



Western Kansas Groundwater Management District #1

Regular Board Meeting of the Board of Directors

May 18, 2026

10:00 a.m. CST

The meeting will be held via Microsoft Teams meeting link due to scheduling issues

Join Online: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/256791296779701?p=A1nBbgN6R94SXSP1Ed>

Join by Phone: [+1 872-242-8065](tel:+18722428065), [741823028#](tel:+18722428065)

Phone conference ID: 741 823 028#

I. Call Meeting to Order		Action
a. Review & Approve Agenda	Pg. 1	Action
b. Review & Approve April 16 th , 2026, Special Board Meeting Minutes	Pg. 2	Action
c. Review & Approve April 17 th , 2026, Regular Board Meeting Minutes	Pg. 3-4	Action
d. Review & Approve April 17 th , 2026, Open Meeting with DWR Minutes	Pg. 5-6	Action
e. Review & Approve March Financials		
II. Correspondence		
a. Staff Report: General Updates		
III. Old Business		
a. Wichita County LEMA Renewal Discussion		Action
IV. Public Comment		
a.		
V. Meeting Adjourn		
		Action

*Mark Callender pres
5/18/26*



Western Kansas Groundwater Management District #1

April 16, 2026 Special Executive Board Meeting Minutes

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Vice President - Travis Weaver, Greeley County *
Treasurer – Steve Compton, Scott County *
Member - Ray Smith - Wallace County *
Member – Brian Bauck, Wichita County *

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Manager – Katie Durham
Water Resource Specialist – Tallee Davis
Office Administrator - Toni Palen

AGENCIES PRESENT

Hinkle Law Firm - Tom Adrian *
KWR Consultant - David Barfield *
Jim Minnix *

Board Member not present

President, Mark Callender

Virtual Attendees *

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – To promote efficiency in consideration of the topics to be discussed, the Board asked District Manager Katie Durham to serve as convenor and facilitator of the meeting. In that capacity, Katie Durham called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m. at 906 W 5th, Scott City, KS 67871.
 - Jim Minnix was welcomed before the executive session began, and stated he was aware of our concerns.

Ray Smith initiated a 30-minute executive session at 8:40 a.m. to consult with legal counsel regarding the Wichita County LEMA renewal. The motion was seconded by Brian Bauck and approved unanimously. Attendees in the executive session included board members Travis Weaver, Steve Compton, Ray Smith, and Brian Bauck; staff members Katie Durham, Toni Palen, and Tallee Davis; Legal Counsel Tom Adrian; and Consultant David Barfield. At 9:10 a.m., Ray Smith requested an additional 30-minute extension. Brian Bauck seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. At 9:40 a.m., Ray Smith proposed a further 20-minute extension, which was also seconded and approved unanimously. The executive session concluded at 10:00 a.m. No decisions were made during the executive session.

- II. **MEETING ADJOURN** – Ray Smith motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:01 a.m. Brian Bauck seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Approved:

Toni Palen – Office Administrator

Mark Callender – Board President

5/18/26

Date



Western Kansas Groundwater Management District #1

April 17, 2026 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

President – Mark Callender, Lane County
Treasurer – Steve Compton, Scott County
Member - Ray Smith - Wallace County
Member – Brian Bauck, Wichita County
Member - Travis Weaver, Wallace County

KWO - Keadron Pearson *
Hinkle Law Firm - Tom Adrian *
KWR Consulting - David Barfield *

Agencies Present

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Manager – Katie Durham
Water Resource Specialist – Tallee Davis *
Office Administrator - Toni Palen *

Virtual Attendees *

Chief Engineer - Earl Lewis
DWR - Mike Meyer
DWR/Legal Counsel - Stephanie Kramer

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – The President of the Board, Mark Callender, called the Board of Directors meeting to order on April 17, 2026, at 12:23 p.m. The meeting was held at 1821 Frontier Rd, Hays, KS 67601.

Review & Approve Agenda - Travis Weaver moved to approve the Agenda. Brian Bauck seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Review & Approve March 18, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes - Travis Weaver moved to approve the March 18th Board Meeting Minutes. Steve Compton seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Review & Approve March Financials - Ray Smith moved to approve the March 2026 financials. Brian Bauck seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

II. **CORRESPONDENCE**

General Updates - Administrative Challenges - The Board discussed the difficulties of tracking allocations and water use across different time periods and systems, highlighting the need for clear accounting and reporting procedures. They agreed to explore ways to streamline processes and improve transparency.

ITI Program Expansion and Funding - Katie Durham reviewed the ongoing expansion of the ITI program, including new contracts, increased funding, and proposals to enhance cost-share opportunities for producers.

III. **OLD BUSINESS**

Wichita County LEMA Renewal - This was discussed earlier this morning during the open meeting.

