

PECAN VALLEY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

BY-LAWS

Approved	09-22-2009
Revised	12-20-2011
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Reviewed	01-10-2018
Revised	01-23-2024

SECTION 1 – DISTRICT CREATION, PURPOSE AND POWERS

1.1 - District Creation and Purpose

The Pecan Valley Groundwater Conservation District (the “District”) was created under the authority of Section 59, Article XVI, of the Texas Constitution and in accordance with Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code by the 77th Texas Legislature with an effective date of September 1, 2001 subject to the confirmation election held on November 6, 2001, the Act Texas HB 3231 (“the District Act”), as a governmental agency and a body politic and corporate. The District was created to serve a public use and benefit, and is essential to accomplish the objectives set forth in Section 59, Article XVI, of the Texas Constitution. The district’s boundaries are coextensive with the boundaries of DeWitt County, and all lands and other property within these boundaries will benefit from the works and projects that will be accomplished by the district.

1.2 Powers of the District

Except as otherwise specified by the District act, the District has all of the rights, powers, privileges, authority, functions, and duties provided by the general laws of this state, including Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code, applicable to groundwater conservation districts created under Section 59, Article XVI, of the Texas Constitution.

1.3 Principal Office

The principal office shall be located in Cuero, TX, the county seat for DeWitt County. The principal office of the district is located at 1009 N. Esplanade Street, or at such other place as the Board of Directors may determine from time to time.

SECTION 2 – THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2.1 Purpose of the Board

The Board was created to shape policy and regulate the withdrawal of groundwater within the District in order to provide for the conservation, preservation, protection, recharging, and prevention of waste of District groundwater, as well as to exercise its rights, powers, and duties in a manner that will effectively and expeditiously accomplish the purposes of the Act creating the District, Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code, and Section 59, Article XVI, of the Texas Constitution. The Board's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the adoption and enforcement of reasonable rules, policies, permits, orders, and a management plan.

2.2 Terms of Office

The business, powers and duties, rights and privileges, functions and property of the district shall be conducted, controlled, and managed to the extent authorized by law and these by-laws, by a Board of five (5) Directors; four of whom have been elected from their DeWitt County Commissioners' Precinct, and one Director elected by the county at-large. Directors will be elected for a four-year term beginning in January per the election rotation schedule. Directors shall continue to serve until their successor is elected, qualified, and properly sworn in. Directors are eligible to run for re-election. Should a vacancy occur on the Board for any reason, the Board shall appoint a replacement to serve until the next regularly scheduled election. Section 36.051 of the Texas Water Code, shall control the need for and method of an election to fill a vacancy. Within thirty (30) days after any election or appointment of a Director, the District shall notify the Executive Director of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

2.3 Guidelines for Directors

(a) As soon as practicable after a Director is elected or appointed, the Director shall be sworn in, take the oath of office, and execute a bond, as required by Texas Water Code, Section 36.055. The district shall file the sworn statement, oath and bond as prescribed in Section 36.055 (d)

(b) As authorized by Section 36.060, Water Code, a Director is entitled to fees of office of \$200.00 a day effective October 1, 2013, for each day the director actually spends performing the duties of a director. The fees of office may not exceed \$9,000 a year for service on the Board of Directors. Each director is also entitled to receive reimbursement for actual expenses reasonably and necessarily incurred while engaging in activities on behalf of the district.

(c) In order to receive fees of office and to receive reimbursement for expenses, each director shall file with the district a verified statement showing the number of days actually spent in the service of the district and a general description of the duties performed for each day of service.

(d) Upon a Director relinquishing their office, the Director shall return all keys, and other water district supplied items.

