

President's Letter June 2026

Please accept my first President's letter. This is the first President's letter since Spring 2022. I hope you will take the time to see what is happening at the "President's kitchen table."

In the beginning

- a. In summer 2025, the previous Brazos MDWCA Board was disbanded by the NM Environmental Division (NMED) due to expired terms and concerns regarding possible violations of the Sanitary Projects Act (SPA) and the BMDWCA By-laws.
- b. NMED held a BMDWCA election in late summer, the first election held since Spring 2022. The following six were elected to the Board (in alphabetical order): Jimmy Banister, Donna Casados, Ryan Costanza, Teri Fahs, Rubel Martinez, & Chuck Roberts.
- c. Of the newly elected Board, Rubel served as Board Treasurer over a decade ago. Ryan served a year on the past board, resigning after a year for personal reasons. Jimmy served as Vice-President and was acting President when the Brazos MDWCA Board was disbanded. Donna, Chuck, and Teri have no previous experience on the BMDWCA Board.
- d. At its first Board meeting on September 20, 2025, the Board unanimously elected Donna as Secretary/Treasurer, Rubel as Vice-President, and myself (Teri) as President.
- e. The previous Board passed on very little required to function as a Board. Financial records were sparse and confusing. Audits required annually by the State had not been completed since 2019. Copies of documents like employee contracts, resolutions, and basic information such as payment records, organizational procedures and history were not made readily available. The Board has more-or-less started from scratch.
- f. Given that the new Board has been in office only eight (8) months, I think we've made significant progress.

A steep learning curve

- a. As President, I entered the University of the Brazos MDWCA and it's college of hard knocks!
- b. To learn compliance requirements of the State I have attended and continue to attend numerous meetings for instruction from NMED, the Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) and meetings with professional associates and related partners.
- c. I have completed thirteen and a half (13.5) hours of the twelve (12) hours required of any current Board member of a Domestic Water Consumer's Association in the first two years of their term.

Reliability of Water

- a. A new water operator, Daniel Gonzales, has been hired. Levi Sandoval retired after many years with the Brazos MDWCA. Daniel has provided a consistent, reliable performance in all his duties.
- b. Chris Dennison was hired as our Community Liaison. Chris is invaluable in providing up-to-the-minute information regarding our system. He regularly checks the water level in the two (2) storage tanks, inspects the neighborhood frequently looking for leaks or other concerns, and is available to meet service personnel or residents as needed.
- c. The Board has approved the following repairs:
 1. Replaced a worn-out pump for Well 1 (\$9,148.70.),
 2. Replaced flow meter that were not approved by the state of NM in Well 1, 1a and Well 3 (\$1872.53) and,
 3. Replaced the electrical panel for Well # 3 which still contained its original wiring (\$1706.00)!

- d. Additionally, Daniel and Chris have worked together to maintain the very finicky high-altitude valve which controls the water supply to the upper tank.
- e. I am proud and very excited to announce the Brazos MDWCA has been approved for a TAP-Grant. A Tap-Grant is a Federal Program administered by the state of NM aimed at improving community infrastructure. This grant involves an engineering review of our entire system, a work-up of suggestions for improvements and additions needed to the system and help with finding funding to complete the recommended improvements or additions. THIS IS A BIG DEAL!! Our initial site visit will be in June.
- f. Chuck Roberts has spent hours bringing the Brazos MDWCA “As-Bilt” map current. This work included significant time and effort searching county records, maps, and membership information which has allowed for the location of missing or unknown meters, updating the map, and verifying membership information.
- g. Rubel Martinez has investigated the availability of potable water for Association members in case of emergencies. He has researched removing the old water tank on Falls Creek Road.

Compliance with State requirements:

- a. Martha Montoya has been hired as our new bookkeeper. Martha is very familiar with Mutual Domestic Water Consumer Associations. Martha has brought many non-compliant (incomplete reports and payments) State accounts into compliance which have been delinquent for years. Gross Receipts taxes, Water Conservation taxes, Annual and quarterly reports are some of the accounts brought into compliance.
- b. Additionally, Martha and treasurer Donna Casados have been instrumental in collecting information necessary to complete the Agreed Upon Procedure (AUP) audits that have languished for the past five years. Association member Audrey Jaramilo volunteered to investigate grants to pay for the AUP audits. Audrey was successful in finding a state grant from the NMDFA-Office of the State Auditor for the Brazos MDWCA, thereby saving the Association twenty-five thousand (\$25,000) dollars. “Thank you” does not seem enough!
- c. The 2020 – 2025 delinquent AUP reports are due for completion in June 2026. All reports will be posted on the BMDWCA website at upperbrazoswater.org.
- d. The Board has completed and submitted our Open Meeting Act (OMA) Resolution and Budget for 2026.

