86R4906 SLB-D

By:  Huberty H.B. No. 911

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation and functions of the Lake Houston Watershed Commission.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Subtitle A, Title 2, Water Code, is amended by adding Chapter 9 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 9. LAKE HOUSTON WATERSHED COMMISSION

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 9.0101.  DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1)  "Board" means the Texas Water Development Board.

(2)  "Watershed commission" means the Lake Houston Watershed Commission.

Sec. 9.0102.  PURPOSE. The watershed commission is created to provide the public with streamlined communication and cooperation in flood control planning.

SUBCHAPTER B. ADMINISTRATION

Sec. 9.0201.  WATERSHED COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP. (a) The watershed commission is composed of the following voting watershed commissioners:

(1)  one member of the commissioners court of Harris County, appointed by that court;

(2)  one member of the commissioners court of Liberty County, appointed by that court;

(3)  one member of the commissioners court of Montgomery County, appointed by that court;

(4)  one person appointed by the city council of the City of Houston;

(5)  one person appointed by the city council of the City of Humble; and

(6)  one person appointed by the board of each municipal utility district that borders Lake Houston.

(b)  The San Jacinto River Authority and the Coastal Water Authority each shall appoint a representative to serve as a nonvoting commissioner of the watershed commission.

Sec. 9.0202.  WATERSHED COMMISSION TERMS; VACANCY. (a) Commissioners of the watershed commission serve staggered terms of two years, with approximately equal numbers of commissioners' terms expiring each year.

(b)  Each appointing entity shall fill a vacancy on the watershed commission for the unexpired term of a person appointed by that entity by appointing a person who has the same qualifications as required under Section 9.0201 for the person who previously held the vacated position.

Sec. 9.0203.  PRESIDING OFFICER. The watershed commissioners shall select one commissioner as the presiding officer of the watershed commission to serve in that capacity until the person's term as a watershed commissioner expires.

Sec. 9.0204.  WATERSHED COMMISSION STAFF. On request by the watershed commission, the board shall provide any necessary staff to assist the watershed commission in the performance of its duties.

Sec. 9.0205.  PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION. (a) The watershed commission may hold public meetings as needed to fulfill its duties under this chapter.

(b)  The watershed commission is subject to Chapters 551 and 552, Government Code.

Sec. 9.0206.  COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS. (a) Commissioners of the watershed commission serve without compensation but may be reimbursed by legislative appropriation for actual and necessary expenses related to the performance of watershed commission duties.

(b)  Reimbursement under Subsection (a) is subject to the approval of the presiding officer of the watershed commission.

Sec. 9.0207.  MEETINGS. The watershed commission shall meet quarterly.

SUBCHAPTER C. POWERS AND DUTIES

Sec. 9.0301.  POWERS AND DUTIES. The watershed commission shall:

(1)  engage in flood control planning in the watershed of Lake Houston, including the planning of projects that may also serve as a water source;

(2)  facilitate the sharing of flood-related information and maps between political subdivisions in the watershed of Lake Houston; and

(3)  publish information about the activities of the watershed commission on an Internet website maintained by the watershed commission.

SECTION 2.  (a) Not later than December 31, 2019, the entities described by Section 9.0201, Water Code, as added by this Act, shall appoint watershed commissioners to the Lake Houston Watershed Commission.

(b)  The Lake Houston Watershed Commission shall hold an initial meeting in the first quarter of 2020. At the initial meeting, the watershed commissioners shall draw lots to determine which watershed commissioners serve a term of one year and which watershed commissioners serve a term of two years.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.