

# Fayette County

## Groundwater Conservation District

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## MINUTES

### of the August 15, 2005 Board of Directors Meeting

**Directors Present:** William P. Kohlleppel, Rodney Willis, Carl Wendler, Lloyd Brunner, Eddie Schneider  
**Directors Absent:** none  
**Others Present:** District manager Linda Streicher, Assistant County Attorney Harold Streicher

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The meeting was called to order by President Kohlleppel at 8:30 a.m. on August 15, 2005 at the District Office in Room 600 of the Fayette County Agricultural Building at 254 N. Jefferson in La Grange, Texas. A quorum to conduct business was declared to be present.

No members of the public were present.

Minutes from the previous meeting of July 5, 2005, which were mailed out to the directors in advance of the meeting, were approved with no corrections.

The financial statement was distributed for review, and all outstanding bills were listed to be paid. Mr. Willis moved to accept the financial statement and pay the bills that were presented. Mr. Brunner seconded the motion and it was approved.

Mrs. Streicher presented a proposal for a water conservation education program similar to that given as a pilot program to the La Grange ISD fifth grade students. This program is widely used and is very good. However, it is significantly less expensive than the pilot program, and it will allow the District to provide water conservation education to all fifth grade students in Fayette County. The Board asked Streicher to look into how soon this program could be implemented. Additionally, Mr. Wendler asked her to look into having the District participate in the Farm Safety Day activities.

The General Manager told the Board what she learned from the State concerning the confidentiality of information. It has always been a concern of the Board to be able to protect as much as the law allows the confidentiality of the data it collects, particularly through well registrations. Mr. Streicher was asked to make a short presentation at the next meeting on what the law requires concerning public information requests. The Board asked Mrs. Streicher to always contact at least one Board member prior to complying with any requests for information.

The Board reviewed the draft of the 2006 budget and made some final adjustments. Mr. Wendler then moved to adopt the 2006 budget with discussed changes, and to set the tax rate as needed to meet the approved budget of \$97,100. To meet the expected shortfall of \$9,000, the tax rate would be raised

from \$0.005 (one half cent) per \$100 of value to \$0.0055, an increase of 1/20 of one cent. On a home valued at \$100,000, the taxes would be \$5.50, or an increase of 50 cents. Mr. Schneider seconded the motion and it was approved.

Mr. Kohlleppel reviewed the issues the General Manager had raised concerning the District's rules exception policy. He requested the Board members to give these issues serious thought for discussion at the next meeting.

The Board thought that it should attempt to simplify the proposed draft of the District's investment policy. This item will be tabled until the next meeting.

The Board then discussed the intention of the well registration fee. It was very important for the District to collect current data on existing wells as quickly as possible. The State of Texas has studies which show that Fayette County has a surplus of water. If that is true, then the District must make that water available to the big cities or other large water suppliers that are looking for water. The District is concerned that the State may be underestimating how much water Fayette County is currently using and also underestimating our expected growth. The District has hired a firm of professional hydrogeologists to conduct a study of Fayette County's aquifers, using the data the District collected through well registrations, to get a more accurate picture of the water situation in Fayette County. That study is nearing completion. Currently, the main reason to register an existing well is to protect it from any harm by a new well that may be drilled nearby. Mr. Wendler moved that the Board should now drop the well registration fee, which was instituted to encourage compliance with the registration requirement. Mr. Willis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Note that new wells are still required to be registered within 14 days after completion. However, a well owner may choose to assume the risk of not registering his existing well.

Mr. Schneider moved to adopt a resolution from the Board to place a six month moratorium on the drilling of non-exempt water wells (e.g., commercial, industrial, and irrigation wells) so that the ongoing aquifer study can be completed. This should also allow time for the Board to fully understand the results of the study and make any rule changes that may be necessary. The moratorium may be extended, if necessary, or may be terminated sooner than six months, via another resolution adopted at a public meeting. Mr. Wendler seconded the motion and it was approved.

In other administrative business, the Board authorized that a bond be obtained for the District's employee, and to purchase a digital voice recorder to record public hearings as required by a new law passed by this legislature. A draft of the Fall newsletter was also distributed for review.

Items were identified for the next meeting's agenda. Mr. Schneider pointed out that the Board had voted to meet on the first Monday every month and the Board agreed to adhere to that policy. However, since the first Monday in September is a holiday, the next meeting will be scheduled for September 12, 2005, at 9:30 a.m., with a public hearing on the proposed tax rate tentatively scheduled for the same morning at 8:30 a.m.

Mr. Wendler made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Brunner and approved.

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Wm. Paul Kohlleppel, Jr., President

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Carl Wendler, Secretary-Treasurer