2.4 Officers Responsibilities

After each Director's election, the Board shall meet and elect three officers whose titles shall be President, Vice-President, and Secretary/Treasurer. Officers shall be elected annually for terms of one year at the Board's first meeting in January or at such time as is necessary to fill a vacancy for the remainder of a one-year term. The President shall preside at all Board meetings and public hearings, execute all documents on behalf of the district, and perform other duties prescribed by the Board. The Vice-President shall act as the President in the absence or disability of the President, and perform other duties prescribed by the Board. The Secretary/Treasurer of the Board of Directors shall be responsible for preparing, organizing and maintaining the Board meeting minutes and District documents, financial records, and the official District Seal, according to the requirements of Texas Water Code Section 36.055. The Secretary/Treasurer shall attest the President's signature on all documents, and shall perform other duties prescribed by the Board. The Secretary-Treasurer may delegate the recording and transcribing of the minutes to another Board member or staff of the General Manager of the District.

2.5 Indemnification of Directors and Employees

Each director and employee is indemnified by the District against any liability imposed upon him and for any expense reasonably incurred by him in connection with any claim made against him, or any action, suit or proceeding to which he may be a party by reason of his being, or having been, a director or employee, and against such sums as counsel selected by the Board shall deem reasonable payment made in settlement of any such claim, action, suit, or proceeding; provided, however, that no director or employee shall be indemnified with respect to actual damages arising out of a cause of action for a willful act of omission, an act or omission constituting gross negligence or official misconduct, or with respect to matters for which such indemnification would be unlawful or against public policy. Any right of indemnification granted by this Article is in addition to and not in lieu of any other such right of which any director or employee of the District may at any time be entitled under the laws of the State of Texas; and if any indemnification that would otherwise be granted by this Article is disallowed by any competent court or administrative body as illegal or against public policy, then any director or employee with respect to whom such adjudication was made, and any other director or employee, shall be indemnified to the fullest extent permitted by law and public policy, it being the express intent of the District to indemnify its directors and employees to the fullest extent possible in conformity with these Bylaws, all applicable laws and public policy. The district may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is a director or employee of the district in any capacity, or arising out of his status as such. The indemnification provided herein shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of the directors and employees of the district.

SECTION 3 – BOARD MEETINGS

3.1 Quorum

Except where otherwise provided by law or by these By-Laws, a quorum of the Board of Directors consists of a majority of the number of authorized positions on the Board of Directors. All actions of the Board of Directors shall require three (3) affirmative votes.

3.2 Regular Scheduled Meetings

The Board of Directors shall plan to meet at least once each month, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, in the principal office of the district or where notified according to the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Government Code, at a time to be set by the Board of Directors.

3.3 Work Sessions

From time to time as may be necessary, the Board may hold work sessions to discuss and evaluate issues in such detail as to require open and free discussion not normally possible in regular Board meetings. During work sessions of the Board, no public comment will be heard, unless specifically requested by a Director and recognized by the Board chair. Public comment may be made at the time the item(s) is up for discussion at a regular Board Meeting.

3.4 Special Board Meetings

Special meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held upon the call of the President of the Board of Directors or upon the written request of at least two (2) members of the Board of Directors. Such written request shall be signed by members making same, shall state the purpose of such meeting, the time and place where it is to be held, and shall be addressed and delivered to the Secretary of the District's Board of Directors.

Public Notice of special meetings of the Board of Directors must be given and made in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Government Code. Notice of all special meetings, except emergency meetings, shall be given to all members of the Board

of Directors at least two (2) working days prior to the date of such meeting, provided, however, that such written notice of any meeting may be waived by the Board of Directors by unanimous consent.

3.5 Public Hearings

When necessary, a Board Meeting may serve as a Public Hearing to address specific matters such as the annual budget, tax rates, fee schedules, rule changes, permits and other matters where a Public Hearing is legally required.

All actions on District rules shall be taken following a Public Hearing. In addition to the Open Meetings Act notice for a Board Meeting, the District shall publish the agenda of a Public Hearing on District Rules in all newspapers of general circulation in DeWitt County.

The Board shall provide members of the public an opportunity to speak at all Public Hearings. The Board may set reasonable limits on the number, frequency, and length of presentations before it, but shall not unfairly discriminate among speakers for or against a particular point of view.