IV. **NEW BUSINESS**

DOC Contract No. ITI-CS/2026-01 & ITI-TSP/2026-06 - The Board discussed the new contract with the Division of Conservation for an additional \$500,000 in ITI funding, bringing the total to \$815,000. Travis Weaver moved to approve the new \$500,000.00 DOC Contract. Ray Smith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

WR #15066 Appeal - The Board reviewed the appeal-related corrections involving WR #15066. Corrections included updating records for multiple prior years, clarifying allocations based on submitted documentation, and noting ongoing follow-up efforts such as reminders and text messages. Katie emphasized the need for improved meter maintenance and reporting, proposing educational initiatives such as newsletters, text reminders, and a one-stop shop for meter information on the website. The Board discussed requiring meter checks and providing reminders to ensure compliance. Ray Smith moved to approve the appeal on WR #15066. Travis Weaver seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mark Callender Pres
6/30/26

ITI Bank Account - Katie requested approval to open a dedicated bank account for ITI Grant Funds to facilitate better financial tracking and management of the ITI Grant program. Travis Weaver moved to open a separate account, Ray Smith seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

District Cost Share - Katie noted an increase in District Cost Share activity and proposed transferring \$25,000 from the 3-month CD to the General Fund. Travis Weaver moved to approve the transfer, and Brian Bauck seconded the motion; the motion was approved unanimously.

Employee Handbook and Vehicle Policy Updates - Toni Palen worked with Tom's office to revise the employee handbook, integrating employment law best practices and examples from other districts, and to discuss vehicle trade-in and mileage policies. The Board discussed setting a cap of 150,000 miles in order to buy a newer vehicle. ITI Funds could be used to purchase a new vehicle. Steve Compton moved to approve the employee handbook with provisions for future edits and cost management. Brian Bauck seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Water Tap Application Review Criteria - Katie outlined criteria for reviewing water tap applications, focusing on the impact on LEMA allocation, viable pumping history, and proximity to Leoti or Tribune, and proposed formalizing these criteria for future recommendations. The Board agreed to formalize three main criteria for reviewing water tap applications: the amount of LEMA allocation removed, recent viable pumping history, and proximity to key locations. These criteria will guide future recommendations and streamline the review process.

Regional Water Authority and Project Updates - Keadron provided updates on regional water authority meetings and priority projects, including a water reclamation initiative for CAFOs, highlighting ongoing support for regional water management efforts. The Upper Smoky Hill Rack identified water reclamation for CAFOs as a priority project, reflecting regional efforts to address water management challenges and support sustainable practices.

MEETING ADJOURN - Steve Compton moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:31 p.m. Brian Bauck seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:


Approved:



Toni Palen – Office Administrator



Mark Callender – Board President



Date



Western Kansas Groundwater Management District #1

April 17, 2026 - Open Meeting Minutes Discussion for Wichita County LEMA Renewal

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

President – Mark Callender, Lane County
Treasurer – Steve Compton, Scott County
Member - Ray Smith - Wallace County
Member – Brian Bauck, Wichita County
Member - Travis Weaver, Wallace County

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Manager – Katie Durham
Water Resource Specialist – Tallee Davis *
Office Administrator - Toni Palen *

AGENCIES PRESENT

Hinkle Law Firm - Tom Adrian *
KWO - Keadron Pearson *
Chief Engineer - Earl Lewis
DWR/Legal Counsel - Stephanie Kramer
DWR - Mike Meyer

Virtual attendees *

To promote efficiency in consideration of the topics to be discussed, the Board asked District Manager Katie Durham to serve as convenor and facilitator of the meeting. In that capacity, Katie Durham called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. at 1821 Frontier Rd., Hays, Kansas 67601. The open meeting was held to discuss the Wichita County LEMA renewal process with GMD1 Board members, staff, Chief Engineer Earl Lewis, and DWR Mike Meyer. The topics listed below cover what was discussed.

Transition to a Ten-Year LEMA Plan with Two-Year Carryover: The Board discussed with Chief Engineer Earl Lewis shifting from a five-year to a ten-year LEMA plan, introducing two years of carryover flexibility, and establishing a process for mid-term allocation adjustments based on refined Q-stable data, with input from Brownie Wilson from the Kansas Geological Survey.

Rationale for Ten-Year Plan: The Board reviewed the reasons for moving from a five-year to a ten-year LEMA plan, noting that the change was prompted by recent discussions and the need for more refined data to support stable water levels. The ten-year plan is structured as two five-year periods, allowing for a more gradual transition and avoiding abrupt changes for producers. The plan aims to provide clarity and stability for long-term water management, with the first five years focused on data collection and the second five years on implementing the data.

Mid-Term Allocation Adjustment Process: The plan includes a process for submitting a new attachment A at year five, which will update allocations based on refined Q-stable data collected during the first period. The Board will work with KGS and Brownie to analyze sub-regional water levels and determine which areas require further reductions and which have maintained Q-stable. This process is designed to ensure that only regions not at Q-stable take additional cuts, while stable areas are protected from further reductions.

