000. Out of network benefits would have a \$2,000 deductible and then pay 50% of the costs.

Ms. Boone reviewed and discussed the monthly rates for an employee, spouse, child and family with the Board in detail. She stated to help offset the increase in the deductible, PRPC proposes to fund the employees HRA account \$600 in 2016. Total estimated incremental costs to PRPC to continue with our current plan and current HRA contribution would be \$46,771 as opposed to the new plan and new HRA contribution would be \$45,340. We believe that the new plan and contribution is a better deal for the employees as they have more flexibility with their HRA account to fund day to day needs such as copays and also expenses that apply towards their deductible.

Dr. Bill Hallerberg moved to authorize the Executive Director to execute the agreements with TML for the new plan and the HRA agreements as presented effective October 1, 2015. Judge Harold Keeter seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

6. PRPC 2015 AUDIT SERVICES ENGAGEMENT

Ms. Cindy Boone, CPA, reminded the Board that the Planning Commission has an audit performed annually under the required standards of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the U.S. General Accounting Office, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, and the State of Texas Uniform Grant Management Standards.

In 2011, the PRPC issued a request for proposal for audit services for fiscal years ending September 30, 2011, 2012, and 2013 with the option of two (2) one year extensions for fiscal years 2014 and 2015. This procurement resulted in the selection of Edgin, Parkman, Fleming & Fleming (EPF&F) which the Board approved in October 2011.

Because of new auditing standards, the engagement letter from EPF&F for fiscal year 2015 is now requiring signature from PRPC's governance. Therefore, we are asking for the Board to approve our option year 2015 with EPF&F in the amount of \$35,250 which is the same fee we paid for our 2014 audit.

Mr. Philip Self moved to authorize the Executive Director to execute the engagement letter with EPF&F for fiscal year 2015. Mayor Ricky White seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

7. AGRICULTURAL WATER CONSERVATION PROJECT INTERLOCAL CONTRACT AMENDMENTS

Mr. Dustin Meyer reminded the Board that the Planning Commission has been deeply involved in the Regional Water Planning process for over 15 years. Involvement has included serving as the long time administrative agent and political subdivision to the Panhandle Water Planning Group (PWPG) and serving in an administrative and planning capacity with the Groundwater Management Area #1 (GMA#1). One of the key components of all planning

efforts has been the recognition of the importance of agriculture water conservation measures.

In July of 2012 the PRPC Board of Directors authorized Staff to execute a contract with the Texas Water Development Board for \$200,000 for the purpose of expanding and enhancing the region's Evapotranspiration Network (ETN). An ETN analyzes rainfall, air temperature, soil temperature, soil moisture content, wind speed, and other environmental factors to provide recommendations on crop management to farmers, groundwater conservation districts, and consultants. The use of this data in the Panhandle Region has resulted in extensive water savings over the last 15 years; and, the conservation savings anticipated over the next 50 years based on ETN data comprises a large portion of the planning process' solutions to projected water deficits in the region.

In October of 2012 the PRPC Board of Directors authorized a \$180,000 interlocal contract to be executed with Texas A&M AgriLife Research-Amarillo for the following general tasks:

1. Development and operation of internet site for access to information, tools, and educational resources.
2. Identification, adaption, integration, and promotion of tools & resources
3. Training of key stakeholders and educators
4. Project administration functions

In early 2015, it was identified that Texas A&M AgriLife Research-Amarillo needed additional time to complete, monitor, and report on all of the contracted tasks. As the PRPC/TWDB Evapotranspiration contract allowed for three years to complete required tasks, it is appropriate to extend the Interlocal Contract with Texas A&M AgriLife Research-Amarillo for 6 months. However, since this does extend the administrative responsibilities of PRPC, Texas A&M AgriLife Research-Amarillo has agreed to reduce the Interlocal Contract by \$10,000 so that PRPC can pay for its additional workload associated with the longer contract period. TWDB has expressed that it is comfortable with the revisions.

