



Voter Guide for the May 2021 Elections in Blanco County

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan civic organization and does not support or oppose any candidate or candidates or political party or parties. The information provided on this flyer is also available at the website VOTE411.org, sponsored by the League of Women Voters - Hill Country Texas. All responses to questions come directly from the candidates and are not edited by LWV-Hill Country Texas.

Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District Board

The Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District Board is a political subdivision of the State of Texas. BPGCD or the District was created by an election in January 2001 when Blanco County voters approved the creation with the authority to assess an Ad Valorem tax on property owners in Blanco County. The district is responsible for the conservation, preservation, protection and recharge of all groundwater and aquifers with Blanco County. To accomplish these goals, the District works to minimize the drawdown of the water table, minimize the reduction of artesian pressure, control subsidence, prevent interference between wells, prevent the degradation of the quality of groundwater, prevent waste of groundwater, preserve historic use of groundwater, give consideration to the service needs of retail water utilities, and carry out the powers and duties conferred under chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code.

The Board of Directors is composed for five members: four directors represent each of the county precincts and one director at large represents the county as a whole. To be qualified to represent a precinct, the director must live in the geographical precinct and be registered to vote in the precinct. The elections of the directors are staggered: Directors of Precinct 1 and 2 and the Director at Large are open in May 2021.

Duties: appoints the general manager; oversees the general manager and the direction of the district; approves the district budget; sets the fee rates and the tax rate; sets salaries and benefits of district employees; amends or repeals district bylaws as needed; sets district policies and rules; approves a district management plan; appoints members to advisory committees.

Election for Director At Large: term of office - 4 years

Jimmy Klepac	Beckie J. Morris
Email: jimmy@klepac.com	Email: morrisforwater@gmail.com
Phone: 830-833-45-74	Phone:
Website: www.jimmyklepac.com	Website: www.morrisforwater.com

1. What experience and knowledge qualifies you to serve as the Director at Large for the Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District Board?

Jimmy Klepac: I have acquired a vast understanding of our Groundwater District while serving 18 years as Director: helping develop Texas' 50-year water plan, reviewing and approving budget cycles and monthly financial reports, the role of our District with local and state agencies, and developing prudent rules to help conserve our groundwater. I have learned a wealth of hydrogeology knowledge from Ron Fieseler, District General Manager: understanding aquifers of our county, recharge, and managing drought situations. I have also learned the wisdom of relying on sound legal counsel from our attorney while keeping abreast of proposed Legislative impacts on our groundwater.

Beckie J. Morris: I started my hands-on work with aquifers when I was a hydrogeologist with the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Groundwater Conservation District. Several years later, when I was general manager of the Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District in Dripping Springs, I was involved in the everyday concerns of homeowners, existing businesses and of people coming to develop and live in the Hill Country. I understand how critical groundwater is to them. From there, I worked as a science and policy groundwater consultant for Turner, Collie & Braden Inc., doing work for groundwater conservation districts all over Texas.

Answers to questions #2 and #3 and #4 for Director At Large continued on page 2.



Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District Board

Election for Director At Large: term of office - 4 years

2. What is the most pressing issue facing the Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District and what do you hope/plan to do about it?

Jimmy Klepac: Water availability to meet the inevitable population growth of Blanco County is a major issue. The District’s role is vital in balancing smart growth. I will see that we continue to work with our Blanco County Commissioners as they update subdivision rules with regards to water availability. I will make sure the District continues to review all proposed subdivision water availability studies. I will ensure that the District continues to expand our well database: a vast county wide log of well data showing individual scientific well information allowing us to better pinpoint water quality and availability.

Beckie J. Morris: Every person in Blanco County deserves clean, accessible water. People and businesses are moving here at an unprecedented rate. That’s great, but do we have enough water? The BPGCD Groundwater Management Plan warns, in Section VII.B, that the Trinity Aquifer “could be overextended.” Based on estimated data, they are planning for a 30’ drop in water level of the Trinity Aquifer within 50 years. I believe that will harm our property values. If elected to the Board, I will participate in determining priorities for our groundwater and help create policies that protect groundwater resources for the people of Blanco County.

3. What are the citizens who live in Blanco County telling you about water problems?

Jimmy Klepac: Balancing water availability and population growth which I covered above. Now, the 2 Elephants in the Room: there have been many passionate comments concerning the Permian Highway Pipeline and the City of Blanco’s Wastewater Treatment application with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality allowing the discharge of treated water into the Blanco River. I stand firm that both of those issues are outside of Groundwater District’s jurisdiction. When called upon, our District took a multitude of water samples from many concerned County landowners and took the opportunity to help address and ease those concerns with scientific understanding of the facts.

Beckie J. Morris: Citizens concerned about their groundwater approached me to run for the BPGCD board. They believe the current leadership does not represent their concerns, nor care about those concerns. I have listened to many stories of wells running dry and then unexpectedly needing to invest in a rainwater harvesting system. Also, many people believe the District should be involved in surface water issues. The BPGCD website states, “The District is responsible for the conservation, preservation, protection and recharge of all groundwater and aquifers within Blanco County.” Recharge is surface water becoming groundwater. Therefore, surface water must be protected, to protect groundwater.

