

Memorandum

To: Coastal Georgia Regional Water Planning Council

From: Shayne Wood and Bill Davis, CDM Smith

Date: October 10, 2019

Subject: Coastal Georgia Regional Water Planning Council: Business Meeting Summary

This memorandum provides the meeting summary of the Coastal Georgia Regional Water Planning Council (Council) Meeting 9, held on October 10, 2019 at the Richmond Hill City Center in Richmond Hill, GA. This memorandum provides a summary of the major items discussed at the Council Meeting. The meeting began at 10:30 AM and followed the Council Meeting Agenda.

Welcome and Introductions

Council Chairman Benjy Thompson opened the meeting, welcomed Council Members and guests, and asked each Council Member (CM) and attendee to introduce themselves. A moment of silence was then held for Johnny Murphy and Chris Blocker, two past council members that recently passed away. CDM Smith, the Planning Contractor (PC), provided an outline of the topics that would be covered during the Council Meeting. The Council approved the Meeting Agenda and the past meeting summary from the from November 8, 2018 Council Meeting in Sylvania.

Updates from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

CMs enjoyed the presentation by USACE member Jeff Morris on the South Atlantic Coastal Study (SACS). Mr. Morris noted the purpose of the study, which is to identify risks associated with sea level rise, conduct analysis and develop solutions. The study area covers 65,000 miles of coastline from North Carolina to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. CMs were receptive to the topics presented and agree that sea level rise may impact the region in a variety of ways.

Question/Comment: A CM asked what the highest storm surge in history in the study region was.

Answer: The highest recorded storm surge in the area was 16 feet in the 1898 Hurricane in Brunswick, GA.

Mr. Morris identified the Georgia Coastal Stakeholders Meeting on October 30th at Tybee Island as an opportunity for engagement on issues surrounding the SACS. More information on this event can be found at the link below.

<https://www.sad.usace.army.mil/SACS/>

CMs found the following presentation by USACE on the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project (SHEP) to be informational and expressed appreciation to the USACE for taking time to update the Council.

Overview of Work to Support Upcoming Water Plan Updates

The PC gave an overview of the upcoming technical work that will support the 2020-2022 Regional Water plan Update Cycle. The purpose of this overview was to serve as a primer that will refamiliarize the council with tasks that go into the update, and to present the idea of forming subcommittees to assist with upcoming technical work. It was noted that 2019 census population projections are available for use on the Carl Vinson website and can be used prior to the 2020 census data becoming available.

Question/Comment: A CM asked how military personnel will be counted in the 2020 census and noted that they have been miscounted in previous years.

Answer: After some discussion, it was confirmed that military personnel will be counted based on station of duty rather than station of enlistment. It was also reiterated that the council has the power to adjust population projections used for water demand forecasting to account for discrepancies in the data.

The PC then gave an overview of how water demand forecasts are developed for each type of user. It was again suggested that the development of subcommittees may be beneficial for the water plan update. The presentation then shifted to resource assessments where aquifer permit limits and demand were discussed.

Question/Comment: A CM asked about issues with South Carolina over withdrawals and saltwater intrusion.

Answer: It was noted by others that South Carolina is beginning a water planning process and is working well with Georgia. It was noted also that portions of Hilton Head Island have had to go to membrane treatment to treat the portions of the aquifer water that have experienced saltwater intrusion.

Question/Comment: CMs discussed groundwater resources and how the Red Zone/Yellow Zone management plan has been implemented and how it impacts aquifer levels. It was noted by some that there have not been any observed changes in aquifer levels in numerous wells across the region.

Question/Comment: A CM brought up the need to better utilize available data, such as that maintained by the USGS, and concurred with previous and noted that Georgia Southern University was working on a Seed Grant Proposal that may address this request being made by the Council.

Water Demand Forecast Methodology Overview

The PC discussed water demand forecast methods and results and how these pertain to water planning efforts. An overview of water demand forecasting for each sector was given, beginning with industrial users.

Question/Comment: A CM noted that the current trend of linking water use with employment for industrial users is not the most accurate way to develop those forecasts. For example, how

does that methodology take into account increasing automation in industry. Other CMs agreed with this assessment. It was pointed out that the buffer shown in industrial water demand forecasts may be useful in accounting for these changes along with the potential for new industrial users potentially coming to the region that could also increase future demands.

Question/Comment: A CM noted that with an emphasis by corporations and industries to account for their continued strides in becoming more sustainable and with many corporations having stated sustainability goals with increased transparency for reporting and accountability, there may be more water use data available based on actual production that could be used potentially in developing the future industrial forecasts.

The PC noted that they could look into that and it could be a discussion item with the subcommittee or ad-hoc technical committee if those do get established.

The PC continued discussing water demand forecasts and reviewed what other states, including Arkansas, Oklahoma, California, Colorado and Texas, do for water planning efforts and industrial demand forecasts. The 100 Miles Report on Industrial Forecasts was also reviewed for comparison with current industrial water forecast demands.

Question/Comment: A CM stated that there are often variations in municipal water use and consumption data that need to be better understood and accounted for.

Answer: The PC and Council Chairman will work together to better identify ways to address these issues and concerns.

EPD Seed Grant Discussion

Georgia EPD provided details on applying for the current round of seed grant funding. Potential project ideas that were discussed include those that support water quality improvement along with stormwater and recreation projects for the City of Savannah and a "State of the Hydrology" project being spearheaded by Georgia Southern University that would potentially develop a web based portal that Council Members and the general public could access to view data associated with aquifer levels, stream flows and precipitation across the Coastal Regional, including trending information. The concept is to aggregate and summarize existing information in a user friendly format.

CM Question/Comment: A CM noted interest in making sure the council supports the Georgia Southern project and asked that the council and the PC assist with making sure they have their required pre-application meeting and get a letter of support from the Council.

The PC noted that they will coordinate this with the council and will share the draft grant proposal with the council after the meeting today for their review and input.

Next Steps

The Council Chairman was asked about updating the council roster in January and ensuring that the council is reappointed. He replied that CMs do not have control over this but that it is being discussed by those involved, including EPD and the appointing officials within the Governor's office, Speaker of the House and Lieutenant Governor.

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Next Meeting

The next full council meeting will be targeted for the first quarter of next year after the seed grant projects have been selected and the holiday season has concluded.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05pm.

Meeting Attendance

The table below summarizes the Coastal Council Members in attendance as well as public and agency attendees.

Affiliation	Name
<i>Coastal Georgia Regional Water Planning Council</i>	Michelle Liotta
	E. James Burnsed
	Phil Odom
	Michael Browning
	John Godbee
	Reggie Loper
	Pete Peterson
	Mark Smith
	Jim Thomas
	Benjy Thompson
	Jim Vaughn
<i>Georgia EPD Representatives</i>	Reid Jackson
	Michelle Dennis
	Tracy Perkins
<i>Regional Water Planning Council Planning Contractors</i>	Shayne Wood
	Bill Davis
	Chris Cerreta
<i>Public/Agency Attendees</i>	Boyd Stanley
	Jeff Morris
	Ashby Worley
	Shawn Rosenquist
	Laura Walker
	Brian Neuse
	Matthew Miane