

South Central New Mexico Stormwater Coalition
Regular Meeting
March 19, 2015
Held in Sunland Park Council Chambers
Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Zack Libbin at 1:30 p.m.

Participants introduced themselves. Attendees included:

[Zack Libbin-- Chairman](#)

[Paul Dugie, Doña Ana County Flood Commission—Vice Chairman](#)

Dwaine Solana, City of Sunland Park

Ken Giove, Sunland Park City Councilor

Robert Coleman, City of Sunland Park Manager

Linda Vasquez, City of Sunland Park

Woody Irvine, Bureau of Reclamation

Isela Rosas, Anapara resident

Conrad Keyes, Jr., Paso del Norte Watershed Council

Jessica Knopic, Bureau of Land Management

Hilary Brinegar, Marron and Assoc.

Eric Hamilton, Wilson and Co

William Perry

Sally Williams

Fernando Cadena

Kevin Huckabee

[\(Blue color indicates Coalition member representative\)](#)

Zack Libbin noted that only two member agencies were represented but public attendance was part of the goal of changing meeting locations.

Paul Dugie began with an introduction and discussion of IBWC levee improvement and progress towards FEMA certification as he understands it. He discussed challenges for certification as currently constructed including lack of freeboard, tiebacks to high ground, areas with no levees, and bridge crossings. Paul explained that meetings with FEMA and IBWC are taking place and IBWC points to local governments to fund and provide land side/interior drainage studies required for accreditation of IBWC levees. Paul further explained his standpoint on interior watershed studies required for levee accreditation noting that the Flood Commission will help with studies once a levee section or reach is deemed certifiable by FEMA. Paul explained that FEMA levee accreditation is required for the benefit of levees to be included on flood plain insurance rate maps. Paul explained that currently FEMA was proceeding with LAMP process and natural valley (no levee) to be the only method paid for by FEMA until levees are certified. Paul explained that a lack of levee certification and mapping with this natural valley method could cause changes to flood insurance zoning affecting more than 9,000 lots in Dona Ana County. Paul answered questions from the public.

Dr. Keyes asked about funding opportunities and noted that New Mexico Water Trust Board may have opportunities.

Sunland Park and Anapara residents next explained and discussed that levees have not been improved in Anapara but have been almost everywhere else despite their community being located very near the river. The residents explained that flooding commonly takes place including roads being block as recently as December. Zack encouraged residents to address their concerns to IBWC and IBWC citizen forum. Residents continued to comment and express concerns over current state of levees and lack of certification.

Zack briefly explained and informed residents about a multi-purpose project EBID has underway in the Santa Teresita/Sunland park area to help alleviate flooding associated with uncontrolled stormwater runoff that comes into EBID's West and Nemexas Drains and also create habitat for wildlife. EBID calls this project Diez Lagos and the site has already proven helpful for preventing the drain from over filling with uncontrolled stormwater.

Dwaine Solana provided an update on stormwater issues in Sunland Park. Dwaine discussed the need for a drainage study in Anapara and problems arising from river seepage. Dwaine described stormwater problems with Crawford Road and several related to Mt. Cristo Rey and Juarez MX. Dwaine explained that NMDOT highway construction has increased runoff problems in some locations. Dwaine explained that he hoped to develop projects to improve area problems soon.

Zack asked if the Anapara problems were related to river seepage or stormwater. Dwaine explained that some of the problems, specifically at a local church, were related to a broken water line and not river seepage as once thought. Dwaine also explained that the community has a major stormwater runoff problem associated with the steep slopes from Mt. Cristo Rey and the river banks preventing water from reaching the Rio Grande.

Sunland Park's new City Manager Robert Coleman provided input into the stormwater problems in Sunland Park. Robert explained that a pump for stormwater into the Rio Grande failed so Sunland Park rented pump during the monsoon rains. Robert explained that Sunland Park has stormwater problems and that their stormwater pump needed to be replaced. Robert also mentioned that groundwater accumulation creates problems when the river has water. Robert also reinforced that the local church seepage problem was caused by a CRRUA pipe leak.

Resident Kevin Huckabee gave input about the studies he felt may be needed.

Robert Coleman explained further that Sunland Park is discussing a Master Plan and has planned a Master Drainage Study. Robert explained that he expects to see some modification to McNutt Rd drainage after a study to better be able to develop upstream retention and detention and drainage ways. He explained that Sunland Park would likely have an ICIP request to improve stormwater management.

Ms. Hilary Brinegar explained her knowledge of improvements to Pete Domenici Highway for increased heavy truck loads.

Dr. Keyes notified the group of the next Paso Del Norte Watershed Council meeting on April 18.

Next Meeting Discussions: Meet at EBID to discuss bylaws and Coalition business on April 16.

Meeting adjourned 4:00 pm.