

IRION COUNTY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
April 13, 2026

Members Present: Chairman of the Board Bill Whitley, Robert Richey, Sid Sullenger, James Furr, Pete Barrera, General Manager Diana Thomas, and Technician Ashley Masters

Public Present: Accountant Macy Hartley, Clay Thorp, Leon Standard, Linda Hofacket, and Frank Lindley

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM. by Bill Whitley, Chairman of the Board.

Public comment was made by Linda Hofacket. She expressed concern with the cost of District participation in the WTWMA indicating she would prefer taxpayer money to benefit the citizens of Irion in a more direct way. She stated her belief that the weather modification program does not work as effectively as it used to and District involvement needs to be reevaluated. She stated that the citizens of Irion County have not had an ability to vote on involvement in the WTWMA program since its inception in 1996 and requested that the District investigate ways to hold another vote.

Public comment was made by Frank Lindley. He expressed concern over the detrimental effects of cloud seeding chemicals on soil health and plant viability. He cited a lack of long-term research on the use of such chemicals, a particular concern considering the longevity of WTWMA operations in the area.

James Furr moved and Robert Richey seconded to accept the minutes of the previous meeting. The motion carried.

Accountant Macy Hartley presented the financial report and bills to the Board. The bills included standard monthly bills, the bi-annual WTWMA assessment, and the purchase of a field laptop for compatibility with the new rain gauges. After reviewing the bills as presented, Robert Richey moved to pay all bills and transfer \$22,000 from the Money Market account. Pete Barrera seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Manager's report included: WTWMA in San Angelo, GMA 7 in Sonora, TAGD Executive Committee retreat in Granbury, TDLR field day, and WTRGA virtual meeting. The WTWMA entered into a contract with Recast Systems for meteorological services for a 6 month seeding season. The 2025 season evaluation was presented, with operations being rated excellent. GMA 7 met in Sonora to discuss actual water level data to modeled water levels to evaluate how effectively DFCs are being met across the region. Kinney County GCD presented an alternative method of calculating their DFC due to known problems in the model for their area. The next meeting will run pumping scenarios for the Edwards Trinity Aquifer. The TAGD Executive Committee met for a full day of future planning for the organization as a whole and the upcoming legislative session. There is a huge interest in management of groundwater this interim with a wide range of proposed solutions, leading to some very interesting discussions.

General house make-up and the potential for a big democrat-republican shift was also discussed. Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) associates and Ashley completed field work in Irion County assessing wells believed to be comingling and assessing surface completions. Multiple wells were examined and failed to have proper surface completion. TDLR will follow up with well owner for plugging and will come back to evaluate additional wells throughout county. The WTRGA met virtually with their consultant to formalize our stance on recent House Natural Resource discussions focused on groundwater management. Two main positions were prioritized that could be beneficial state-wide and not just in our area: the ability of local GCDs to set permit conditions based on local needs, allowing for both more or less restrictive conditions as warranted and the updating of legislative terms “waste” and “beneficial use.”

Well surveillance included the water level monitor network. Three wells were unable to be measured, three wells measured at a decreased water level, five wells measured at static water level, and nine wells measured an increased water level. The Sugg Switch well was evaluated as a potential monitor well but will not be utilized due to the inability to obtain static water level. To ensure proper deployment of the rain gauge network, Ashley Masters downloaded two new gauges and determined deployments were successful! A Notice of Intent to Drill was received for McGehee for two livestock replacement wells, one being plugged due to no water found. Ashley Masters presented the reported 2025 permitted production totals to the Board, equaling 140.47-acre feet of water. 2025 reports have not been received from three permit holders.

After review and consideration of the scholarship applications, James Furr moved to award Audrey Tillman and Layne Green as recipients of the ICWCD Progressive Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each. Sid Sullenger seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Robert Richey moved to award Kyle Hope and Presli Cormier as recipients of the ICWCD Board Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 each. Pete Barrera seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. The selection committee for the Vicki Tankersley Memorial Scholarship have not disclosed their chosen recipient yet, an announcement is anticipated by the regularly scheduled May board meeting.

Diana Thomas presented the drought indexes for Irion County, noting there was an increase in drought conditions across the state from March to April. James Furr moved to receive the most recent drought index as presented. Robert Richey seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Investment Officer Diana Thomas presented the 2026 Q1 Investment Report to the Board, highlighting the lower CD interest rates after early January renewal of both CDs. Sid Sullenger moved to receive the 2026 Q1 Investment Report as presented. Pete Barrera seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Board members reviewed public comment on district participation in the weather modification program from this and the previous meeting. Other weather modification programs around the world were discussed as well as published research in support of and to the detriment of silver iodide and weather modification practices. The enabling election to participate in hail

suppression was discussed, with potential options to hold another vote to gauge how opinions had changed. Sid Sullenger moved to table the agenda item and address it again at the next regular business meeting, expressing a desire to receive more public feedback. Robert Richey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business James Furr moved and Sid Sullenger seconded to adjourn at 7:04 PM.

James C Furr

Attesting Signature

Robert Richey

Presiding Officer

Date: 5-11-2024