Judge Ronnie Gordon moved to approve amendments to extend the project period and modify certain work products in an existing contract with Texas AgriLife Research, a member of the Texas A&M University System to deliver services related to the Panhandle Evapotranspiration Network. Judge Harold Keeter seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

8. 2016 PANHANDLE REGIONAL WATER PLAN DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT SERVICES CONTRACT AMENDMENT

Mr. Dustin Meyer reminded the Board that PRPC is currently serving as the fiscal agent and political subdivision for the Panhandle Water Planning Group (PWPG) and has done so since 1998. Currently, PRPC staff and the PWPG are working on the development of the 2016 Panhandle Regional Water Plan which will be the fourth iteration of the Plan. PRPC received funding from the Texas Water Development Board under a TWDB contract for a full \$544,583 over a five year period to fully develop this iteration of the Plan.

In May 2011, the PRPC Board of Directors contracted with Freese and Nichols, Inc. for the contractual development of large portions of the upcoming plan. PRPC and the PWPG went through a comprehensive Request for Qualifications process in which Freese and Nichols, Inc. was identified to be the most qualified out of five firms submitting statements of qualifications. After an initial award and an initial contract amendment mirroring the first contract amendment between PRPC and the TWDB, a Freese and Nichols, Inc. contract is currently in place for a total of \$466,209 (*PRPC to FNI – Total*) for the complete development and approval of the 2016 Panhandle Regional Water Plan.

In March of 2015 the PRPC Board of Directors authorized the execution of an amendment that brought the timeline in the Freese & Nichols Contract in line with five amendments that TWDB had issued related to this contract, so the technical aspects of all contracts is current. However, of \$78,374 allocated for PRPC administration only \$17,716 has been drawn to date. Unfortunately, TWDB has determined that staffing cost is not eligible in this planning cycle, so PRPC has not and will not be able to access these funds originally budgeted for staff time committed to the state water planning effort.

In the production and distribution of the Initially Prepared Plan (IPP) for the 2016 Regional Water Plan Freese & Nichols has incurred approximately \$10,000 of copying and mailing costs that PRPC had planned on utilizing internal staff and cost centers for. As such, PRPC staff has communicated with TWDB and Freese & Nichols in an effort to identify how this production cost that was originally to be paid under an administrative line item could be transferred to a contractual expense by the contractor. TWDB and Freese & Nichols both are agreeable to moving \$10,000 from the funds that are currently inaccessible to PRPC for staffing to the existing Freese & Nichols contract. The funds are currently available and could

be utilized to make the contractor whole. A fund transfer of this size would not require a contract amendment to the PRPC/TWDB contract, but it would necessitate an amendment to the PRPC/Freese & Nichols contract.

Dr. Bill Hallerberg moved to approve an amendment to the existing consultant services contract with Freese and Nichols, Inc. regarding certain services related to the completion of the 2016 Regional Water Plan. Ms. Irene Favila seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

9. 2021 PANHANDLE REGIONAL WATER PLAN DEVELOPMENT CONTRACT

Mr. Dustin Meyer reminded the Board that PRPC has assisted the Panhandle Water Planning Group in the development of three regional water plans completed in 2001, 2006, and 2011, respectively with the 2016 Plan nearing the adoption phase. Freese and Nichols, Inc. has been contracted to assist in the development of each of the regional water plans.

In December of 2014 the Texas Water Development Board released the general guidelines for the Regional Water Plan Development (2017-2021) and the Request for Application for Planning. Under these documents, PRPC on behalf of PWPG may apply for \$77,520 of base funding for Region A (the Panhandle Region) for the initial development of the 2021 Regional Water Plan. These funds are specifically allocated to Task 10 – Public Participation and Task 2 – Water Supplies to get the next five year process under way. In January of 2015 the PRPC Board of Directors authorized staff to submit an application under this funding opportunity.

