

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE WATER COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ron Highland at 9:00 am on Tuesday, March 23, 2021, in room 152-S of the Capitol.

All members were present

Committee staff present:

Chris Waggoner, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Damien Gilbert, Committee Assistant
Meredith Fry, Legislative Research Department
Victoria Potts, Legislative Research Department
Zach Fridell, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Connie Owen - Kansas Water Office
Dawn Buehler - Kansas Water Authority
Jeremiah Hobbs - Kansas Water Authority

Others in attendance:

No list available

Presentation on:

Connie Owen, Director of the Kansas Water Office, thanked the committee for the opportunity to return to testify and introduced the presenters that would follow her ([Attachment 1](#)), then directed committee to the directory of Kansas Water Authority's Regional Advisory Committee members that had been distributed ([Attachment 2](#)).

Dawn Buehler, Chair of the Kansas Water Authority, began a presentation which provided an overview of the roles, reporting structures and budget information of the KWA ([Attachment 3](#)). The KWA's primary responsibilities include advising the Governor, Legislature and Director of the Kansas Water Office on water policy issues, approving the Kansas Water Plan, approving federal contracts, administration regulations and legislation proposed by the KWA, and preparing and issuing an Annual Report to Governor and Legislature. It consists of 13 voting members who are appointed by the Governor or legislative leadership. State agency directors or appointees serve as exofficio members.

Jeremiah Hobbs, KWA Regional Advisory Committee Operations Committee Chair, then continued the presentation. He described the boundaries and roles of the RACs, and described the roles and qualifications of their members, who serve on a volunteer basis. He then described the state water planning cycle, which takes input from RACs, the public, and legislators, and repeats in 5-year increments after each new state water plan is released.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES of the Committee on Water at 9:00 am on Tuesday, March 23, 2021, in room 152-S of the Capitol.

The conferees then stood for questions from the committee, which covered topics including the timeframe of the 50-year water plan, whether injection drilling impact groundwater management districts, what's being done to fill the vacant RAC positions, how many seats are on each RAC, what the membership criteria are for RAC members, and demographic inequities in water issues. Some answers, which required further research, were later provided to the committee ([Attachment 4](#)).

With no further questions, Chairperson Highland adjourned the committee at 10am.