Public Hearing and Timeline: Katie and Tom Adrian clarified that a public hearing will be required at the 10-year mark to adopt the revised allocations, consistent with the 90-day resubmittal period. The Board aims to draft and submit the new plan quickly, targeting a timeline of one to two weeks for initial drafting, followed by outreach and hearing procedures. The timeline will be shared with stakeholders to ensure transparency and facilitate planning.

Legal Safeguards and Board Discretion: Katie Durham emphasized the importance of clear language in the LEMA agreement to prevent external intervention and ensure local control. The plan will specify that areas already at Q-stable will not take further reductions, and any additional cuts will be at the Board's discretion, based on factual data. The Board discussed the need for legal safeguards to protect against future administrative changes and maintain flexibility for unforeseen circumstances.

Refinement of Q-Stable Analysis and Sub-Regional Data Collection: The Board explored methods to refine Q-stable analysis, focusing on localized water-level measurements, voluntary participation, and collaboration with KGS to identify sub-regions requiring further reductions.

Mark Callender Pres
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Localized Water Level Measurement: The Board discussed the need for more granular water-level data and proposed using measurement tubes, telemetry, and voluntary enrollment to collect static water levels from individual wells. Brownie Wilson at KGS will help identify priority areas and guide the data collection process, aiming to reduce uncertainty and improve allocation decisions.

Voluntary Participation and Cost Sharing: Katie highlighted the importance of voluntary participation in data collection, noting that ITI funds and cost-sharing programs are available to incentivize producers. The Board agreed to advertise these opportunities and provide financial support to minimize the burden on landowners, encouraging broader engagement in monitoring efforts.

Sub-Regional Q-Stable Analysis: Brownie has already divided counties into multiple quadrants, and the Board will use this framework to further refine Q-stable analysis. Areas at Q-stable will maintain their allocations, while sub-regions with ongoing declines will be targeted for additional reductions. The process will be iterative, with ongoing data collection and analysis to improve accuracy.

Integration with Management Plan: The Board considered whether to integrate data collection requirements into the LEMA plan or keep them as a companion piece within the broader management plan. They decided to recognize the need for additional data in the LEMA plan, while operational details may be handled separately to maintain flexibility.

Scope of Appeals: The Board reviewed the appeals process, considering whether to keep it open for the full ten-year period or limit it to specific circumstances. Katie advised narrowing the scope to prevent excessive appeals, focusing on economic hardship and unforeseen events rather than routine requests for additional water.

Local Control and Board Discretion: Katie emphasized the importance of maintaining local control, allowing the Board to address emergencies and unique situations as they arise. The plan will include language granting the Board discretion to act in cases of economic harm or other unforeseen circumstances, ensuring responsiveness to stakeholder needs.

Examples of Emergency Situations: Katie provided examples such as land sales gone wrong, in which new owners were left without access to water due to miscommunication or misunderstandings about allocations. The Board discussed the need for tools to address such cases, including combined well units and conditional approvals based on water level reporting.

Sideboards to Prevent Abuse: The Board agreed to implement tight sideboards in the appeals process, requiring factual basis and preventing loopholes that could allow individuals to game the system. Appeals will be contingent on meeting reporting requirements and maintaining Q-stable status, with the Board retaining the authority to deny requests that threaten overall stability.

Water Allocation Complexity: WCA and LEMA Interactions: discussion on the complexities of managing water allocations between WCA and LEMA systems, including carryover rules, reduction schedules, and the potential for simplifying or integrating the two systems.

Allocation Rules and Carryover: The Board examined how WCA and LEMA allocations interact, noting that whichever system is more restrictive governs water use. Carryover rules differ between the two: WCA offers unlimited carryover, while the LEMA provides limited carryover, which can lead to confusion and potential inequities among producers.

Reduction Schedules and Self-Regulation: WCA wells undergo 7% reductions every seven years, while LEMA reductions are less frequent. The Board observed that WCA producers often self-regulate and do not fully utilize their carryover, but concerns remain about how to manage declines in regions with overlapping systems.


Potential for Simplification: The Board raised the possibility of removing the WCA and integrating. The Board acknowledged legal and practical challenges, including producers' preferences and the risk of lawsuits, but agreed to consider options to reduce complexity.

Executive Session: At 11:53 a.m., Brian Bauck proposed entering executive session to consult with legal counsel for 15 minutes. Those in executive session were Mark Callender, Travis Weaver, Steve Compton, Ray Smith, Brian Bauck, Katie Durham, Tallee Davis, and Tom Adrian. Executive session ended at 12:09 p.m. No decision was made in executive session. The Board agreed to take a break and have lunch before the regular Board meeting at 12:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Approved:

Date:


Office Administrator, Toni Palen


Mark Callender, Board President