It is anticipated that the TWDB will be issuing contracts under this funding opportunity in the near future with a very quick return date. The contract will likely mirror the contracts for the previous regional water planning cycles and include the \$77,520 base amount to begin the 2021 regional planning process with additional funds coming available through future legislative sessions and contract amendments. The regional water planning process is statutorily required to be conducted by a political subdivision of the State of Texas, and the neutrality that the PRPC has brought to the process in the Panhandle region has traditionally be very favorably viewed by the cities, counties, and special districts served by PRPC. While it is not expected that administrative costs will be allowable in the upcoming cycle, it is still a valuable service that PRPC provides to its members. Staffing is made possible for the planning effort through the annual solicitation of local funds by the Panhandle Water Planning Group. While not ideal, this does create a fiscally practicable model to conduct regional water planning that other regions are now beginning to utilize.

Judge Dan Looten moved to authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract with the Texas Water Development Board for funding to prepare the 2021 Panhandle Regional Water Plan on behalf of the Panhandle Water Planning Group. Mayor Ricky White seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

10. STRATEGIC PLANNING SERVICES INTERLOCAL CONTRACT

Mr. Joe Price stated that since 2008 PRPC Local Government Services staff has been providing strategic planning services to cities, counties, and economic development corporations in the Texas Panhandle.

PRPC has been contacted by the City of Wheeler and the Wheeler Economic Development Corporation regarding strategic planning services as the community is evolving, growing, and meeting existing goals. PRPC staff has presented the Strategic planning services model to the City of Wheeler for review, and it is anticipated that the Council, with three new members, will be considering PRPC's services at its July meeting.

PRPC's standard rate on this type of service is now \$60.00 per hour. It is anticipated that the preparation work, strategic planning session, and plan development will take between 36 and 84 hours. So, the contract shall not exceed \$5,000 and will be a minimum of \$2,200 with the exact billed amount being determined based upon the actual hours accrued on the project. The proposed contract has a ceiling of \$5,000 and is for a one time planning effort.

Commissioner Juan Cantu moved to authorize the Executive Director to execute an interlocal contract with the City of Wheeler for the Planning Commission to provide strategic planning services. Mr. Winston Sauls seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

11. **PANHANDLE REGIONAL 9-1-1 NETWORK RECORDING EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT**

Mr. John Schaumburg informed the Board that there are two central 9-1-1 Network recorders, PRPC and Pampa, recording 9-1-1 traffic and radio traffic that were replaced within the past two years. Additionally there are 22 smaller 4 or 8 channel recorders that are pushing recordings back to the central recorders that were installed in 2011. All of these calls are then accessed by their respective agencies over the internet. The recordings are secured by channel limitations and password protection for each user. Each agency only has access to their respective channels within the system.

In order to keep this system working properly it is necessary to enter into an extended maintenance program with Vista Com, the original installer of the equipment. Our last contract was in 2011 for three years, and it is now time to renew the support.

The total three-year contract cost to provide maintenance support for the recorders mentioned previously is \$69,153. Vista Com also agreed to extend the warranty on any new equipment purchased during the term.

Judge Don Allred moved to approve the renewal of a 9-1-1 Network recording equipment maintenance agreement in the amount of \$69,153 with Vista Com. Judge Ernie Houdashell seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

12. **PANHANDLE REGIONAL 9-1-1 NETWORK FY16-20 STRATEGIC PLAN APPROVAL**

Mr. John Schaumburg informed the Board that following the conclusion of the 84th legislative session, the Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC) completed its projected 9-1-1 funding allocations statewide. Funding for the 9-1-1 program comes from fees on each landline or wireless phone in the state.

By statute, revenue generated by the 9-1-1 Service Fee (\$.50 per phone, per month), must be reallocated back to the region from which it was collected. The \$.50 cent fees from all wireless devices are allocated to regions of the state based on population percentage. Historically, these funds are not sufficient to operate the Panhandle's 9-1-1 Program.

