

# Uintah Water Conservancy District

Board of Trustees  
Board Meeting Minutes  
December 9, 2019

Approved

- Conducting:** Chairman Todd Thacker called the December 9, 2019, Budget Hearing and Board Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed guests.
- Present:**
- Trustees:** Todd Thacker, Quentin Johnson, Greg Witbeck, Herb Snyder, Dean Baker and Tyson Murray. Shane Frost was excused.
- Others:** William Merkley, UWCD General Manager; Mary Searle, UWCD Clerk; John Hunting, UWCD O&M Manager; Dave Rasmussen, UWCD Consultant; Bart Jensen, Jones & DeMille Engineering; Aaron Averett, Sunrise Engineering; Keith Despain - CRS.
- Approval of Minutes** Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously to approve the November 12, 2019, Board Meeting minutes.
- 2019 Amended Budget** William presented the proposed 2019 Amended Budget and explained changes. Herb Snyder made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to approve the 2019 Amended Budget in the amount of \$9,692,845.
- 2020 Proposed Budget** William Merkley presented the 2020 Proposed Budget for approval and explained background of the Navajo Indian Water Right expense. Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Herb Snyder and passed unanimously to approve the 2020 Budget in the amount of \$26,310,333.
- Vernal Unit Efficiency Project Watershed Plan** Bart Jensen reported that they are having a conference call with the NRCS every week. The report is started and they are putting the pieces together and are sending that information to the economist to do a model. Bart reported that they have six projects like this going on in the State and they are moving forward with all concurrently so that streamlines the process. They plan to complete in June. As soon as the Highline and Upper Canals get their environmental assessments approved, this can follow right behind. William will put together what money will be coming right after this plan is completed.
- Uinta River Bifurcation** Bart Jensen reported that the Tribal Water Commission met with the BIA and communications are open. They want more control over where the water goes and to keep the East channel and the West channel more balanced. They are negotiating the wording of the agreement. The Business Commission will approve when Duane Moss is happy with it. They need signatures on the NEPA and Right of Way documents. They are hoping for Spring construction before high water.

**Ashley  
Upper/Highline  
Canals Pipe  
Project**

There was a meeting with BHI who is contracted for pre-construction. The 70% design workshop was well attended and the project is moving forward. A finalized modification agreement was needed to release funds from the Bureau of Reclamation. There is a monthly update meeting with the Bureau and William Merkley. Kent Kofford is acting as Area Manager for the Bureau instead of Wayne Pullen. Aaron Averett talked about the NEPA. Because of where the funding is coming from, they have to mitigate all habitat losses. They are working with Shon Massey. They are in the final stages of creating a mitigation plan. They gave a draft of the plan to Shon but he asked for a few modifications to help make it more successful. It will go back to the Bureau this week. They found one Ute Lady Tress plant. The Bureau agreed that the Highline and Upper can buy into a state-managed mitigation bank to offset the disturbance.

The Legislative Audit Office is tasked with auditing the CIB program. We are trying to provide documents that show how this project was approved. The project is under scrutiny. The Audit Committee will make recommendations to the Legislature. There is a meeting at the Conference Center at noon Tuesday, December 10 on the proposed Sales Tax.

**Master Plan**

William met with Mike Collins, Keith Larsen and Cody Moltry to kick off the project. A shared file has been created to transmit information and the project is moving forward. July is the anticipated finish date.

**Financial  
Statements**

Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Herb Snyder and passed unanimously to approve the November financial statements.

**Invoices**

Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously to approve paying Bowen Collins \$189; Jones & DeMille \$1,424.06; J-U-B Engineers \$5,250; W.E. Machine \$5,464.49 for a total of \$12,327.55.

**2020 Meeting  
Schedule**

Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously to approve the 2020 Meeting Schedule. Each meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month except no July meeting.

**Manager Report**

William reported that we received a premium rebate from PEHP for employee health insurance and a premium credit from Utah Local Governments Trust for both liability insurance and workers compensation.

Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to approve the employees having Christmas Eve as a holiday.

Greg Witbeck made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously to approve a \$500 Christmas bonus to all employees.

There is an opening for the position of Ashley Creek Water Commissioner since

Laris Hunting is retiring at the end of the year. The deadline for applications is December 11.

The water leadership in the state of Utah is changing. There is large amount of turnover.

A process called "Water Banking" is moving in the Legislature. There will be more information on this at the Uinta Basin Water Summit in January. This is an effort to develop watershed coordinating councils throughout the State. There is a water auditing bill for water utilities. They are going through everything water utility does. They want to mandate every public water supply do this audit. We could have Candace Hasenyager come to the February meeting to answer questions about water banking.

The Uinta Basin Water Summit will be held Wednesday, January 15, 2020 at the Grace Event Center in Roosevelt.

**Adjourn**

Dean Baker made a MOTION to adjourn which was SECONDED by Herb Snyder and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.