

# Region 4 - Sabine Regional Flood Planning Group

April 14, 2021 Meeting





Bill Hughes, P.E.  
*November 24, 1960 – April 6, 2021*

Bill Hughes was a long-time employee of the Sabine River Authority and Chair of the Sabine Regional Flood Planning Group. Bill attended Texas A&M University where he received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering and proudly held the title of *Fightin' Texas Aggie, Class of 1983*. He had a professional career that spanned 37 years and had been with the SRA since 2003. As a licensed Professional Engineer, Bill served as the Director of Engineering Services for SRA and went on to also manage operations for the lower river basin for nearly two decades. He was a long-time standing member of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).

Bill was a valuable member of the SRA staff and a pillar of the local community. He was an Eagle Scout and Troup 1 Scout Master, a Knight of Columbus, and President of the Orange Rotary Club. He will be missed by those who knew and worked with him.



## Region 4 - Sabine Regional Flood Planning Group

5. Receive general public comments (Public comments limited to 3 minutes)
6. Discussion and Approval of minutes from the previous Region 4 Sabine RFPG meeting held March 4, 2021.

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Region 4. Sabine Flood Planning Group Meeting**  
**March 4, 2021, 1:30pm**  
**SRA AGO Large Meeting Room**  
**and Zoom Virtual Meeting**

**Roll Call:**

<b><u>Voting Member</u></b>	<b><u>Interest Category</u></b>	<b><u>Present (V-Virtual, P-Physical)/ Absent ( ) / Alternate Present (*)</u></b>
James (Bill) Bruce	<i>Agricultural interests</i>	P
Johnny Trahan	<i>Counties</i>	P
Francis X. Shannon	<i>Electric generating utilities</i>	V
Clyde V. "Tad" McKee III	<i>Environmental interests</i>	V
Don Carona	<i>Flood districts</i>	V
Nikki Davis	<i>Industries</i>	V
Alton Bradley	<i>Municipalities</i>	V
Michelle Falgout	<i>Public</i>	V
William R. (Bill) Hughes	<i>River authorities</i>	P
Jeff Rogers	<i>Small business</i>	P
Roman D. Griffin	<i>Water districts</i>	V
Ross Gordon	<i>Water utilities</i>	V

<b><u>Non-voting Member</u></b>	<b><u>Agency</u></b>	<b><u>Present (V-Virtual, P-Physical)/ Absent ( ) / Alternate Present (*)</u></b>
Colleen Jones	General Land Office	V
Kathy Saucedo	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	
Manuel Martinez	Texas Department of Agriculture	V
Brian Hurtuk	Texas Division of Emergency Management	V
Robert (Bob) Baker	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	V
Trey Watson	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board	
Ryke Moore	Texas Water Development Board	V

**Quorum:**

Number of voting members or alternates representing voting members present: 12

Number required for quorum per current voting membership of 12: 7

**Other Meeting Attendees:**

E. Savage \*\*\*

John Grounds \*\*\*

Tiffany Cartwright \*\*\*

Michael Reedy \*\*\*

Richard Bagans (TWDB) \*\*\*

Rob Armstrong \*\*\*

Carol Nevarez \*\*\*

Steve Jordan \*\*\*

\*\*\*Virtual meeting attendee names were gathered from those who entered information for joining the Zoom meeting.

*All meeting materials are available for the public at:*

<https://www.sabine-rfpq.org/meetings>.

Bart Standley \*\*\*

Brian Hurtuk \*\*\*

James Bronikowski \*\*\*

Rachael Hayden \*\*\*

Joe Escobeeo (OCDD)

Mark Howard (SRATX)

Jim Brown (SRATX)

Jamie East (SRATX)

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**AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Call to Order**

Chairman Bill Hughes called the meeting to order.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: Roll call**

Mark Howard gave roll call. All voting Sabine RFPG members present.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Welcome, Meeting Facilitation Information, and Instructions**

Chairman Hughes stated that TWCB hosted a Chairperson conference call March 3, 2021. Sabine RFPG is in line with where need to be with TWDB schedule. Grant funds will not available until after March 15 (later in the month).

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Receive general public comments (public comments limited to 3 minutes per speaker)**

Chairman Hughes opened the floor for public comments. No public comments were made.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5. Discussion and Approval of minutes from the previous Region 4 Sabine RFPG meeting held January 7, 2021**

Chairman Hughes opened the floor for discussion on the draft minutes. J. Trahan moved and B. Bruce second to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: Update from Chairman**

- Website update  
[sabine-rfpg.org](http://sabine-rfpg.org) is online. Mark Howard showed the RPG website on the Zoom screen and gave a short tour of the site.
- Responses from our RFQ  
The RFPG advertised for consultants. Don Carona was added to the Sabine River Authority staff for review. The review group is bringing a recommendation to the RFPG in a later agenda item.
- Other Updates  
Sabine RFPG is in line with the other RFPGs on the schedule. TWDB has a live RFPGs master schedule on the Board's website. Ryke Moore (TWDB) shared the schedule on the Zoom screen. "Working Conceptual Schedule". It is the same schedule that was in the Sabine RFPG's Grant Application. Chairman Hughes stated that we are at the first red box and on schedule. The red items are fixed.