Communications:

- a. I have diligently attempted to keep Association members informed of what’s happening with the BMDWCA via emails and website (upperbrazoswater.org) messages. If you haven’t received the emails and you would like to do so, please send your email address to terifahswater@gmail.com.
- b. Monthly Board meetings have taken place as required by both our Bylaws and OMA Resolution. These meetings are consistently held on the second Tuesday of each month. Agendas and participation links may be found on the Association website and on the noticeboard across from the Cliffview restaurant.
- c. I will begin a short “Accolades & Concerns” email each month beginning in June 2026.
- d. I am available to visit with any Association member and appreciate thoughts and ideas for improving the Association.
- e. This President’s letter will be sent to all Association members via USPS and email.

Financial:

- a. Donna, Martha, Chuck and I have reconstructed memberships records for the past two (2) years using photocopies of checks provided by UMB (our banking partner).
- b. Past due accounts were contacted and respectfully asked to bring their account current. We have had a great response.
- c. The 2026-2027 Annual fee notice went out as required on April 15th. Again, Association members are responding in a very timely manner. If you have not returned your annual fee watch your mail for a follow-up bill.
- d. Please see below the high-level overview of the Brazos MDWCA finances presented by Treasurer Donna Casados from the April 2026 Treasurer's Report
- e. General Budget & Financial Activity Report
Account Overview
Beginning Balance (04/01/2026): \$98,666.31
Total Deposits & Credits: \$3.91
Total Disbursements: (\$5,200.55)
Service Charges: \$0.00
Ending Balance (04/30/2026): \$93,469.67
Income Summary
Interest Income: Interest Earned (04/30/2026): \$3.91 Total Income for April: \$3.91

Challenges:

- a. When NMED established the current board of directors in September 2025 they directed, for unexplained reasons, that we have only six directors. This is contrary to the statutes of both the Brazos MDWCA Bylaws, which require nine (9) members and the State of New Mexico Sanitary Project Act, which requires an odd number of Board members. This situation has led to a number of 3-ayes/3nos votes and has caused considerable challenges.
- b. Because the members of the Board are so widely disbursed, we meet via a virtual platform with a land-based location always available. Can I tell you how much I dislike not being able to see the faces of Association and Board's members!
- c. Board member Jimmy Banister has filed a formal OMA complaint with the Attorney General's office (NMDOJ). This complaint is directed at myself and Donna Casados with no other Board members named. A great deal of time and effort is going into answering the alleged violations of the Open Meeting Act and other procedures. As I write this letter, we have not received a ruling from the AG's office on Banister's complaint.
- d. Jimmy Banister, Board member Ryan Costanza, and Association member Sharon Wells have filed numerous informal complaints with NMED.
- e. Copies of the complaints can be obtained through me or through the Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA) and NMED.
- f. As you know, as a result of these unresolved complaints NMED ordered the Association to forgo the scheduled May 23, 2026, Annual Membership Meeting and Board member elections. Statutes of both our By-laws and our 2026 OMA Resolution call for an Annual Membership Meeting distinct from our monthly Board meetings.
- g. To improve communications within the Board and help update our organizational documents NMED has established a connection for the Brazos MDWCA with the SW Educational Finance Center. The SWEFC's mission is to promote self-reliance through training and assistance focused on actionable

results. The SWEFC is located on the UNM ABQ campus. Work with SWEFC will begin as soon as possible.

- h. Let me assure you, if NMED and/or DOJ find that mistakes have been made, the mistakes have been made by inexperienced Board members who are dealing with difficult situations, who have the best interests of the Association at heart, and who are trying to get the Association back on track as quickly as possible. Challenges give us a chance to reflect on where we are now and where we want to go.

My goals as President for the coming year include:

- a. Complete and post the AUP reports.
- b. In conjunction with NMED, SWEFC, the Brazos MDWCA Board, and Association members review and update the Brazos MDWCA organizational documents including the 2008 Bylaws, the 1999 Articles of Incorporation and Rules and Regulation.
- c. Begin development of an “Operations Manual” so that future presidents will have a “how to” handbook with which to start their term.
- d. Utilize the Tap-Grant to its fullest extent.
- e. Continue to hold monthly Board meetings and provide up-to-date communications regarding the status of the Brazos MDWCA and relevant topics (drought, repairs, etc.) to the community. If you’d like specific information in future President’s letters, or monthly missives please, let me know.

Most of all I hope to continue to learn about the functions and purposes of the Brazos MDWCA. It has been a wild, bumpy ride so far. I have learned so much about myself and those in our community. Thanks for reading to “The End.” Much of this information would have been shared at the Annual Membership Meeting. Please join me at any Board meeting or drop by for a drink of “cold, clear Brazos water” (of course) on the porch.

Respectfully submitted,

Teri Fahs
President Brazos MDWCA
June 2026