

# Uintah Water Conservancy District

Board of Trustees  
Board Meeting Minutes  
August 10, 2020

Approved

**Conducting:** Chairman Todd Thacker called the August 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; Bart Jensen, Jones & DeMille Engineering; Aaron Averett, Sunrise Engineering; Tyler Dow, WETx.

**Approval of Minutes** Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to approve the June 9, 2020, Board Meeting minutes and the June 16, 2020, Special Board Meeting minutes.

**GRPP** A sand bar in the river had the pumps completely isolated. There wasn't any water getting to the plant from upstream or downstream. They took out the sand in sections and left a sand plug in between so water would not come rushing into the plant. Then they removed the plugs and the river flowed to the pump site. They had to use swamp mats from Texas. Since removing the sand bar, we have been running one pump 24/7.

**Brush Creek Fish Screen** The DWR was concerned about predatory fish passing through Red Fleet, traveling down Brush Creek and getting into Green River. So they built a fish screen just below Red Fleet Dam. They dammed the stream off and diverted 100% of the flow through the screen structure. We have no responsibilities for operating or maintaining this screen. The Board is invited to tour this later this fall.

**Steinaker Dam Gate Modifications** Weeminuchee, the contractor out of Colorado that repaired the dam and installed the gates, responded to Bureau of Reclamation's request regarding leakage on the gates. They will come do their own inspection (with the Bureau) on August 18. We will have to shut down water deliveries through the Service Canal for a day while they do that inspection.

We expect the elevation in Steinaker to go down to just over the conservation pool this year. We will have the same instructions on filling Steinaker next year that we did this year except that because we completed the first hold, we can come in at the second fill hold.

**Vernal Unit**  
**Efficiency**  
**Project**  
**Watershed Plan**

Bart Jensen reported on the plan. They are continuing to work with Sunrise and pieces are coming together on the draft. The Steinaker Service Canal part of the plan will add a project enhancement and help us request more funding. BOR is planning to issue a FONSI on the Upper and Highline later this month. William thanked Bart and crew for all the work they are doing on this. If everything works out, we can go after a 75% cost share funding on this program and do both Reach II and Reach III portions of piping the Steinaker Service Canal. We are requesting additional funding for flood control on the Rock Point Canal. The Rock Point is still having trouble with its pipeline.

**Uinta River**  
**Bifurcation**

Bart Jensen reported that they got the EA signed off on. The right-of-way document still needs to be signed. They re-calculated the cost share based on acres. The structure has nearly doubled in cost. For companies wishing to apply for Board of Water Resources funding, there is an application online that must be completed by September 25. The BIA wants more control over the structure.

**Ashley**  
**Upper/Highline**  
**Canals Pipe**  
**Project**

Aaron Averett gave an update on the EA. It has to go online for public comment. A virtual public meeting will be held August 18. The BOR has to be the facilitator. It has to be ADA compliant and the BOR has been having a hard time with that. It has not been posted yet. When the comment period is over, the BOR will address comments. The project needs to become a depreciable asset valued at \$10 million by the end of the year or the stockholders will be liable for income tax on that \$10 million. The Highline has been dry for a month now and, unfortunately, they could have been working on the project. The final step is the FONSI. They are looking at October 1 at the earliest before the contractor could get a Notice to Proceed.

**Ashley Valley**  
**Flood Control**

The report has been delivered to the NRCS and they are just waiting for comments. Design made the costs come down. GIS has collected 182 points for drains. This has been a good way to get reference points for all the drains in the valley. This sets it up so it will be easier to work with subdivisions and other construction. The BOR has provided information on M&I water but they have their own coordinate system. We are waiting for them to convert their coordinates. 400 shares of water has been used and converted to M&I on paper. Canal companies have to come up with the difference in cost by billing the M&I users. Any property under five acres will be converted to M&I.

**Thornburg**  
**Structure**

We had a meeting with all the canal companies. Originally Dyle Webster said it would be great to extend his line and tie into the Rock Point and Island Ditch box but when he came to the meeting he had changed his mind. He will need to maintain his ditch. The only way he will be involved is that we will have to put a slide gate on the cement structure to divert water out of the channel for him.

**Financial**  
**Statements**

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

**Invoices**

Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Quentin Johnson and passed unanimously to approve paying Bowen Collins \$15,952.75; BHI \$11,010; CivicPlus \$4,200; George Weldon Construction \$900; Honnen Equipment \$9,327.55; Jones & DeMille \$27,284.43; J-U-B \$1,750; Brett Prevedel \$837.48; Sunrise Engineering \$2,459.10 for a total of \$73,721.31.

**Spot Award  
Program**

This is a program for employees to receive compensation for performance over and above their regular duties. The Board would decide how much and approve it. The Board wants to be aware of performance, but wants to give William discretion to give this award. It would need to be added to the Administrative Code. William will put it in a final draft and bring to the September meeting. We would add a new budget line item.

**Manager Report**

We have a Carriage Agreement in Steinaker so canal companies have the ability to by-pass non-project through project facilities and the Bureau adds fees for doing that. That agreement is for irrigation water only. We have some M&I users that, at times, we are able to store water in Steinaker for them. However, we don't have a mechanism to release that water to them. The Bureau is working on an agreement to facilitate that need.

There are interesting discussions on the Colorado River. In July they had 27% of normal unregulated inflows into Lake Powell. The reservoir is sitting at 55% right now. All projections are terrible. They are looking at a process for curtailing Colorado River rights. In the last 21 years they have had only five years of normal inflow. They are trying to get Mexico involved in the running of the river. There is a draft EIS out for public comment on the Lake Powell Pipeline. They are hoping to be delivering water by 2030.

When an entity pays off its federal facilities, it is possible to get title transferred from the Bureau to the entity. The Board felt that doing that would not be to our benefit.

**Adjourn**

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