Future work includes Pre-Planning Meeting for Public Input. Chairman Hughes asked if there were thoughts or concerns on these activities. Michelle Falgout asked if the schedule is on the Sabine RFPG website. It is not but it will be posted to it.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: Update from the Texas Water Development Board**

Ryke Moore, TWDB, provided a standing update. TWDB is reviewing our Grant Application. Will get back with the group. Pre-Planning Public Meetings are required. Reem Zoom provided an email about this meeting but Ryke can provide it again. TWDB working on a guidance document which they will share with the RFPG. Please provide group updates, if any. Chairman Hughes mentioned that other RFPGs have added members. The Sabine RFPG has a



need for more upper basin members, in his opinion, and there is a process for accomplishing this. Far upper basin including Lake Fork and Lake Tawakoni (e.g. Emory, Hunt County) may need representation. Chairman Hughes asked for input for Upper Basin members in Longview area if more membership needed.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: Region 5. Neches RFPG Report**

Don Carona provided a report. Mr. Carona spoke to Dr. Majdalani. Neches RFPG has interviewed engineering firms and selected Freese and Nichols, Inc. (FNI). Have not contracted with FNI yet.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: Action Item: Review and take necessary action on recommendation for engineering services to complete the initial scope of work for the First Cycle of Regional Flood Planning in the Sabine River Basin**

Chairman Hughes mentioned that SRA received Statements of Qualifications (SOQs) from Freese and Nichols, Inc. (FNI); RPS; GEI Consultants, Inc; and Huitt-Zollars, Inc. Chairman Hughes summarized the results of the review of the SOQs conducted by the review team consisting of Don Carona, Bill Hughes and SRA staff. The review team recommended considering and taking action on hiring FNI as the technical consultant.

Johnny Trahan recommended selecting FNI as technical consultant. Tad McKee seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 10: Reminder regarding Planning Group member training on Public Information Act and Open Meetings Act.**

Johnny Trahan mentioned that he took the training already (as Orange County Commissioner) and that this should be sufficient. Chairman Hughes mentioned that elected officials may not have to take it again. Jeff Rogers read the form and records are not kept; it is up to the people that take the training. Jeff Rogers mentioned that there is no report; you get an email and that is it. Members could send their training certificate to Mark Howard.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 11 Consider date and agenda items for next meeting**

Chairman Hughes stated that the RFPG should have the engineering consultant on board for the next meeting. We should start working towards holding the Pre-Planning Public Meeting. Chairman Hughes asked members to provide him potential agenda items for next meeting. Funding will not be available until late March, then can get FNI working. Next meeting was suggested as being April 8, 2021. Chairman Hughes set the next meeting for April 8, 2021 at 1:30 PM.

Chairman Hughes called for additional discussion. There was none.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 12 Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn by Tad McKee. Second by Bill Bruce. Motion passed unanimously.

*Approved by the Region 4 Sabine RFPG at a meeting held on 4/8/2021.*

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Johnny Trahan, INTERIM CHAIR

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## Region 4 - Sabine Regional Flood Planning Group

### 7. Update from the Chairman.

- TWDB Grant Contract

## Region 4 - Sabine Regional Flood Planning Group

8. Update from the Texas Water Development Board.
  - Pre-Planning Public Meeting overview

## Pre-Planning Meetings

Texas Water Code 16.062(d) requires that: *“Each regional flood planning group shall hold public meetings as provided by board rule to gather from interested persons, including members of the public and other political subdivisions located in that county, suggestions and recommendations as to issues, provisions, projects, and strategies that should be considered for inclusion in a regional flood plan.”*

31 Texas Administrative Code §361.12(a)(4) requires: *“Hold[ing] public meetings at central locations readily accessible to the public within the FPR to gather general suggestions and recommendations from the public as to issues, provisions, and types of FMSs, FMPs, and FMEs that should be considered or addressed or provisions that should be considered and potentially included during that regional flood planning cycle in accordance with the public notice requirements in §361.21 of this title.”*

Such “pre-planning” meetings are to provide an opportunity for the public to provide input near the beginning of each flood planning cycle. These meetings may be held in conjunction with regular RFPG meetings or may be held as entirely separate meetings. If they are held in conjunction with a regular RFPG meeting, is important to make this specific meeting requirement and purpose clear in the public notice and posted meeting agenda.

To assist you in meeting the statutory and rule requirement for holding pre-planning meetings, the TWDB:

A. Recommends that the RFPGs hold a minimum of two meetings within the region for this purpose; and

B. Offers the following example agenda item for your potential use in posting those meetings.

***“Pre-Planning Public Input: The RFPG is soliciting public input regarding suggestions and recommendations as to issues, provisions, projects, and strategies that should be considered during the flood planning cycle and/or input on the development of the regional flood plan (as required per Texas Water Code §16.062(d) and 31 Texas Administrative Code §361.12(a)(4)).”***

The TWDB is working on creating a short presentation intended orient the public to the new flood planning process. At the discretion of the RFPG, the TWDB Planner can present this information at the pre-planning meeting(s).

These meetings require 14-day notices and the TWDB suggests that your RFPG engage in proactive outreach to encourage public participation in these meetings. The RFPG may want to accomplish other public input activities at these meetings. For example, in conjunction with the general preplanning

meeting requirement described above, the RFPG may also solicit input from the public on geographic areas that are subject to flooding that existing mapping does not recognize.

The RFPG may address issues and recommendations received from the public to the extent that doing so is in accordance with, and eligible under, the statutory and agency rule regional planning framework, regional flood planning grant contract scope of work, and related agency guidance.

## Region 4 - Sabine Regional Flood Planning Group

9. Discussion and possible recommended action on Pre-Planning Public Meetings.

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10. Presentation from Freese and Nichols, Inc.

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11. Consider date and agenda items for next meeting.

12. Adjourn.