3.6 Public Comment

(a) During Board meetings, other than a work session, public comment may be heard by the Board. Public comment during a Board meeting will be of two types:

(1) Public comments of a general nature may be made under the public comment item on the agenda; or

(2) Specific comments on any posted agenda item may be made following recognition of the speaker by the Board chair. Such comments may be made after the presentation of the item, or during the Board discussion of the item, if the speaker is called upon.

(b) Public comments of either type will be accepted by the Board chair only after the person wishing to speak has completed an information card, which is available at the meeting. The card must contain the speakers name, address, phone number, and the

number of the agenda item that will be addressed, if applicable. A speaker may speak for three (3) minutes or less. Speakers shall address only the item for which they indicated, unless their general comment is heard during the Public Comment period. No speaker will be allowed to pass his time to someone else, nor will be permitted to repeat comments made by another, except to concur with those remarks.

3.7 Public Committee Memberships

(a) The President of the Board may establish committees for formulation of policy recommendations to the Board. The Board shall appoint the chair and membership of the committees.

(b) Members of the various committees shall be appointed from residents of the district as much as feasible. Membership may include individuals residing outside the district when it would be in the best interest of the committee's work efforts and the district. Membership is voluntary and without compensation.

1. Members of committees will be selected from persons recommended to the Board by directors, public officials and citizen request.
2. All members appointed to a committee by the Board or Board President shall have a single vote on any issue before the committee.
3. Written proxy votes may be accepted when the vote is cast by an informed and active committee member as determined by the committee chair.

(c) Members of the committees are appointed by the directors. Technical representatives are appointed by the Board, based on recommendations from the General Manager.

(d) Committee size will be limited to a number that may reasonably address an issue and will be determined by the Board. Subcommittees appointed by the committee chair may be formed to create a work product for Board and/or full committee review and input.

(e) Members of committees who miss three or more consecutive committee meetings may, at the request of the committee chair, be replaced by the appointing director.

SECTION 4 - ADMINISTRATION

4.1 General Manager

(a) The Board may employ or contract with a person to perform those services as General Manager for the District as the Board may from time to time specify. The General Manager shall have full authority to manage and operate the affairs of the district, subject only to orders of the Board.

(b) The Board may delegate to the General Manager the authority to employ all persons necessary for the proper handling of the business and operations of the district and to determine the compensation to be paid all employees other than the General Manager.

(c) A Director may be employed as General Manager of the District. The compensation of a General Manager who also serves as a Director shall be established by the other Directors.

d) The person employed by the Board as General Manager shall be the chief administrative officer of the district and shall have full authority to manage and operate the affairs of the district, subject only to the direction given by the Board through policies and resolutions adopted by it. At least annually, the Board shall determine the compensation to be paid to the General Manger and review the actions and performance of the General Manager to determine how the General Manager has fulfilled his/her responsibilities and whether additional responsibilities should be delegated to him/her.

(e) In the absence of a General Manager, the President shall exercise all of the duties delegated to the General Manager under the Rules of the District.

4.2 Delegation of Authority.

The General Manager may delegate his or her administrative duties as may be necessary to effectively and expeditiously accomplish his/her duties, provided, however, that no

such delegation shall ever relieve him/her of responsibilities which are ultimately his/hers under the Act, Rules, or Board orders.

4.3 Reimbursable Expenses

(a) Travel Expenses

The General Manager, with the Board's approval, shall provide and periodically revise a written policy concerning the incurring and reimbursement of travel expenses on District business. Directors and employees shall be entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing District business.

The General Manager or Board President, or the Board Vice President must approve travel expenditures submitted for reimbursement in the absence of the Board President.

Travel will be reimbursed at the current mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service.

