

Uintah Water Conservancy District

Board of Trustees
Annual Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2020

Approved

Conducting: Chairman Todd Thacker called the May 12, 2020, Annual Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed guests. The meeting was held at the Uintah Conference Center to comply with COVID-19 requirements.

Present: **Trustees:** Todd Thacker, Quentin Johnson, Greg Witbeck, Dean Baker, Shane Frost and Tyson Murray. Herb Snyder attended by telephone.
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; Keith Despain, CRS Engineers; Aaron Averett, Sunrise Engineering; Mike Miles, Auditor; Monty Pratt, Burns Bench; Wayne Simper, Central Canal.

Approval of Minutes Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously to approve the March 10, 2020, Board Meeting minutes.

Election of Officers Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to suspend the election rules and retain Todd Thacker as Chairman/President, Quentin Johnson as 1st Vice Chairman/Vice President and Greg Witbeck as 2nd Vice Chairman/Vice President with William Merkley as Secretary/Treasurer and Mary Searle as District Clerk.

Ashley Creek River Commissioner William Merkley reported that Tom Hadden had resigned as River Commissioner and that Bart Batty had replaced him and is currently serving in that position.

2019 Financial Statements Mike Miles presented the Audit of the 2019 Financial Statements for the District. He stated that most of the audit was done remotely this year due to the required social distancing and the District had no significant findings. Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously to approve the 2019 Audited Financial Statements.

2019 Annual Report William Merkley reported that there had been some significant changes in 2019, and acknowledged the passing of Vernon Richens who had served faithfully on the board for nearly 19 years.

On March 20, 2019, the Green River Water Rights Exchange contract was signed which moved the District's Green River rights behind Flaming Gorge Dam..

A new District Water Master Plan was begun as well as an overhaul of the District's website design.

Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to accept the 2019 Annual Report as presented.

**Update on
Steinaker and
Red Fleet
Elevations**

John Hunting gave an update on Steinaker and Red Fleet. Steinaker is at elevation 5483.03 with 241 CFS coming in and 48 going out. Red Fleet is at elevation 5602.41 with 23000 acre feet, 86 CFS coming in and releasing 100 plus pumping 6 CFS. The first hold on the dam started April 16; the elevation was at 5480.3 on April 20. The elevation went down to 5480.21; at that time the water started coming up. On May 7, it was at 5480.78. It will take 17 days with the level increasing by one foot a day to reach the second hold at 5497. At that point, the dam will need 24-hour surveillance. That hold lasts four weeks. If we can get to 5500 for the second hold, we can do a full allotment. Right now, the allotment would only be 40%. The employees might have to work in shifts to keep a 24-hour watch on the dam.

**Steinaker Dam
Gate
Modifications**

There was a significant amount of water leaking through the gates when the water was brought up to pressure. The meter the contractor and supervisors used to measure the pressure during installation was not up to specifications. There have been 5-6 investigations and tests by the Bureau of Reclamation with some specialists coming from Colorado. The installation of the gates, fitting of seats and seals leakage was not acceptable. The seats and seals were only replaced on the regulating gates. The Bureau of Reclamation reached out to the contracting officer in Denver. She is writing up technical reports then arranging with the contractor to come back on site and get the gates to work correctly. It will be a lengthy process and will require the gates to be pulled out again. It can be done when convenient for the District but it feels like a significant setback.

**Vernal Unit
Efficiency
Project
Watershed Plan**

Bart Jensen reported that they are continuing to make progress on the draft EA document. He met with the economist and are coordinating back and forth on cost analysis. The draft EA document should be published in June, go through the comment period then do required revisions.

**Uinta River
Bifurcation**

Bart Jensen reported the Business Committee met Monday but this was not on the agenda. Eric Major plans to meet with UIIP Board to get them to put it on the next meeting's agenda.

**Ashley
Upper/Highline
Canals Pipe
Project**

Because of the presence of Ute Lady Tress, the Environmental had to go through Fish and Wildlife. The 135-day comment period began April 20. It is hard to keep momentum going when everyone is working from home. The canal companies hired BHI to procure pipe and it is showing up already. They cannot stack the pipe in the staging area so it is being stored on private property with permission of the Bureau of Reclamation.

**Ashley Valley
Flood Control**

Aaron Averett reported that he has presented models of the canal profiles to BHI. They looked at where canals need improvement and what needs to be done to make canals able to take flood water. They will build retention ponds which will take the brunt of floods off and slow them down. Since the Highline is so flat, it backs up in Coalmine Basin. The plan is to take flood water out of Coalmine Basin down to the Upper Canal. Enlargement of Highline doesn't do any good. When the Upper Canal is done with piping, they should leave an open channel for flood control. They are trying to meet the process for the Upper Canal so they can release the funding.

**Rockpoint Canal
Flood Control
Design**

The Rock Point Canal needs the same analysis as the Upper Canal to get funding released. They will use half for irrigation water the the other half for flood control. Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously to authorize William Merkley to sign the Work Order Approval.

GIS System

We are working with the Bureau of Reclamation on locating drains and finding out how much M&I water is being diverted by developments in Uinta Basin. We have information on the drains but nothing is digitized on the M&I water. The Bureau is working on digitizing data while working at home during the pandemic. There should be more information in June's board meeting.

Master Plan

Mike Collins is planning to be here next month with an update on the Plan. They are moving forward. We have been providing them with all information they have requested. We are trying to make sure we do the rights things today so we can deliver water in the future.

**Financial
Statements**

Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to approve the March and April 2020 financial statements.

Invoices

Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously to approve paying Bowen Collins \$15,436.25, Jones & DeMille \$6,724.25; PdM \$6,890.00; Stearns Construction \$10,250; Tree Care \$800 for a total of \$40,100.50.

**Uinta River
Model**

The Uinta River and Whiterocks River models are under working construction. They will be used as a tool to show when to operate the Green River pumps and for the entire river system.

PEHP Insurance

William Merkley reported that the PEHP health insurance premium will go up 5.8% July 1. Shane Mayberry does a comparison of the available health insurance policies and recommended that our current policy is the best option. Greg Witbeck made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Shane Frost and passed unanimously to approve continuing with the current policy.

Snotel Report

The snowpack is coming off the mountain a few days earlier than average. Cloud seeding cost is right at what was approved.

Manager Report

William reported that because of the COVID-19 pandemic, they decided to not reschedule the St. George water conference and just hold it in 2021.

Adjourn

Shane Frost made a MOTION to adjourn which was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.