

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE VISION 2020 COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Tom Sloan at 9:00 am on Wednesday, February 11, 2015, 218-N of the Capitol.

All members were present

Committee staff present:

Scott Abbott, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Iraida Orr, Legislative Research Department
Natalie Teemer-Washington, Legislative Research Department
Mary Koles, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant
Renaë Jefferies, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Renaë Jefferies, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Zack Pistora, Director, Sierra Club
Herb Graves, Executive Director, State Association of Watersheds
Herb Graves Club

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

Update on:

Renaë Jefferies, Office of the Revisor of Statutes, provided an update on and highlights of **HB 2270**, the KanCare II expansion bill. Each section was briefly examined. She elaborated on new Section 9, expenditures from the Kansas Health Care Administrative Support Fee Fund in the state treasury. ([Attachment 1](#)) After her remarks, questions were posed by Chairman Sloan and Representatives O'Brien, Bollier, Swanson, and Rooker. Discussions ensued.

Presentation on: State Water Plan Funding and Program needs

Raney Gilliland, Director, Kansas Legislative Research Department, noted that irrigation is Kansas' largest water user. He reviewed and explained the relationship between the State Water Plan Fund, Water Authority, and Water Plan. Funds are appropriated by the Legislature and are generated by an array of sources: fees, receipts, fines, and transfers from the State General Fund and the Economic Development Initiatives Fund. He noted that municipal water fees, fertilizer registration and clean drinking water fees contribute more than \$3 million each to the Water Plan Fund. Approved expenditures and transfers from the Fund for 2013-215 are summarized and presented in a table.

Gilliland explained the membership, budgetary process, and general functions of the Kansas Water Authority. He provided actual and appropriated financial data for 2014-2017 and historical data for 2011-2014. ([Attachment 2](#)) Questions and comments followed his presentation. Participants included Chairman Sloan and Representatives Rooker and Ousley.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES of the Committee on Vision 2020 at 9:00 am on Wednesday, February 11, 2015, 218-N of the Capitol.

Presentation on: State Water Plan Funding and Program needs

Zack Pistora, Legislative Director and State Lobbyist, Kansas Chapter of Sierra Club, agrees with Governor Brownback and the Kansas Water Authority, Kansas must act now and make the best decisions for taking care of this precious resource. He reported that the Ogallala High Plains Aquifer serves 2.3 million people and is being drained over 3 times its annual recharge. Research from Kansas State University estimates that a third of the aquifer has already been drained, and that 70% of it will be gone in the next 50 years. The Ogallala is estimated at \$5 billion in direct value and much more indirectly.

Pistora discussed and applauded the Water Vision: education on water conservation, more efficient irrigation technology, sustainable agricultural practices, and more. Irrigation, he observed, is the root of the water problem; 15% of Kansas' farmers use nearly 85% of our ground and surface water. He supports fully funding the State Water Plan Fund. He also stated that a key cornerstone of sustainable water use is living within one's means. ([Attachment 3](#)) Chairman Sloan and Representatives O'Brien and Campbell had questions for Pistora after his presentation.

Presentation on:

Herb Graves, Jr., Executive Director, State Association of Kansas Watersheds (SAKW), spoke in favor of any legislation that can increase funding for water quality and/or quantity projects in Kansas, for example **HB 2014**. He stated that SAKW feels water projects can only be as good as the protection of the upstream watersheds. SAKW thinks land treatment is a better solution to the problems than stream bank stabilization, the current choice of protection. Conservation practices and watershed dams reduce or control the amount of water that leaves a watershed as well as sediment. Currently, district dams contribute \$50 million dollars of average flood reduction benefits/year in Kansas. SAKW maintains that without these benefits, stream banks would be even more unstable.

About 500 watershed dams await funding. Funding for district dams has markedly decreased during the past decade. The Governor's recent 50 year vision for water calls for finding sites for multi-purpose small lakes. A good plan, Graves observed. ([Attachment 4](#))

Chairman Sloan thanked the conferees for their presentations.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m..
The next meeting will be February 16.