

# Uintah Water Conservancy District

Board of Trustees  
Board Meeting Minutes  
March 10, 2020

Approved

**Conducting:** Chairman Todd Thacker called the March 10, 2020, Board Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed guests.

**Present:**

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

**Others:** William Merkley, UWCD General Manager; Mary Searle, UWCD Clerk; John Hunting, UWCD O&M Manager; Dave Rasmussen, UWCD Consultant; Tom Hadden, Ashley Creek River Commissioner; Clay Crozier representing Senator Mitt Romney's office; Steve Hanberg, Central Utah Water Conservancy District Board; Bart Jensen, Jones & DeMille Engineering; Keith Despain, CRS Engineers; Mike Collins, Bowen Collins & Associates; Troy Ostler, CIVCO Engineering; Wayne Simper, Central Canal.

**Approval of Minutes** Herb Snyder made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Shane Frost and passed unanimously to approve the February 11, 2020, Board Meeting minutes.

**River Commissioner** Tom Hadden was introduced as the new Ashley Creek River Commissioner replacing Larris Hunting who has retired.

**Steinaker Fill Schedule** John Hunting reported that the Bureau Reclamation decreased the first hold on Steinaker two feet to  $5483 \pm 3$  feet. Right now the inflow is about 22 CFS. At that rate it will take about 35 days to get up to 5480. The first hold will take place when the lake reaches a capacity of 9,527 acre feet which we expect to reach about April 15. We will then hold it at that capacity for three weeks. That level is at the bottom of the scarp. The next hold will be for four weeks at the elevation which is at the top of the scarp. The final hold is for four weeks at the level that is considered "full." We are limited to raising or decreasing the level one foot per day.

John also reported that Red Fleet elevation is at 5598.86 for a capacity of 21,464 acre feet. That allows us to make a full allotment.

**Vernal Unit Efficiency Project Watershed Plan** Bart Jensen reported that he met with the NRCS to update them on the progress of this project. They got an extension on the contract filed. The schedule is based on current review timelines for other projects they are working on. They are trying to reduce review times to try to get it done in time for Fall construction. We do have until the end of March 2021 to get it completed. This has to be done before construction can be started on several projects.

**Uinta River  
Bifurcation**

Bart Jensen reported there will be a meeting Thursday at 3:00 p.m. at Dry Gulch Irrigation with the BIA and other companies involved in this project. We need direction from the stakeholders on how to proceed. There will also be an update on the budget and costs since prices have gone up. The board expressed they are not in support of building a new structure at the same site as the old one since that would not solve the problems.

**Ashley  
Upper/Highline  
Canals Pipe  
Project**

Troy Ostler presented an update on the status of this project. They have selected a contractor (BHI). They have negotiated with pipe suppliers for a bid of \$.90/lb for some savings on the cost. All environmental documents have been submitted to the Bureau of Reclamation for review. They will contribute to the study being conducted by USU on the history of the local canals. They are working with Shon Massey on finalizing the easement. The last hurdle Section 7 Formal Consultation on Ute Ladies' Tresses with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. This may take about three months. They should have final clearance from the Bureau in July. When the water is out of the Highline, they can begin placing pipe along that alignment as well as the Upper. The goal is to have the structures, settling basins laid to about 1500 North this winter then be back into irrigation and begin again the following winter. They need to have enough in the ground to be substantially complete before December 31 for the tax issue.

**Master Plan**

Mike Collins reported that they met with the District's M&I customers and went over their projections for future use to develop the District's long-term needs. That will help to finalize financial information about the District. They also met with Central Utah about their plans for the Treatment Plant.

**Steinaker Service  
Canal Enclosure  
Project**

William Merkley reported that we had three different funding efforts. We received tentative approval for \$1.5 million for Reach III from Reclamation's WaterSMART program. Jones & DeMille helped us put the applications together. The Bureau of Reclamation has a 50/50 match requirement. We would have been bumped over 50% with the NRCS funding for Reach II. It will probably take 6-8 months. We need to have the project finished within three years. We applied to the State for CRSP power funding. We will request CIB funding also.

**USU Research  
Farm**

The USU sprinkler project has been moved up one year. Reclamation is working toward having the environmental review finished by 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> week of April so that they can start on the project. They will do different irrigation treatments with a lateral moving system. They are trying to service twenty acres.

**Red Fleet Fish  
Screen**

John Hunting said the Bureau of Reclamation will start construction April 1. Non-native fish in the Green River have been traced back to Red Fleet. This screen will stop these fish from going down Brush Creek to Green River. John reported he hasn't heard any more information concerning the Red Fleet toe drains and thinks they are probably a year away making them a Fall 2021 project.

**Financial  
Statements**

Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously to approve the February 2020 financial statements.

**Invoices**

Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously to approve paying CIVCO \$65,000, Jones & DeMille Engineering \$998.50; J-U-B Engineering \$3,250; Lewis Young Robertson & Burningham \$5,100 for a total of \$74,348.50.

**Navajo Water  
Rights  
Settlement**

Clay Crozier representing Senator Mitt Romney's office reported on this settlement. They have been working on this since 2003 and have both the House and the Senate on board to pass it but many people want to attach other bills to it. This bill would bring surety to Navajo Nation Colorado River water rights and will provide drinking and municipal water. The District contributed \$25,000 toward this process. It just deals with the Utah portion of the Navajo Nation with water being developed primarily from the San Juan River.

**Manager Report**

We are looking more closely at the Tyzack Aqueduct and making sure the pipe is in good condition to meet demands. The Bureau of Reclamation has decided that the section that goes under the reservoir needs cathodic protection. The Bureau in Denver is currently putting specifications together on the cost and what is required to protect that pipe. It is important because that is the only way to get water to the Treatment Plant.

The Utah Water Users Association has asked William to serve on their Board.

**Closed Session**

Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed with Aye votes by Dean Baker, Tyson Murray, Shane Frost, Herb Snyder and Todd Thacker to go into and out of Closed Session to discuss personnel issues.

**Adjourn**

Shane Frost made a MOTION to adjourn which was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.