

# Uintah Water Conservancy District

Board of Trustees  
Board Meeting Minutes  
November 12, 2019

Approved

**Conducting:** Chairman Todd Thacker called the November 12, 2019, Board Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed guests.

**Present:**

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

**Others:** William Merkley, UWCD General Manager; Mary Searle, UWCD Clerk; John Hunting, UWCD O&M Manager; Dave Rasmussen, UWCD Consultant; Scott Elliott, Bureau of Reclamation; Bart Jensen, Jones & DeMille Engineering; Tom Marston, USGS Salt Lake Division; Mike Collins, Bowen & Collins & Associates.

**Approval of Minutes** Herb Snyder made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Shane Frost and passed unanimously to approve the October 7, 2019, Board Meeting minutes.

**Red Fleet Groundwater** Tom Marston went through the background of the study of the groundwater around Red Fleet and presented the finalized copy to each of the board members. He explained about the Navajo sandstone and other compositions of the area surrounding Red Fleet. There is a section of Big Brush Creek that has water gain before it enters the reservoir. The reservoir is gaining water from the adjoining aquifer. They did tracers to find out where most of the water comes from. The study is available online. This was a cooperative study between USGS, Bureau of Reclamation and the District.

**Steinaker - Safety of Dams** William made a presentation of the footage taken by a drone of the progress of the repair of Steinaker Dam. This will be added to the District website. William, Todd and Tyson met with the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation at the NWRA. She was instrumental in getting this project through the people in Washington D.C. The reservoir is going up about two-tenths of a foot per day. It currently contains just under 2,000 acre feet of useable water plus the dead storage and conservation pool. It should be above the outlet in another week. Steinaker freezes over about the end of December. The gate modifications cost \$877,000 and about \$60,000 came out for inspections. We should get a check back somewhere in the range of \$120,000.

**Vernal Unit Efficiency Project Watershed Plan** Bart Jensen reported they are coordinating with the NRCS for environmental assessments. Their economist is planning a site visit. Things are moving forward. They are meeting with the NRCS concerning this and other WaterSMART plans in the works.

**Uinta River  
Bifurcation**

Eric Major has been meeting with the Ute Tribe Water Commissioner and the BIA. The MOA includes a grant for a right-of-way. There has been a 24.8% increase in costs at this point. There may be some RCPP funds which would help with some of the increased costs. The structure has full support of the Water Commission. BIA will own the structure and the River Commissioner will operate it. The majority of interest is held by BIA water rights. They want to have more control over the River Commissioner but the he is a State employee. Senator Winterton is trying to help move this along. Game and Fish are now supportive after observing the site.

**Ashley  
Upper/Highline  
Canals Pipe  
Project**

The most significant thing is to get a contractor to review the design. They have hired BHI. We will negotiate and may not have to go out for additional bids. We will meet with BHI next week. They will review and make comments. With the contractor, it will infuse energy into the project. We had proposals from W.W. Clyde and BHI. There are new procurement guidelines for canal companies. The Bureau of Reclamation has all the information they need to unfreeze the funds. It should start next Fall. The surveys for Ute Lady Tress are all complete. They will work with Shon Massey on the mitigation area.

**Ashley Creek  
Diversion  
Structure**

We have put together a letter of intent for the canal companies. They have agreed that they will pay their percentage. We agree to pay engineering costs up to \$40,000.

**Master Plan**

We renewed our General Services Agreement and signed a Task Order with Bowen Collins Associates. The contracting is all complete. There will be a kick-off meeting next week. This document is going to be very thorough and telling in guiding us on how to move forward.

**Website  
Redesign**

William showed the initial page for the new website. The page will link to other websites and things that are connected and important to us.

**Financial  
Statements**

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

**Invoices**

Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Herb Snyder and passed unanimously to approve paying Jason Black \$1,800; BHI \$11,010; Curt's Crane Service \$500; Jones & DeMille \$12,741.81; PdM \$9,695; Bowen Collins \$669.50; Snow Christensen \$208.50 for a total of \$36,624.81.

**Preliminary 2020  
Budget**

Some projects are moving to next year. We anticipate doing the second Reach of the Service Canal in 2020-2021. We hope that we don't have to cover the cost of the entire project. We are looking at what the bond market looks like. We may replace one vehicle, pave the area behind the shop, build a structure to park vehicles under. That would come out of the capital improvement fund.

**2020 Meeting  
Schedule**

The board decided to leave the meetings on Tuesday as they have been. The finalized schedule will be presented and voted on in December.

**Manager Report**

The Executive Committee did the Manager Annual Review.

Tyson, Todd and William reported on the NWRA conference and their discussion with the BOR Commissioner's side of things and what that means for the District as we go forward on projects with grants and funding available through the Bureau of Reclamation.

**Closed Session**

Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and received aye votes from Dean Baker, Tyson Murray, Shane Frost, Herb Snyder and Todd Thacker to go into and out of closed session for personnel issues.

When closed session ended, Quentin Johnson made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Shane Frost and passed unanimously to approve a 12% raise for William Merkley as General Manager and a 3% raise for all other employees. They also expressed a vote of approval for the job William Merkley is doing as General Manager.

**Adjourn**

Quentin Johnson made a MOTION to adjourn which was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:48 a.m.