

# Uintah Water Conservancy District

Board of Trustees  
Annual Meeting and  
Board Meeting Minutes  
April 9, 2019

Approved

**Conducting:** Chairman Todd Thacker called the April 9, 2019, Annual Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed guests.

**Present:**

**Trustees:** Todd Thacker, Quentin Johnson, Greg Witbeck, Dean Baker and Tyson Murray. Herb Snyder was excused. Shane Frost was sworn in as a new Trustee replacing Vernon Richens who passed away.

**Others:** William Merkley, UWCD General Manager; Mary Searle, UWCD Clerk; John Hunting, UWCD O&M Manager; Dave Rasmussen, UWCD Consultant; Gawain Snow, UWCD Consultant; Mike Miles, UWCD Auditor; Jay Kalafatis, Bureau of Reclamation; Bart Jensen, Jones & DeMille Engineering; Aaron Averett, Sunrise Engineering; Clint Allen, CRS Engineers; Tony George, Rock Point Canal; Wayne Simper, Central Canal; Bill Cook, Upper Canal; Curt Smuin, Highline Canal; Scott Elliott, Bureau of Reclamation.

**Approval of Minutes** Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously to approve the March 12, 2019, Board Meeting minutes.

**Election of Officers** Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously to suspend the rules from the Administrative Code and reinstate Todd Thacker as Board President/Chairman, Quentin Johnson as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President/Vice Chairman and Greg Witbeck and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President/Vice Chairman.

Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously to approve William Merkley as Secretary/Treasurer and Mary Searle as District Clerk.

**2018 Annual Report** After the Annual Report being presented by William Merkley, Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously to approve the 2018 Annual Report as presented.

**2018 Audit of Financial Statements** Mike Miles reported that the auditors made routine closing entries for the audit and that there were no findings. John Hunting questioned how much money we could legally hold in unrestricted funds. Mike responded that it needs to be less than 100% of revenues. Greg Witbeck made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to accept the 2018 Audit Report.

**VU O&M Fee**

After an explanation of S-Stock fees, O&M fees and pass-through water, Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously that in the event pass-through water is made available this season, carriage fees will only apply to delivered water over and above the amount of each company's S-stock.

**Steinaker -  
Safety of Dams**

Jay Kalafatis reported on the progress of the Steinaker repair. The concrete outlet works is done. They are dry-fitting the bulkhead from Red Fleet. Headgates are out for repairs and should be back in about three weeks although the contractor has not given an actual date. The contract for payment of the gates has not yet been finalized. Earth placement starts this week. They are working around the clock at the Ouray gravel pit. They are currently backfilling the over-excavated area on the upstream toe of the dam. The rip-rap is coming from DG&T pit on Diamond Mountain. They are still on schedule for the June 1 target date to begin delivering pass-through water. In the event that the contractor allows for the reservoir to be filled during construction, the water must stay at least five feet below their work area.

**Vernal Unit  
Efficiency  
Project**

Bart Jensen reported on the progress of the Watershed Plan. There are delays in the NEPA process for the Ashley Upper and Highline Canal Rehabilitation Project. It is anticipated that this process will be finalized in October, after which the Watershed Plan can be completed. The due date is March 31, 2020. Once the Watershed Plan is complete, it frees up the RCPP funding for a number of other projects in the County.

**Uinta River  
Bifurcation**

Bart also reported that they are still continuing to coordinate with the Ute Tribe on rights-of-way and access permits. The funding deadline is approaching and costs are rising the longer this takes. Radial gates in particular are significantly more than the original cost. They are working on an amendment to cover those rising costs. The WaterSmart grant expires October 31.

**Flood Control**

Clint Allen gave an update on the progress of piping the Rock Point Canal. All the large-diameter pipe has been laid. Two-thirds of the services have been completed. It should be finished the first part of next week. They will then start pressure-testing the line. The small lateral has to be completed and the mainline will be up and delivering water before then.

The contractor on the dam repair borrowed pipe to drain Steinaker. Some got damaged so they replaced it. The contract ends April 30. They will be doing final clean-up by that time.

**Green River  
Block Water  
Exchange**

There was a signing ceremony in St. George with the Bureau of Reclamation and the State of Utah. William Merkley explained that of the 500,000 acre feet of water intended for the Ultimate Phase of the Central Utah Project, the District granted the right to divert 51,800. That is flow out of Green River to satisfy the

Utah portion of the Colorado River. The contract allows storage in Flaming Gorge Dam and helps the Bureau of Reclamation meet their obligations to the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. They will be charging for water use from now on. The Green River Pumping Project is exempt along with any previously developed water. The additional yearly costs will be a \$3.37/acre-foot of depletion fee for Flaming Gorge Dam operations and maintenance, and a \$19/acre-foot of depletion storage fee. The storage fee will be increased every five years by 10.68%.

**Ramsey Hill  
Exploration**

Their corporation has identified sandstone between Red Fleet and Steinaker that can be used for fracking. They will be mining and crushing on that site and need water. They have contracted with Ashley Valley Water & Sewer District for water that will be delivered by tying into the Tyzack Aqueduct. They will need 200 AF per year to begin with and will use up to 400 AF per year. To get more Red Fleet water it will have to come through the Burns Bench project. That would free up 12,000 AF of water set aside for M&I.

**RCPP - Uintah  
County  
Efficiency  
Project**

The Utah Department of Wildlife Resources is building two fish ponds just west of the Thornburg Diversion. They will stock them with fish and manage the fish. They have water in the Upper Canal and will pipe water to the fish ponds.

**Financial  
Statements**

Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Shane Frost and passed unanimously to approve the March financial statements.

**Invoices**

Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously to approve paying Jones & DeMille \$10,682.34.

**Kent Raim - GR  
water**

Kent Raim would like to enter into a long-term lease agreement for Green River water. It will be \$5/AF yearly for lease of water, a one-time \$12.50/AF for application fee, \$20/AF one-time Fish and Wildlife fee and \$19/AF annual Bureau of Reclamation Flaming Gorge storage fee on depletion of 234 acre feet of water. There is an O&M charge of \$3.37/AF. After the Board approves and signs the lease agreement, he needs to make application to the State Engineer, then file Proof of Beneficial Use with the State Engineer then published for public comment. Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously to approve Kent's application for 360 acre feet of Green River water. This helps put more of our water right to beneficial use.

**GRPP Erosion**

William Merkley met with the steering committee consisting of members from Ouray Park Irrigation, Uintah River Irrigation and Whiterock Irrigation. The main question is property ownership of the sand bar deposited by property now belonging to Josh Horrocks. Josh's stand is that it belongs to him and we would be trespassing if we try to remove it. Attorney Shawn Draney will look into the matter and write a letter to the entities served by the Green River Pump Plant on the rule of accretion and what our rights are to get a permit and go on cleaning the channel to allow water to get to the pumps.

**Manager Report**

William Merkley stated that because of weather, Gawain's retirement party has been moved to the Uintah Conference Center with lunch at 12:30 and an open-mike program at 1:30. William thanked Gawain for his help.

William did a radio interview. There is apparently a lot of wrong information out in the public. We also need to keep the Chamber of Commerce informed on water subjects as well as putting something in the newspaper including contact names and numbers. It was suggested that we write the press release ourselves rather than just doing an interview so there is no misunderstanding. We also need to get our website up.

Gawain Snow reported on his trip to the NWRA in Washington D.C. and federal issues.

**Adjourn**

Shane Frost made a MOTION to adjourn which was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.