Revenue collected from the Texas Infrastructure Equalization Surcharge (\$.06 per access line) are funds distributed at the discretion of CSEC. This assists 9-1-1 programs in less-populated areas, and provides funding for equipment purchases across the State. These funds also maintain the State's Poison Control Network.

Prior to receiving the projected funds for FY16 and FY17, the Planning Commission must submit a strategic plan for FY16 through FY20. Mr. Schaumburg stated that the total funding requests for FY16 and FY17 to maintain the 9-1-1 program for the next two years and projected funding requests to fund the program through FY20 are as follows:

FY16	\$ 1,938,593
FY17	\$ 1,655,642
FY18	\$ 2,031,289
FY19	\$ 2,056,057
FY20	\$ 2,081,513

To reach our funding requests for each year, and to replace equipment, additional funding will be requested through the Equalization Surcharge Fund. Mr. Schaumburg reviewed the Strategic Plan with the board in detail and stated that anticipated equipment upgrades in FY16 call for 22 new call recording devices and new generators for Castro County, Pampa PD, Hansford County, Lipscomb County, and Oldham County.

Commissioner Juan Cantu moved to approve the Panhandle Regional 9-1-1 Network FY16-20 Strategic Plan as presented. Judge Don Allred seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

13. **2013 PANHANDLE REGIONAL MASS FATALITY INCIDENT PLAN APPROVAL**

Mr. John Kiehl stated that the PRPC received funding under the 2013 State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) grant program to develop a regional mass fatality incident response plan. As has been the customary approach over the past several years, whenever a regional plan is developed, a supporting document is created for use at the local level. So, along with this regional plan, a plan attachment has been developed intended for inclusion in the emergency operations plans (EOPs) of those jurisdictions in the region that maintain an EOP.

The implementation of this planning project utilized the planning expertise of the City of Amarillo. The PRPC contracted with the City for the development of the regional plan and contracted with Emily Nolte for the development of the EOP attachment.

The intent of the regional plan is to lay out the strategy the region will follow when the plan is activated. This document has been developed under the direction of the Panhandle Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee (PREMAC) and has been reviewed and critiqued at several stages of the development process. Mr. Kiehl reviewed the regional plan in detail with the Board.

The PRPC's 2013 Mass Fatality Incident Planning project grant closes on June 30. The PREMAC will meet on June 29 and during that meeting, they'll also review the document one final time. Mr. Kiehl stated he fully anticipates that the PREMAC will accept the plan as it is now being presented to the Board.

As part of the Scope of Work for the SHSP grant, PRPC staff committed to bringing the draft plan to the Board for consideration and approval. In this case, PRPC staff recommends that the Board approve the plan contingent upon the PREMAC's final approval of the plan. If any further comments or suggestions are made during the PREMAC's next meeting, the changes will be made quickly so that the plan can be fully and finally completed by the close of the 2013 SHSP grant's performance period.

Dr. Bill Hallerberg moved to approve the 2013 Panhandle Regional Mass Fatality Incident Plan as prepared by the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission. Mayor Ricky White seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

14. **EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANNING CONSULTING SERVICES CONTRACT AMENDMENT**

Mr. John Kiehl informed the board that as staff worked to close out the 2013 SHSP-funded Regional Mass Fatality Incident planning project, we've found opportunities for enhancing the work we originally set out to accomplish. One example of that is with the purchase of field guides for first responders. These guides are essentially bound flip chart/check list instructions for what should be done in the event of a mass fatality and a mass casualty incident.

This was a need that grew out of the regional exercise conducted in February. Where we had been focusing on what should be done during a multiple death incident, the tornado-based scenario exercised as part of the Regional Preparedness Conference reminded us that in a situation like that, while we're working to recover and identify those that have died; we'll be working even harder to recover, triage and treat those who have survived. These field guides provide quick reference guidance to the approach that needs to be taken to meet both objectives.