(b) Normal Reimbursable Expenses

"Actual and necessary expenses" includes:

1. Mileage - All mileage traveled in behalf of District related matters.
2. Travel - All actual costs incurred in out-of-town District related business (taxi, bus, air, car, rental, gasoline, etc.).
3. Parking/Tolls - All, anywhere.
4. Telephone - All for District business.
5. Lodging - All costs for lodging and meals on out-of-town trips and other District business.
6. Conventions/Seminars - The General Manager has the privilege and discretion to attend or approve District staff attendance at conventions and/or seminars where matters pertinent to District business are to be discussed or where there is to be an exchange in regards to information, education, or legislation pertinent to District business. The General

Manager will seek approval of the Board to attend out of state conventions and/or seminars of interest and value to the district.

7. Purchasing - The General Manager is entrusted and has the authority to purchase education, conservation, and/or pollution related materials to be used by the district, while attending meetings with state agencies, political subdivisions, conventions, or other conferences.

8. Food/Beverage - The General Manager is entrusted with the privilege and discretion of purchasing food and/or non-alcoholic beverages within budget constraints. The district may provide a per diem allowance to staff to cover food and/or beverage expenses incurred while on District business. Original receipt or proper documentation must be submitted in order to be reimbursed.

SECTION 5 - MANAGEMENT OF DISTRICT

5.1 Management of District.

(a) The Board shall be responsible for the management of all the affairs of the district. The district shall employ or contract with all persons, firms, partnerships, corporations, or other entities, public or private, deemed necessary by the Board for the conduct of the affairs of the district, including, but not limited to, engineers, attorneys, financial advisors, operators, bookkeepers, tax assessors and collectors, auditors, and administrative staff.

(b) The Board shall set the compensation and terms for consultants.

(c) In selecting attorneys, engineers, auditors, financial advisors, or other professional consultants, the district shall follow the procedures provided in the Professional Services Procurement Act, Subchapter A, Chapter 2254, Texas Government Code.

(d) The Board shall require any officer, employee, or consultant who collects, pays, or handles any funds of the district to furnish good and sufficient bond, payable to the district, in an amount determined by the Board to be sufficient to safeguard the district. The bond shall be conditioned on the faithful performance of that person's duties and on accounting for all funds and property of the district. Such a bond shall be signed or endorsed by a surety company authorized to do business in the State of Texas.

(e) The Board may pay a premium on surety bonds required of officials, employees, or consultants of the district out of any available funds of the district, including proceeds from the sale of bonds.

(f) The Board may adopt Bylaws to govern the affairs of the district to perform its purposes, and amend them from time to time. The Board may, by resolution, authorize the General Manager or other employee to execute documents on behalf of the district.

(g) The Board shall also have the right to purchase all materials, supplies, equipment, vehicles, and machinery needed by the district to conduct its affairs.

(1) Expenditures to acquire goods or services valued at greater than \$2,000 require approval by the Board in advance, unless an emergency occurs that endangers life or property and an emergency acquisition requiring expenditure greater than \$2,000 shall be presented to the Board for approval and validation at its next following meeting. Emergency acquisitions valued at less than \$5,000 may be made by the General Manager and approved by the Board President without prior Board approval and if within budget constraints.

(2) No expenditures may be made that are not authorized by the budget. This requirement shall not, however, prevent the Board from amending the budget at the same time that it authorizes an expenditure, provided that funds are available in other budget categories or that reserve funds are available.

(3) In the case of acquisitions of goods valued at \$1,000 or more, competitive quotations shall be obtained from three vendors, if possible, and documented for the district's records prior to making the purchase.

(4) The Board authorizes purchasing through the State's cooperative local purchasing program, established under Texas Local Government Code 271.081, et seq.

(h) The Board shall utilize appropriate procurement tools and procedures, such as Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and Request for Qualifications (RFQs) to obtain professional services to ensure best use of district resources. Request for professional services shall be published as practical given budget considerations and time constraints.

(i) The Board shall consider all responsive proposals to requests for professional services and base their selection of the preferred respondent based on a formal evaluation of all responsive proposals to ensure best use of district resources.

(j)The Board shall be responsible for monitoring the performance of all consultant providing professional services to the district while services are being provided to the district. The Board shall consider the performance of all consultants at the end of an agreement including an evaluation of any products delivered to the district as part of the agreement to ensure best use of district resources. The Board may assign any monitoring and evaluation tasks to the general manager or any such person it deems necessary and appropriate.

