

Uintah Water Conservancy District

Board of Trustees
Board Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2021

Approved

Conducting: Chairman Quentin R. Johnson called the May 11, 2021, Board Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed guests.

Present:

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

Others: William Merkley, UWCD General Manager; Mary Searle, UWCD Clerk; John Hunting, UWCD O&M Manager; Dave Rasmussen, UWCD Consultant; Aaron Averett, Sunrise Engineering; Bart Jensen, Jones & DeMille; Mike Collins, Bowen Collins & Associates; Wayne Simper, Central Canal; Morgan Batty, Island Ditch; Randy and Randan Vincent, Brush Creek Water Users.

Approval of Minutes Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to approve the April 13, 2021, Annual Meeting minutes.

Jensen Pump Project Randy Vincent requested funding for a project to pump water out of Green River in Jensen. This would benefit the Sunshine and Snow pipelines, the Murray Ditch, Burns Bench as well as being able to send water through Red Fleet exchange to other entities in the Uinta Basin. The NRCS study shows they can pump 25 CFS back to the top pipelines. The Bureau of Reclamation has a block of water (12,000 AF) intended to be developed out of Red Fleet. This project could benefit the entire community. The question was asked if this would be duplicating the Burns Bench Pump Station. We need to have customers to make the Burns Bench project feasible. The Board directed William to talk with Scott Chew and find out if there is funding from the State.

Resolution 2021-0511 David Robertson and Eric Hunter from Chapman & Cutler joined the meeting by Zoom. They are looking into re-funding five of our outstanding loans:

- 1) 2004 Water Treatment Tank;
- 2) 2008 Island Ditch Pumping Station;
- 3) 2015 Green River Pumping Plant;
- 4) Jensen Unit Block Notice No. 1;
- 5) Jensen Unit Block Notice No. 3.

They would be combined into one bond, but will maintain the same amortization schedules so the debt service will taper off at the same rate. The savings from doing this through about 2026 will be \$45,000-\$45,000 per year, then \$20,000-\$25,000 per year after that. They will form a pricing committee to price the bonds within the parameters. The total sources of bonds is up to \$7.5 million.

This should save us money on interest rates. Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Todd Thacker and passed unanimously to approve the resolution and authorize Quentin Johnson and William Merkley to sign it.

**Steinaker and
Red Fleet Inflows**

John Hunting reported that Red Fleet Reservoir is currently at elevation 5587.82 with an active capacity of 16,767 acre-feet and an average inflow of 53 CFS and outflow of 41 and pumping about 6 over to the treatment plant. Steinaker Reservoir is at elevation 5478.11 with an active capacity of 8,701 acre-feet and an average inflow of 27 CFS with 83 CFS going out. There was a report that the Feeder Canal was leaking, but it was a Rock Point lateral instead. Wayne Simper asked if there was an agreement about pass-through water. Feeder Canal flows below 20 CFS are considered regulation water instead of pass-through that keeps Central Canal regulated. They feel that water is being wasted by trying to regulate the canal without Steinaker. We are required to pay the Bureau of Reclamation \$1.70 for the contract payment but could have the option to not charge the O&M and Reserve. Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously to allow Central to run water through and pay only the \$1.70/acre-foot to let the reservoir regulate the canal flows.

**Red Fleet
Allotment**

Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Todd Thacker and passed unanimously to approve 100% allotment on the Red Fleet water.

**Vernal Unit
Efficiency
Project
Watershed Plan**

Bart Jensen reported that they have made great progress. They are at 30% project design and cost has been turned over to the economist as well as the hydro-model. The next step is to continue to answer questions. They are meeting with the NRCS bi-weekly. They may be able to update their completion schedule next month.

Red Leaf

Red Leaf would like to enter into a 3-year water lease option on our White River water right. The Option is for a period of three years at \$5 per acre foot per year. If they choose to act on the Option and lease the water, the cost jumps to \$150 per acre foot. This will be used for oil shale production. They want to make sure they have the resources in place in case production heats up. Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Shane Frost and passed unanimously to have William re-negotiate the lease to \$300 per acre foot instead of \$150.

**2020
Conservation
Plan**

The Board felt that we need to put a measuring device in at Vernal City's point of diversion. Todd Thacker made a MOTION that SECONDED by Shane Frost and passed unanimously to adopt the 2020 Conservation Plan as presented.

**Financial
Statements**

Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to approve the April 2021 financial statements.

Invoices

Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Shane Frost and passed unanimously to approve paying BHI \$3,700; Bowen Collins \$25,681; International Water Screens \$9,520.08 for a total of \$38,901.08.

Gordon Merkley

William Merkley reported that Gordon has stepped up and picked up the slack to do Devin's job. We are going to replace Devin soon on the West Side. Gordon and Dustin are reading meters this week. The District cost of a ditch rider is not being completely reimbursed by the canal companies. Shane Frost made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously that Gordon's hourly rate be increased to \$30 for this year and the Board will talk about it next month after the new person is hired.

Employee Health Insurance

Shane Mayberry prepares a comparison chart for us each year to see where our current policy stands in the insurance market. Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Shane Frost and passed unanimously to accept the renewal option presented by PEHP.

Manager Report

The State of Utah has approved the process for appointing a representative for Uintah and Duchesne Counties on the Colorado River Board. William will set up a meeting with Duchesne to appoint a representative and let the Board know. It will be a six-year appointment but is most likely an eight-year commitment.

Greg and William are going to the Utah Water Users Conference in St. George.

Governor Cox has mandated that government facilities water lawns between 10 p.m and 6 a.m. to conserve water.

Adjourn

Todd Thacker made a MOTION to adjourn which was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.