We found the funds needed to buy the guides and received State approval to make the purchase fairly late in the SHSP grant's performance period. The guides arrive at PRPC sometime this next week. Our goal is to get them delivered to the region's first responder agencies by the end of June.

Emily Nolte has been deeply involved with the project; having created the supporting local mass fatality response attachment for the jurisdictional emergency management plans, and having met with local planners in each County to customize the attachment for their use. PRPC staff recommends that the contract amendment used to engage Emily on this project be amended once again, to give her the responsibility for ensuring that the guides get delivered to the appropriate agencies on a timely basis. Emily is willing to accept this responsibility and in return, her original amendment amount would be increased by \$800.

Mr. Cleo Castro moved to authorize the Executive Director to execute an amendment to an existing emergency operations planning consulting services contract with Emily Nolte dba EN Enterprises regarding mass fatality planning services. Judge Wayne Nance seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

15. **PANHANDLE REGIONAL INTEROPERABLE RADIO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM (PANCOM) MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS FUNDING DISCUSSION**

Mr. John Kiehl discussed in detail the funding of ongoing maintenance and operations costs associated with the Panhandle Regional Interoperable Radio Communications System (PANCOM). No action was necessary on this item of discussion.

16. **PANHANDLE REGIONAL INTEROPERABLE RADIO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM (PANCOM) EQUIPMENT PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION**

Mr. Shane Brown reminded the Board that the regional PANCOM microwave network was designed to interconnect all 52 PANCOM tower sites and the 24 PSAPs to allow responders and call takers the ability to not only cover their county with communications but also move seamlessly into other counties as needed. The added benefit of the

network is that it also provides an alternate path for 9-1-1 traffic during fiber cuts or other equipment failures.

The first installation of microwave links occurred over 7 years ago. Like our cell phones, newer models provide greater speed and features that increase reliability. Thirty of the original microwave radios are no longer sold or serviceable. In the event of a major 9-1-1 equipment failure, these areas wouldn't be able to handle the increased traffic. In order to guarantee adequate bandwidth system-wide, PRPC staff is now attempting to upgrade 15 of the slowest microwave links in the system. With this upgrade, we'll be able to increase the speed from 8 megabits per second (Mbps) to 25Mbps; tripling the speed at which radio traffic will be able to move through the areas served by the new links.

In order to guarantee adequate bandwidth for 9-1-1 traffic, this project will be funded by the Regional 9-1-1 Network program. PRPC staff has obtained quotes from vendors JTS of Dallas and CTS of Round Rock through the State of Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR); a state-wide cooperative purchasing program. The JTS quote appears to be the most advantageous. With the funds budgeted for this upgrade, the JTS quote would allow us to not only buy and install the 15 links but to also purchase six extra pairs of microwave links. Of these six pairs, three will be used when our two new towers are erected. The other three will be held as spares in case of a link failure to insure down time of a link is minimal.

Mr. Cleo Castro moved to approve the purchase and installation of microwave network equipment for the Panhandle Regional Interoperable Radio Communications System through the State of Texas DIR contract not to exceed \$225,000.00 using Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC) funds. Alderman Bob Gober seconded the vote; the vote carried by unanimous vote.

17. **PANHANDLE REGIONAL INTEROPERABLE RADIO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM (PANCOM) TOWER CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATE**

Mr. John Kiehl briefed the Board on the status of PANCOM tower construction projects in Briscoe and Dallam Counties. The discussion included the required Environmental/Cultural and Historical Resources Assessment. No action was necessary on this item of discussion.

18. **MISCELLANEOUS NON-ACTION INFORMATION ITEMS**

- A. Mr. Gary Pitner reported on issues related to regional planning commissions resulting from the recently completed 84th Session of the Texas Legislature.
- B. Mr. Gary Pitner reported on the recent and upcoming Planning Commission sponsored regional meetings.

19. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.



John James, Chairman
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission
Board of Directors

ATTEST:



Ernie Houdashell, Secretary/Treasurer
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission
Board of Directors