(k)The Board shall annually adopt a budget for the use in planning and controlling District costs. The budget shall contain a complete financial statement including statements regarding outstanding obligations, cash on hand by fund, revenue from previous year, revenue from the ensuing year, end of year fund balances, revenue and balance estimates for the proposed budget, and an estimate of tax rate and fees necessary for the budget. The adopted budget may be amended by the board at any time during the fiscal year.

(l)The Board shall establish an Audit and Finance Committee comprised of at least two directors and any such persons the Board may deem necessary to conduct an annual review of District financial information and the review the annual financial audit. The committee shall make recommendations to the Board regarding its financial review and financial audit. In lieu of establishing an Audit and Finance Committee, the Board may designate the Secretary/Treasurer or another Board member to conduct a monthly review of the district financial records. This monthly review shall be conducted prior to the regularly scheduled Board meetings.

(m)The Board shall seek and obtain the services of a certified public accountant (CPA) to conduct an audit of the district financial records, financial accounts, investments, and associated practices and procedures to ensure the proper use and management of district resources. The resulting audit report shall be conducted in conformity with uniform report

requirements that use “Audit of State and Local Governmental Units” and “Governmental Accounting and Financial Reporting Standards.” The audit report shall be submitted to the district within 120 days after the end of the fiscal year for which the audit was conducted. The Board shall consider the audit report within 180 days after the end of the fiscal year for which the audit was conducted.

SECTION 6 – CODE OF ETHICS

6.1 Standards of Conduct

(a) No director or employee should accept or solicit any gift, favor, or service that might reasonably tend to influence him in the discharge of his official duties or that he knows or should know is being offered him with the intent to influence his official conduct.

(b) No director or employee should accept employment or engage in any business or professional activity that he might reasonably expect would require or induce him to disclose confidential information acquired by reason of his official position.

(c) No director or employee should accept other employment or compensation that could reasonably be expected to impair his independence of judgment in the performance of his official duties.

(d) No director or employee should make personal investments that could reasonably be expected to create a substantial conflict between his private interest and the public interest.

(e) No director or employee should intentionally or knowingly solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit for having exercised his official powers or performed his official duties in favor of another.

(f) As provided by Chapter 171, Local Government Code, Board directors shall be prohibited from participating in a decision on any matter involving an entity in which the director(s) has a substantial interest if it is reasonably foreseeable that decision on the matter would confer a benefit on the entity as this represents a conflict of interest. Board directors shall disclose the nature and extent of any conflict of interest, by written affidavit, to the Board Secretary and District upon identification of the conflict.

SECTION 7 - OPERATIONS OF THE DISTRICT

7.1 Fiscal Year.

The district's fiscal year is October 1st through September 30th.

7.2 Office Hours

The office will be open and staffed to be available to the public from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 a.m. – noon on Fridays, except for District holidays as determined by the Board. The public hours do not necessarily reflect the staff hours; all are subject to the discretion of the board.

7.3 Minutes and Records of the District.

- (a) A complete account of all its meetings and proceedings, minutes, tape recordings, contracts, records, notices, accounts, receipts, and other records in a safe place.

- (b) The records of the district are the property of the district and are subject to Chapter 552, Government Code.

- (c) The preservation, storage, destruction, or other disposition of the records of the district is subject to the requirements of Chapter 201, Local Government Code, and adopted rules.

- (d) All documents, reports, records, and minutes of the district shall be available for public inspection and copying in accordance with the Public Information Act. Upon written application of any person, the district will furnish copies of its public records. Persons who are furnished copies may be assessed a copying charge, pursuant to policies established by the General Manager. A list of the charges for copies will be furnished by the district.

7.4 Certified Copies.

Requests for certified copies must be made in writing. Certified copies shall be made under the direction of the General Manager and shall be affixed with the seal of the district.

