Wintergarden GCD Minutes August 4th 2026, 8:00am

Board President, Von Box called the meeting to order at 8:00am. Her noted that all of the board is present accept Travis Evins, Board Vice Chairman.

Mr. Box asked Mr. Dirk Aaron, Interim GM to offer an invocation.

Mr. Box asked the Board Members and visitors to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Box asked the Staff if we have anybody signed up for public comments? Mr. Aaron stated that we do not.

Mr. Box asked if anybody here wants to offer public comments?

Mr. Aaron did receive one by email this morning from Rick Treviño . But Mr. Rick Treviño did arrive, and the following is a summary of his comments.

Rick Treviño of Laredo, Texas, provided public comments regarding the proposed DFCs and groundwater planning within GMA 13. Mr. Treviño expressed concern regarding requests from interests in Webb County and Laredo for increased groundwater availability and the potential impacts those requests could have on groundwater resources and property owners in Dimmit, Zavala, and La Salle Counties. He encouraged the district to carefully consider and protect the interests of its local communities and landowners throughout the joint-planning process. Mr. Treviño emphasized that residents throughout the region share common interests and expressed his desire for a more collaborative and respectful approach to regional water planning. **Wintergarden GCD Board President Von Box thanked Mr. Treviño for his comments and stated that the Board appreciated his participation.**

Agenda Item 3: Board Minutes

Approval of the minutes of the July 15th board meeting. Mr. Box asked if the board members have any amendments or corrections to offer?

Receiving none, he stated he would entertain a motion to approve them. Neal Lelewellyn moved to accept them, Ed Ritchie seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0 with 1 Director Absent (Travis Ervin).

Agenda Item 4: Discuss, consider, and take appropriate action if necessary to approve the fiscal FY26 line item budget amendments as or if needed.

This is a place holder for amendments as needed and no amendments are being offered by the staff. No action taken.

Agenda Item 9: Interview the four finalist of the position general manager position.

The purpose of the interviews is to let each finalist present themselves and give us a chance to evaluate them. They've been asked to prepare a brief presentation to introduce themselves. Following each presentation, we will then have a question-and-answer session so we can ask each one individually. Mr. Box has asked while one of them is presenting, we ask the others to step outside.

Mr. Aaron provided all 19 applications to Von, Neal and Bill so each of committee reviewed all applications and each of these selected the four candidates independently thus the four names invited were on one or more of the committee's recommended lists. Bill Martin wanted to clarify that this was the process.

Thus, thė process was so the assigned 3 committee members would independently review the nineteen applications. Mr. Aaron clarified that each member of the committee (Neal, Von, Bill) based their selection priorities independent of the others. Mr. Aaron appreciated the question, so the entire board knew what the process was to get to today's 4 finalists.

The Board conducted presentations and interviews with the four finalists for the position of General Manager of Wintergarden GCD. The finalists appeared in the following order: Mr. Bobby Bazan, Mr. Michael Heath, Mr. Chris McFarland, and Mrs. Claudia McDaniel. Each finalist presented a PowerPoint outlining their qualifications, professional experience, management approach, and interest in serving the district. Following each presentation, the finalist responded to questions from members of the Board regarding the position and the needs of the district.

Six members of the Board of Directors were present and participated in the interview process. Mr. Travis Evins was absent. The finalist presentations and interviews were conducted during the morning session, beginning at approximately 8:30 a.m. and concluding at approximately 9:45 a.m.

Board concluded as stated at approximately 9:45 AM and for the purpose of an employee selection went into executive session. The executive session ended at approximately 10:20 AM thus the board reconvened at that time.

Agenda Item 10: Selection of the Candidate for GM:

Upon reconvening board president Von Miller ask is there any motions is there any further discussion related to final selection of the candidate none was heard. Neal Llewellyn moved that the Board allow Mr. Aaron to pursue additional information about the top candidate and instructed Him to negotiate the terms of that offer with the assistance of our board president. Corky Weeks 2nd the motion. Motion passed 6-0 with one member absent.

Agenda Item #5: Selection of a Legal Firm for professional legal services

Mr. Boxes asked that the board refer to the staff report in the packet provided last week to each of you and if we have any questions per the suggested process. Members discussed at length all of the firms and individuals and received input from each Director on their preference. Discussion was also about firms being able to remote into Board Meetings so avoid expensive costs for travel and time in a vehicle. All agreed that both legal and geoscience could remote in on Teams with the system the board already has.

After extension discussion and questions Bill Martin moved that the board hire Kristen Fancher as General Counsel. Ed Ritchie seconded the motion.

Von asked if there was any further discussion, and the members asked, if possible, could Mr. Aaron discuss with Mrs. Fancher the need for an engagement letter and would she be willing to discuss the role of Marty Jones in collaboration as a consult with her on rule changes. Mr. Aaron stated he would bring that up with her and report back on August 18th and have her on the call that day to discuss her engagement and specifics as lead counsel.

The motion passed 6-0 with one member absent.

Agenda Item 6: Select a Hydrogeologic Firm Geoscience firm from those who offered SOQs and interviewed with the board.

Von briefed the board on the length of time (February – July) that five firms presented and were interviewed by the Board. Von stated he would entertain a motion if the board is prepared to select a firm. He polled the board and all 6 affirmed their desire to hire KT Groundwater. Based on the poll of the board Neal moved that the district hire KT Groundwater, Ed Ritchie 2nd the motion. Motion passed 6-0 with one member absent.

Mr. Aaron stated that he will work with Mr. Keester to get an engagement letter and geoscience endeavors from him for the August 18th board meeting.

