

# Uintah Water Conservancy District

Board of Trustees  
Board Meeting Minutes  
January 11, 2022

Approved

**Conducting:** Chairman Quentin R. Johnson called the January 11, 2022, Board Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at the District Office.

**Present:**

**Trustees:** Quentin Johnson, Tyson Murray, Dean Baker, and Todd Thacker. Greg Witbeck attended via Microsoft Teams. Shane Frost and Mitch Phillips were excused.

**Others:** William Merkley, UWCD General Manager, attended via Microsoft Teams; Mary Searle, UWCD Clerk; John Hunting, O&M; Bart Jensen, Jones & DeMille; Wayne Simper, Central Canal; Aaron Averett, Sunrise Engineering; Mike Collins, Bowen Collins Engineers; Scott Elliott, Bureau of Reclamation; Quinn Bennion, Vernal City.

**Approval of Minutes** Todd Thacker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously to approve the December 21, 2021, Board Meeting minutes.

**Proposed Vernal City Downtown Community Reinvestment Project** Quinn Bennion, Vernal City Manager, presented an overview of the Community Reinvestment Area (CRA). The purpose of the area is to revitalize historic downtown Vernal. It would enable the use of future property taxes to be used to encourage investment in the focused area and incentivize market forces. It would not add a taxing entity or increase property taxes. Funding would be through future tax revenues generated by new development/renovation/property value. The area would be 200 North to 200 South and 500 East to 500 West. This project would change the current trends which include vacant buildings, inadequate parking and decreasing property values. They received two grants to fund the study process. Additional funding would come from ARPA (city and county), grants, a CIB loan and revitalization funds. The idea is to increase community pride, enhance the perception of Vernal, prepare for future development and increase market values. The Board expressed support for this project.

**Operations Updates** Steinaker Reservoir is at elevation 5474.62 with an active capacity of 7,246 acre-feet and an average inflow of 20 CFS. Red Fleet Reservoir is currently at elevation 5569.18 with an active capacity of 10,361 acre-feet and an average inflow of 10 CFS. We are releasing 2.5 CFS for stockwater and pumping one CFS over to the sand mine.

**VU Efficiency  
Project  
Watershed Plan**

Bart Jensen reported they had to revise the cost estimate at the end of last month to update costs and request more money. They have re-submitted to the economist. They are trying to get that pushed through so we can get it all funded.

**Steinaker Service  
Canal - RII&III**

The design is about 95% completed. Completion of Reach III would take the pipeline as far north as Main Street. Most of the additional costs are related to providing power to turn-out vaults. We have to do legal descriptions to extend land drains on the project. The plan is to purchase pipe material as soon as we are able. Hopefully costs will be down. The schedule is looking at 18 weeks lead time in having pipe manufactured and delivered. We are looking at March or April at getting pipe purchased and on its way. We need to have staging areas cleared as to where the pipe needs to be set. We need to get a contractor as soon as possible. The turn-out vaults are getting water in, flooding out the valves and causing damage. We need to put a sump pump in to keep water from getting to the valves. Mike Collins requested an additional \$96,536 to complete design and respond to District project requests. Todd Thacker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously to amend the contract to reflect that cost.

**Service Canal  
Project Funding**

There are two applications for funding coming up: (1) Board of Water Resources is due January 14; (2) Bureau of Reclamation infrastructure funding is due by the end of January. The Board of Water Resources funding would be Reaches II and IIIA to about 1500 West. We have secured other funding for Reaches II and III. This would fill the gap of funding that has been secured. This is a \$21 million project and we have secured nearly \$8 million. The Board of Water Resources loan request is just over \$11 million. We have submitted that application twice for commentary and reviews. That would put us before the Board of Water Resources in March. This is all low-interest or no-interest loans. We have submitted the Bureau of Reclamation application to Provo and they are making comments and reviews. This is a loan and would have to be repaid possibly stretching over fifty years. Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Greg Witbeck and passed unanimously to approve the submittal of both applications.

**Red Fleet MOA  
Project**

Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously that the RFP for the Jensen Unit Pump Plant be tabled for later discussion.

**Financial  
Statements**

Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Todd Thacker and passed unanimously to approve the December 2021 financial statements.

**Invoices**

Todd Thacker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously to approve paying Bowen Collins \$3,802.50; Jones & DeMille \$8,262.16; PdM \$725 for a total of \$12,789.66.

**Fraud Risk**

Mary Searle presented the Fraud Risk questionnaire that is to be submitted to the State of Utah each year. Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Tyson Murray and passed unanimously to accept the questionnaire as presented.

**Hydrology  
Update**

John Hunting reported that right now we are over 100% on snowpack but we need to continue to get storms between now and April 1. There is moisture in the soil this year.

**Manager Report**

William asked everyone to attend the Uintah Basin Water Summit to be held Thursday at the Uintah Conference Center.

**Closed Session**

Dean Baker made a MOTION that was SECONDED by Todd Thacker and passed by Quentin Johnson, Tyson Murray and Greg Witbeck (by phone) to go into and out of closed session for the purpose of pending litigation.

**Adjourn**

Todd Thacker made a MOTION to adjourn which was SECONDED by Dean Baker and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.