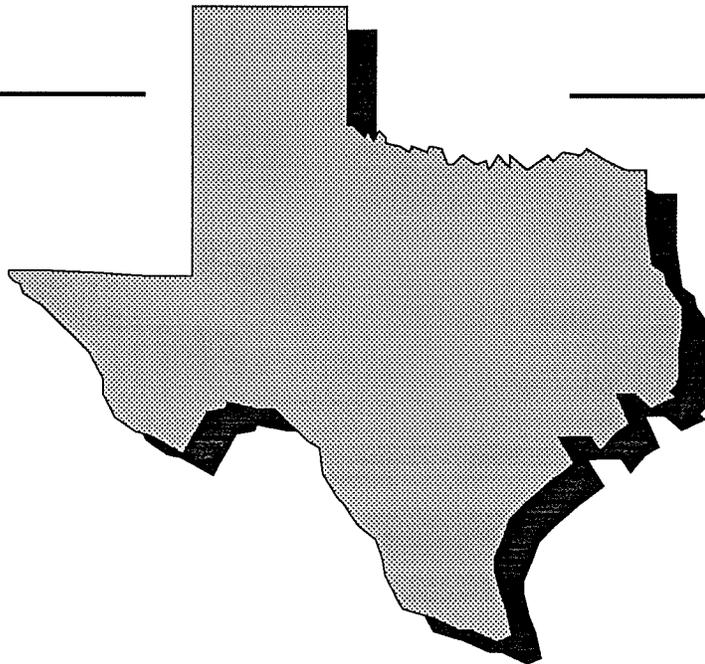


TEXAS SUNSET ADVISORY COMMISSION

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority



STAFF REPORT

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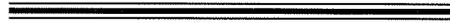
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STAFF REPORT

TO THE

SUNSET ADVISORY COMMISSION

ON THE



GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY

RECOMMENDATION



CONTINUE THE GBRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND REMOVE IT FROM THE SUNSET PROCESS.

BACKGROUND

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) was created by the Texas Legislature in 1935 to develop, conserve, and protect the water resources of the Guadalupe River Basin. The river authority encompasses ten counties, more than 6,000 square miles, and includes about 311,000 people. The ten counties are Kendall, Comal, Hays, Caldwell, Guadalupe, Gonzales, DeWitt, Victoria, Calhoun, and Refugio.

GBRA provides water to municipal, industrial, and agricultural customers; water and waste-water treatment; hydroelectric power, and recreational facilities.

GBRA has 124 employees located at sites throughout the district. Headquarters are in Seguin.

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority is directed by a nine-member board of directors appointed by the Governor and subject to Senate confirmation. Each director serves a six-year term and must reside in one of the ten counties which make up the district. Two directors may not reside in the same county. The

board of directors are listed in the box, *GBRA Board Members*.

In 1989 the 71st Texas Legislature gave the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC), then the Texas Water Commission, increased responsibility and oversight of GBRA and the other constitutionally created water districts and river authorities. At that time, the Legislature also removed river authorities from Sunset review.

However, in 1993, the Legislature identified concerns with the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority's management and placed the river authority under

GBRA Board Members and General Manager

William A. Blackwell, Chair	Cuero
Wanda Roberts, Vice-Chair	Port Lavaca
John C. Taylor, Secretary	Seguin
Marshall Ray Holybee, Treasurer	Bayside
Warren "Pat" Kirksey	Lockhart
Catherine "Kay" McHaney	Victoria
J. Lloyd Moore, Jr.	San Marcos
Jen F. Ripley	Gonzales
T.L. Walker	New Braunfels

W.E. (Bill) West Jr., General Manager

GBRA has addressed prior Legislative concerns through changes in direction and management.

Sunset review. Discussions at that time centered on a perceived lack of responsiveness to the diverse interests of the district.

Under the sunset provision, the terms of the board members expire on September 1, 1995 unless the Legislature continues the board members in office. The statute also provides for the appointment of new board members if the terms of the current board members expire.

FINDINGS

▼ **GBRA has taken steps to correct the problems identified by the Legislature.**

► In February 1994, the board of directors hired a new general manager. The new general manager has worked to identify all the needs of the district and forge new relationships and partnerships with political subdivisions, customers and groups affected by the river authority's activities in the district.

► The board and staff are implementing a strategic planning and budgeting process to identify the goals and objectives for GBRA and to link their budget to the achievement of these goals and objectives.

▼ **No other river authorities are subject to the Sunset Act.**

► Instead, GBRA and the other river authorities are subject to oversight by the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission.

► In 1992, TNRCC issued rules which govern the administrative policies of river authorities. The following are examples of TNRCC's requirements:

- River authorities must conduct an independent management audit once every five years and submit the results to TNRCC. Alternatively, river authorities may establish an internal audit office which reports directly to authority directors.
- Each river authority must submit copies of its administrative policies, including policies on ethics, travel, investments, and procurement, to the Executive Director of TNRCC.
- TNRCC submits a biennial report to Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House that summarizes the supervisory activities of TNRCC over river authorities.
- TNRCC staff indicated that GBRA is in compliance with TNRCC rules.

Recommendation

Change in Statute

■ **Continue the terms of the current members of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority board of directors and repeal the related sunset provision.**

This recommendation recognizes the recent changes in direction and management of GBRA and returns oversight of the river authority to TNRCC.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation will not result in any fiscal impact to the state.

GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY

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