

Uintah Water Conservancy District

Board of Trustees
Board Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2020

Approved

Conducting: Chairman Todd Thacker called the June 9, 2020, Board 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 distancing requirements.

Present:

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

Others: William Merkley, UWCD General Manager; Mary Searle, UWCD Clerk; John Hunting, UWCD O&M Manager; Dave Rasmussen, UWCD Consultant; Bart Batty, Ashley Creek River Commissioner; Bart Jensen, Jones & DeMille Engineering; Keith Despain, CRS Engineers; Jeff McCarty, Sunrise Engineering; Mike Collins, Bowen Collins & Associates; Jake Serago, Utah Division of Water Resources; Wayne Simper, Central Canal.

Approval of Minutes Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to approve the May 12, 2020, Board Meeting minutes.

River Commissioner William Merkley introduced Bart Batty, who has replaced Larris Hunting as the Ashley Creek River Commissioner.

Update on Steinaker and Red Fleet Elevations

John Hunting gave an update on Steinaker and Red Fleet. Steinaker is at elevation 5495.55 and 17,485 AF storage, with 217 CFS coming in and 42 going out. Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously to set the Vernal Unit allotment at 60% with the understanding that if we get more water in, we can change the allotment.

Red Fleet is at elevation 5603.10 with 23,460 acre feet, 75 CFS coming in and releasing 25 plus pumping 6 CFS to the treatment plant. Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Shane Frost and passed unanimously to set the allotment at 100% plus 10% shrinkage.

Steinaker Dam Gate Modifications

William Merkley gave an update on the Warranty Claim. The Bureau of Reclamation will notify the contractor about the deficiency of work. The contractor is to fix the problem; or if they choose not to, the Bureau will get it fixed and invoice the contractor for the cost. They will have to pull the gates out of the dam and re-install them. The Bureau may require them to install the bulk head. We have not heard the contractor's intentions yet. The Bureau feels that it was installed incorrectly and that the design was sound.

**Vernal Unit
Efficiency
Project
Watershed Plan**

Bart Jensen reported they are still moving toward getting the technical part of the draft of the EA to get reviews. They will wait to get documents from the Highline and Upper Canals. They should be ready to go in August. They will continue to have meetings and coordinate. They are trying to get approved to get projects started this Fall. They are working closely with the NRCS.

**Uinta River
Bifurcation**

They are making progress finally. Four tribal members of the UIIP Board are going to sign a letter today to send their request and support to the Business Committee this coming week. They are trying to schedule a site visit with the Business Committee this coming week to show that 76% of the flow that is managed by this structure goes to their members. The right-of-way documents are ready to go; they just need signatures.

**Ashley
Upper/Highline
Canals Pipe
Project**

Because Ute Lady Tresses were found, the Bureau of Reclamation had to have a consultation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife to make sure a plan is in place for endangered species. Fish & Wildlife had 135 days for their review but it was completed in 52 days. They will prepare a biological opinion for the Bureau. The public has thirty days to review and make comments. We are in the process of identifying all owners on the canals who will be impacted by this project. Central Utah Water Conservancy District will help put together a flyer to go to all those owners. Hopefully those who have concerns will raise those when they get the flyer. With the economy and pipe prices going down, we asked if the supplier would lower their prices but they were unable to do that and are ready to deliver. Water should be out of the Highline in July so we can start that portion of the project.

**Ashley Valley
Flood Control**

William reported that flood control funding is coming from the NRCS. He showed a map of the project that showed the required berms. Once the project is completed, it will become the responsibility of Uintah County. We have three different channels for flood control. The County will sub-lease these easements from us. The County is not comfortable with the wording of the contract yet. Shawn Draney is working with the County Attorney to get agreements in place to get us out of the flood control business. The County has a reserve and charges a tax specifically for flood control. If the County were to replace the canal system that is already in place, it would cost \$60-70 million.

Master Plan

Mike Collins and Keith Larsen presented an update on the progress of the Master Plan which included a Financial Analysis, Demand Projections, Water Supply and Conveyance Review and made suggestions for the future of the District.

**Financial
Statements**

Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously to approve the May 2020 financial statements.

Invoices

Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to approve paying CIVCO \$13,000; Snow Christensen \$1,181.50; Sunrise Engineering \$686.50 for a total of \$14,868.

**Uinta River
Model**

Jake Serago gave a presentation on the value of having a model to aid in making decisions to operate the Green River Pump Plant.

Manager Report

William reported that the Navajo Water Rights Settlement has gained speed and is being included with legislation being passed for the COVID-19 impact.

Adjourn

Shane Frost made a MOTION to adjourn which was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.