

Uintah Water Conservancy District

Board of Trustees
Board Meeting Minutes
August 13, 2019

Approved

Conducting: Chairman Todd Thacker called the August 13, 2019, Board Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed guests.

Present:

Trustees: Todd Thacker, Quentin Johnson, Greg Witbeck, Herb Snyder, Shane Frost, Dean Baker and Tyson Murray

Others: William Merkley, UWCD General Manager; Mary Searle, UWCD Clerk; John Hunting, UWCD O&M Manager; Dave Rasmussen, UWCD Consultant; Jay Kalafatis, Bureau of Reclamation; Bart Jensen and Eric Major, Jones & DeMille Engineering; Aaron Averett, Sunrise Engineering; Wayne Simper and Dave Chivers, Central Canal; Bill Cook, Ashley Upper Canal; Curt Smuin, Highline Canal; Clint Allen, CRS Engineers; Mike Collins, Bowen Collins Engineers; Troy D. Ostler, CIVCO Engineering; Brad Ufford, Eagle Scout project; Trayden McKee, Merit Badge.

Approval of Minutes Herb Snyder made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously to approve the June 11, 2019, Board Meeting minutes.

Eagle Scout Project Brad Ufford needs a project to earn his Eagle. He had an idea to paint the concrete wall of the canal at the base of Steinaker Reservoir. Since the wall has been marked by graffiti, it will help the overall appearance in the community to have the wall painted. He would paint all the panels that were damaged and any in between so they will all look blended. Brad asked that the District provide the paint and rollers needed and he would provide people and transportation. He also asked if we could have a porta-potty brought in while they are working on the project. There are about twelve panels that need to be painted. Quentin made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Shane Frost and passed unanimously to do what is needed to support this project.

Steinaker - Safety of Dams Jay Kalafatis reported the project was almost complete. Riprap will be all completed toward the end of the month then there will be a month or two of general cleanup work. There were two modifications: The quantity of the existing riprap was insufficient so they had to get about 5,000 yards more than anticipated. There will be some concrete work involved. We should be able to capture water as soon as the canal companies allow us to start storing. We can only come up one foot per day and we are required to do a three-week hold at 5485 elevation. We probably won't be able to fill completely until 2021.

**Vernal Unit
Efficiency
Project**

Bart Jensen reported that most parts of the Watershed Plan have been designed and they are almost ready to begin the Economic Analysis. Aaron Averett stated that the decision has been made to keep the Highline and Upper out of the project until their EA is complete. They are coordinating with the NRCS. The environmental process still needs to be done which includes the Ute Lady Tresses. The Highline and Upper did not have money until last September and no contract until October. A Habitat mitigation plan is required by the Bureau of Reclamation but not the NRCS. It has taken time to get answers from the Bureau about their requirements, but the process is in motion. If everything goes well, it will be finished in May 2020. If the Bureau finishes the FONSI, it could be done two months after that. They want to determine the condition of the Ute Lady Tresses and what the mitigation needs to be. The Bureau will consult with Fish and Wildlife. That requires 120 days. The Bureau consults with other agencies for endangered species impacted. The NRCS has over \$7 million set aside for all RCPP projects. The Bureau of Reclamation said they would go to the Fish and Wildlife and try to speed up the process.

**Uinta River
Bifurcation**

Eric Major reported that the project needs signatures for the Rights of Way and the NEPA documents from the Business Committee. When some members of the Fish and Wildlife Department went on a site visit, they saw that the existing structure was going to fall apart. They also went to the new structure site and showed that it would keep a more consistent channel. The WaterSmart grant expires the end of October so hopefully they understand the urgency better. The Fish and Wildlife people understand now and will recommend the project to the Business Committee. Letters need to be sent out to all shareholders and let them know the current status and current cost estimates. After meeting with a construction company, we have some ideas on how to make it more cost effective. It would be good to have the blessing of the water commission and irrigation people.