4. Have you ever attended a meeting of the Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District Board of Directors?

Jimmy Klepac: Yes I have, and in my 18 years of serving as a Director, I have attended approximately 150 District meetings, rarely missing any meetings. Since 2011, fellow District Directors have annually elected me as their Board President, which I view as a testimony to my District experience, my ability to run an efficient meeting, and the confidence that the other Directors have in my skillset, the same level confidence the voters of Blanco County can enjoy if I am re-elected.

Beckie J. Morris: Yes, I attended meetings several years ago. During one meeting, I watched the board vote to delegate its authority and responsibilities to the general manager. Through my own experience, I knew that was a bad decision for Blanco County. I reminded the Board they, not the general manager, were elected to represent their constituents. Decisions impacting our water supply are too important to not be discussed. We deserve a District Board that will do the hard work to make informed and sometimes difficult decisions – a board that accepts responsibility for those decisions and that represents everyone in the county.



Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District Board
Election for Director Precinct 2 in Blanco County: term of office - 4 years

Table with 3 columns: Lanny Counts, Todd Kneese, John Sone. Rows include Email, Phone, and Website.

1. What experience and knowledge qualifies you to serve as the Director Precinct 2 for the Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District Board?

Lanny Counts: I have already served 8 years on this board and therefore I am presently familiar with the Rules and Regulations associated with Blanco County's Groundwater Conservation Board (BPGCD).

Todd Kneese: I have been in the ground water production business for 20 years. I am licensed through TCEQ (Texas Commission on Environmental Quality) Very familiar with the water situation in our precinct.

John Sone: Military service for 30 years, including a senior strategic planner in the highest levels of the Department of the Army; service as a city manager for three years in Central Texas; serving as a professor of public administration and political science for the past five years;

2. What is the most pressing issue facing the Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District and what do you hope/plan to do about it?

Lanny Counts: As Blanco county continues to experience population growth then eventually our aquifers might NOT be able to supply our anticipated water requirements. There are alternatives to this county's dependence on aquifer water such as rain water collections systems, desalinization of sea water, and water reparations, etc.

Todd Kneese: We are losing ranches in Blanco county to large subdivisions. These subdivisions are creating many more wells on property that for years may have had only 1 or 2 wells for a home and maybe livestock.

John Sone: There is a risk from developers lacking a realistic understanding of the carrying capacity of a semi-arid environment. The areas adjacent to Johnson City may experience seasonal shortfalls in the Ellenburger aquifer if development of small lots increases.

Answers to questions #3 and #4 for Director Precinct 2 continued on page 4.



Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District Board

Election for Director Precinct 2 in Blanco County: term of office - 4 years

3. What are the citizens who live in Blanco County telling you about water problems?

Lanny Counts: My neighbors wish to know if there are plans being developed for alternative water resources in case usage eventually exceeds aquifer capacity. All well users are consistently concerned with the quality of their well water. The current board is working to research and develop answers to these issues.

Todd Kneese: The people in all of Blanco county not just Precinct 2 are concerned about the amount of growth we are experiencing. We are getting a lot of wells put in, and the people want to know how this is going to affect their property, and way of life. Are the ranchers going to be able to care for their livestock which is their livelihood. Where does our water table stand right now?

John Sone: Many, if not most, depend on continued reliability of community groundwater availability, not just for the present but for the future value of their properties. Johnson City citizens trust that the board is planning for contingencies such as the drought of a decade ago.

4. Have you ever attended a meeting of the Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District Board of Directors?

Lanny Counts: Yes. As a member of this board for the past 8 years, I have to my best memory only missed one scheduled meeting.

Todd Kneese: Yes

John Sone: No, nor have most of my Precinct 2 neighbors who live in the City and therefore rely upon regular City staff interaction with the District and our precinct director.

Voting Information for Blanco Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District

Take a photo ID with you to the voting location. Curbside voting available.

EARLY VOTING IN TWO LOCATIONS FOR ALL PRECINCTS

BLANCO: City Hall 300 Pecan Street

Note: Extended hours on Tuesday, April 20 & Thursday, April 22

Table with 7 columns: Day, Date, and Hours. Rows for April 18-24.

Table with 7 columns: Day, Date, and Hours. Rows for April 25 and May 1.

JOHNSON CITY: Community Park Building 620 North Nugent Street

Note: Extended hours on Monday, April 26 and Tuesday, April 27

Table with 7 columns: Day, Date, and Hours. Rows for April 18-24.

Table with 7 columns: Day, Date, and Hours. Rows for April 25 and May 1.

ELECTION DAY: SATURDAY, MAY 1 from 7:00AM to 7:00PM

Precinct 1 and Precinct 4 Location: Byars Building 308 Pecan Street Blanco

Precinct 2 and Precinct 3 Location: Community Park Building 620 North Nugent Street Johnson City