Persons who are furnished certified copies may be assessed a certification charge, in addition to the copying charge, pursuant to policies established by the General Manager.

7.5 Contracts.

(a) The district shall contract, and be contracted with, in the name of the district

(b) The district may purchase property from any other governmental entity by negotiated contract without the necessity of securing appraisals or advertising for bids.

7.6 Annual Report.

At fiscal year-end, the President and/or General Manager shall report to the Board on the status of the district and its programs as required by the District Management Plan.

7.7 Banking and Investments

(a) The district shall follow guidelines for all financial transactions as set down in the Internal Control guidelines adopted by the Board of Directors.

(b) All funds of the district shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the district in such banks or accounts as the Board may, from time to time, designate, and upon such terms and conditions as shall be fixed by the Board. The Board may, from time to time, authorize the opening and maintaining of general and special accounts within any such depository as it may designate, and may make such special rules and regulations with respect thereto as it may deem expedient. To the extent that funds in the depository bank or banks are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, they shall be secured as provided by Texas Water Code Section 26.155. The depository shall be located within the district.

(c) The Board shall designate two Public Funds Investment officers, one appointed as Administrative Program Director, for the purpose of investing and reinvesting funds of the district. The board shall adopt an Investment Policy to govern and guide the procedures of investment of public funds.

7.8 Setting Fee Schedule.

(a) The Board, by resolution, shall adopt a fee schedule to apply to all applications, registrations, inspections, and permits that are issued, renewed, or amended as well as fees for other services the district performs or fees to cover charges incurred by the district no later than the end of the fiscal year.

(b) The district may amend the fee schedule from time to time at the discretion of the board.

7.9 Official Seal

The Board by resolution may adopt an official seal for the district to be used on permits and other official documents of the district.

SECTION 8 – BY-LAWS

8.1 General Provision

These By-Laws shall be construed in connection with and so as to conform in all respects to the provisions of the Act which created Pecan Valley Groundwater Conservation District and to the general laws of the State of Texas applicable to the district and its affairs. Any provisions of these By-Laws in conflict with any act or law applicable to the district shall be of no force and effect, and are automatically deemed severed in accordance with section 8.3.

8.2 Amendment of By-Laws

By-laws may be altered, amended, repealed, or replaced at any regular meeting of the Board. No such action may be taken unless a copy of the proposed alteration, amendment or repeal or copy of the proposed new By-law is submitted to each of the directors at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting date. The by-laws shall be reviewed on an annual basis.

8.3 Severability

If any provision of these By-laws is rendered invalid in whole or in part by an order of a court of competent jurisdiction or other law, such provision shall be severed from these by-laws and deemed inapplicable to the extent and during the time it is rendered invalid. All remaining provisions of these by-laws shall continue in effect except to the extent they are rendered unworkable by the severance.

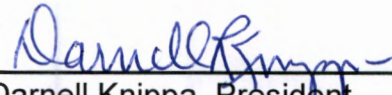
8.4 Compliance with Open Meetings Act and Public Records Act

(a) The Board will comply with the Open Meetings Act. Notice of every regular, special, emergency or work-shop meeting of the Board shall be posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. Except as authorized by the Open Meetings Act and these By-laws, notices of meetings of the Board must be posted no less than 72 hours before the scheduled time of the meeting. Such notices will be posted at the district's administrative office, on the website and in the DeWitt County Courthouse. The Board shall not take any

final or permanent action, make a decision, or vote on any matter deliberated in a closed session, except in a properly-noticed regular open meeting.


(c) The Board will comply with the Public Information Act. All documents and files which are housed within the district office, both electronic and paper, will be made available to the public for review at the district office, or copies made of documents made upon written request.

**Revised by the Board of Directors of the Pecan Valley Groundwater Conservation District
on this the 23rd day of January 2024.**



Darnell Knippa, President

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that the above By-Laws Policy was revised by the Board of Directors of the Pecan Valley Groundwater Conservation District on the 23rd day of January 2024.



Velinda Geffert, Secretary-Treasurer