**Ashley
Upper/Highline
Canals Pipe
Project**

Bill Cook reported that the Bureau of Reclamation wants someone who understands all of this project to be a Project Manager who would report directly to them and also who they could contact with questions. The team on this project would consist of Brett Prevedel, Andrea Merrell, William Merkley and Gawain Snow. William said he would accept the position of Project Manager as long as he had board approval. The District has some large piping projects coming up and this would be a good learning experience. The Bureau was threatening to end their part of the project. They were not understanding the time delay. Meetings were held and they finally came to an agreement to have a project manager. We already have a team in place with Brett Prevedel. We have time and money involved in this project. The Bureau is very comfortable with the team. We have requested that the Bureau do their reviews quickly and put in the schedule what is the required time. Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously that William Merkley be the project manager.

**Central Canal
Pipe/Pressure
Upsizing**

Wayne Simper said they are looking at upsizing their pipe for an additional cost of \$1.3 million. Mike Collins stated that the Central receives water from the Service Canal at 3.7 and 6.9. The District would save about \$400,000 with the elimination of the 6-9 Diversion. It would eliminate one headgate and get the canal back to what it was designed for. The total cost of the project is between \$8.5 million and \$9.1 million. They have already borrowed \$1 million from the Board of Water Resources. The taxpayers and Uintah County have as much to gain as anyone by having this section pressurized. The entire project is about ten miles. There is both NRCS and Bureau of Reclamation funding.. The board agreed that this is a good thing to do since it would decrease the cost of the District's Service Canal piping project but don't know where to get the money since our accounts are earmarked for other projects. The next two phases of piping the Service Canal would be about \$25 million. We are pursuing every avenue of funding. They need to get 30% design completed right away. The structure at the Thornburg is in rough shape. That could be put into this same project and included in the grant. The NRCS is paying 75%. We need to approach Island Ditch and Rockpoint people for cost sharing on this. The entire structure needs to be rebuilt. They could expand the scope of work to include that part. The Board agreed to table this until September's board meeting.

**USU
WaterSmart
Grant**

To implement their research farm, USU applied for a WaterSmart Grant and their application was accepted. Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously to approve William Merkley to sign the letter of acceptance for this grant.

**Financial
Statements**

Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Herb Snyder and passed unanimously to approve the June and July financial statements.

Invoices

Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously to approve paying Bowen Collins \$378; CRS Engineers \$277.50; Home Turf \$6,390; Jones & DeMille \$24,637.12; PdM \$435; Brett Prevedel \$1,003.19; Snow Christensen \$1,535.50 for a total of \$34,656.31.

Wells Fargo

Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously to approve the signatures on the Wells Fargo bank account.

**Website
Redesign**

After sending letters requesting recommendations for companies who do website design and sending requests for proposals based on those recommendations, we received four responses. William suggested that a committee be formed to go online and look at samples of websites, meet within ten days and get back to those who submitted proposals. Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously that the committee consist of William Merkley, John Hunting and Mary Searle.

**Quagga Mussel
Agreement**

Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously to approve the agreement to assist with the payment of people to decontaminate boats at Red Fleet and Steinaker Reservoirs.

**District Water
Master Plan**

A new water conservation plan is required to be submitted every five years in order to receive any state funding. We also need a 10-year capital replacement plan and a comprehensive financial sustainability plan to see if our rates are sufficient to cover costs or if we need to bond. An effort to bring all this together in one comprehensive plan could cost \$75,000-\$150,000. Financing for the project could be taken from a variety of places: District contingency fund, budget item in 2020, outside assistance from WaterSmart grants, CIB funding. A request was sent to all our General Services Contractors and is due back on August 23. A committee to rank proposals will consist of Shane Frost, Todd Thacker, Greg Witbeck, William Merkley and John Hunting.

Manager Report

The Steinaker gates are now controlled on the computer. We still don't have a final cost allocation on the gates.

The Green River pumps are sanded off again. We have submitted a stream alteration application. We intend to have BHI get a trackhoe in the river with the use of swamp pads. We need to get the Green River shareholders together when we get the permit to see if they want it done. We have not used the pumps yet this year. If we don't need the water, we won't turn on the pumps.

Adjourn

Shane Frost made a MOTION to adjourn which was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.