Agenda Items #7 & #8: Conduct the public hearing on the proposed GMP and Approve the plan with offered amendments.

Public hearing was opened up by Board President, Von Box, at 10:45am

Interim General Manager Dirk Aaron addressed President Von Box and the Board of Directors regarding the proposed amended Wintergarden GCD Groundwater Management Plan. Mr. Aaron explained that the draft Management Plan had been made available for review and that several comments received during the review process identified minor corrections and clarifications. These recommended revisions were substantive in nature and had been incorporated into the draft presented to the Board for consideration at the public hearing today. No formal comments were received at the public hearing. Public Hearing was closed at 10:50am.

Mr. Aaron advised the Board to adopt the amended Groundwater Management Plan as presented with the incorporated revisions by resolution. Upon adoption, the Board would authorize Mr. Aaron, as Interim General Manager, to promptly submit the adopted Management Plan to the Texas Water Development Board for review and approval and to make the adopted version available on the Wintergarden GCD website. Neal Llewellyn moved to adopt the amended management plan by resolution and the motion was seconded by Corky Weeks. The motion passed 6-0 with 1 director absent.

Agenda Item 11: Discuss continuing the Texas County & District Retirement System for the new employees once hired.

Von asked the board if they had any questions and if not he would entertain a motion to continue the program. Billy Martin moved that the district continues the program for future employees. Motion was seconded by Neal Llewellyn. Motion carried 6-0 and 1 director absent.

Agenda Item 12: Interim General Managers Report

Interim General Manager Dirk Aaron provided the Board with an update regarding the GMA 13 Desired Future Conditions (DFC) joint planning process. The August 3 deadline for receipt of public comments on the proposed DFCs has now passed, and Wintergarden GCD received numerous formal comments, including comments also submitted directly to GMA 13. With the District's legal counsel and geoscience consultant now in place, their immediate task will be to review the comments relevant to Wintergarden GCD and collaboratively prepare the district's required summary report for submission to GMA 13 Administrative Leader Kelly Cochran in advance of the September 18th, GMA 13 meeting.

Mr. Aaron emphasized the importance of meeting the applicable joint-planning deadlines and ensuring that the district's summary accurately and appropriately represents the comments received. This represents the next step in the broader DFC process, which will continue beyond the September GMA 13 meeting.

Mr. Aaron also advised that, at the Board's next meeting, the Board will need to take formal action to designate representatives for both GMA 13 and Region M. The Board may appoint a director, the new General Manager, or another appropriate representative to serve as the District's primary representative, along with an alternate, to ensure Wintergarden GCD remains actively represented in both regional planning processes.

Agenda Item 13: Director Comments

Von started the conversation with encouragement that all directors consider attending the TAGD Groundwater Summit in early September. He stated that he and the new GM should attend and represent the district.

He brought up the importance of the directors completing their cyber security and public information act training by the end of the month. Dirk Aaron stated that will be an important task for the new GM to help all of the directors complete this task soon.

Neal gave update on District Pickup truck repairs

Bill commented on the La Salle County Desal concerns

Wintergarden GCD

Public Meeting Sign-In Sheet

August 4, 2026 • 8:00 a.m.

No.	Printed Name	Organization / City	Public Comment? ☐ Yes ☐ No	Signature
1	Jeffrey Grissom	[illegible]	☑ Yes ☐ No	
2	Mike Reester	KTGW	☐ Yes ☒ No	
3	[illegible]		☐ Yes ☐ No	
4	Earl Pritchie		☐ Yes ☐ No	
5	Bill Mall		☐ Yes ☐ No	
6	Bobby Dawson	self	☐ Yes ☒ No	
7	Mrs McCarty	self	☐ Yes ☑ No	
8	Diana Nichols	Kelly Hart	☐ Yes ☑ No	
9	Michael Hersh		☐ Yes ☐ No	
10	Paige Roper	Tio Tres Farms	☐ Yes ☑ No	
11	~~[illegible]~~	Rick Tarrano	[illegible]	☒ Yes ☐ No	
12	Neil R. [illegible]	[illegible]	☐ Yes ☐ No	

Please print clearly. If you wish to address the Board during the public comment portion of the meeting, please check 'Yes'.

Also present was:
Dirk Aaron
Von Box
Corky Weeks
Martin Kruger

Agenda Item 14:

1) Set preliminary tax rate and discuss draft buget
2) Select GMA13 and Region M Representative and Alternative.
3) Receive the Proposed DFC comments summary from Legal and Geoscience teams for Board approval to be set to GMA13 on August 19th.
4) Receive update on PIA and letters of engagement from legal and geoscience teams.

Agenda Item 15: Next meeting date and location

August 18th at 8:00am at the District Headquarters

Workshop items:

1) Mr. Aaron stated he is meeting with the Dimmit County Tax Accessor who will be the source for calculating the district's Voter Approval Rate and will give guidance for the upcoming meeting to set the preliminary tax rate.
2) Technology needs will be discussed as a part of the future budget meetings
3) & 4) will be on the future agendas to get input from the Board on the necessary path for policy development.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:45am

Certification

These condensed proceedings were prepared from August 4, 2026, meeting transcript and organized according to the posted agenda. They are intended to accurately summarize Board discussions and actions while eliminating verbatim dialogue. Motions, seconds, and votes have been included where clearly identifiable from the meeting transcript.

Signed: Von R. Box Date: 8/18/26

Von Box, Board President

Signed: E. W. Ritchie III Date: Aug 18, 2026

Ed Ritchie, Board Secretary