

**Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Monday, July 22, 2019**

The Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District conducted a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, July 22, 2019 at the District's offices, 210 West Spencer Avenue, Gunnison, Colorado.

Board members present: Rosemary Carroll, Joellen Fonken, Rebie Hazard, Stacy McPhail, Julie Nania, Bill Nesbitt, John Perusek, Michelle Pierce, George Sibley, and Julie Vlier.

Board member not present: Andy Spann

Others present:

Hannah Cranor, Gunnison County Stockgrowers

Nel Curtiss, Rocky Mountain Trees

Mike Fabbre, Mount Crested Butte Water and Sanitation District

Tom Grant, UGRWCD Wet Meadows Program Coordinator

Jesse Kruthaupt, Trout Unlimited

Frank Kugel, General Manager

John McClow, General Counsel

Tom Rozman, Water Commissioner, District 59

Jill Steele, Office Manager

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Board President Michelle Pierce called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**2. AGENDA APPROVAL**

Michelle Pierce said the board has received some supplemental items including additional non-operating expenses for approval, information on drought contingency planning, demand management, a Project Committee meeting summary, and some watershed management planning follow up information. There is a policy for the board's consideration adding emergency funding to the District's Grant Program.

**Bill Nesbitt moved, and Rosemary Carroll seconded, approval of the agenda as modified. The motion carried.**

**3. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

**Julie Vlier moved and Julie Nania seconded approval of the consent agenda Items. The motion carried.**

**4. LEGAL MATTERS**

John McCLOW said that in the Taylor Park Reservoir stipulation disagreement, the attorneys for the other party did not respond by July 4 as promised, so discussions will be continued in August.

## **5. MANAGER'S REPORT**

Frank Kugel said that the reservoirs continue to fill. Blue Mesa is within 7 inches of spilling, and Taylor Park Reservoir is 1.5 feet below full. The current release rate from Taylor Park Reservoir will continue until later this week. He said that Taylor may be at peak storage or close to it. An updated Taylor Park Reservoir operating plan was emailed to the board today.

Frank said that Lake Powell is currently at 57% of capacity and continuing to rise. Lake Meade is at 40% of capacity. The 6-10-day forecast calls for warmer and drier than average conditions. The 8-14-day forecast calls for warmer than average temperatures and near-normal precipitation. The long-range forecast calls for warmer temperatures and above-normal precipitation.

Michelle Pierce said that the Executive Committee met earlier today to discuss the potential for Frank to leave the District in September. Once it is known for sure that he is leaving, the Executive Committee will meet again as soon as possible. She said that John and Frank will meet together to go over Frank's duties so that John can fill in for him while we search for a new manager.

## **6. 2020 BUDGET**

### **• Appointment of Budget Officer**

**George Sibley moved to appoint John McCLOW as Budget Officer for the 2020 budget. Julie Vlier seconded. The motion carried.**

## **8. BOARD/STAFF/COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPORTS**

**Treasurer's Report:** Bill Nesbitt said that he plans to renew a certificate of deposit at Gunnison Savings and Loan that is scheduled to mature next month.

Bill said that he would like to obtain a higher interest rate on the certificate of deposit at the bank in Lake City. He is not optimistic he will be able to, but he wants to keep the account there in any case.

**Gunnison Basin Roundtable:** Julie Nania said the GBRT met last week. The group discussed the compact curtailment scenario and also talked about the process the state is coordinating with the different Demand Management workgroups. Bill Trampe expressed concern that there wasn't enough public input in the process. John pointed out that the idea is to get ideas going, working with qualified people and then bring that out to the public. The possibility of starting a Demand Management committee for the GBRT will be revisited.

John said that the CWCB has decided to not require workgroup participants to sign a disclosure agreement.

Frank said that Russ George is now the director of the Inter Basin Compact Committee. He was at the meeting and gave a presentation in support of demand management.

**Taylor Park Reservoir:** Frank Kugel said he the board received the revised draft operating plan. This was sent to TLUG members, and everyone he has heard back from so far supports the plan, which calls for an end-of-year estimated storage of 80,000 acre feet.

**Drought Contingency Planning Update:** John McClow said that the board has received a proposed scope of work for analysis of compact curtailment scenarios from Hydros Consulting. A price range of \$5,000 - \$15,000 is included for the work. John said he asked for this proposal in order to get it on the agenda and get the board's responses to the idea. He asked if the board wanted to continue to pursue this and come up with a more definite proposal. The consensus of the board was to pursue this.

**Projects Committee:** Julie Vlier said that a meeting summary dated July 18, 2019 was included in the board packets.

The Projects Committee worked to develop the mission or purpose of the Committee. The following proposed language was suggested: "The Committee's primary goal should be to identify, evaluate feasibility, and implement projects that protect or enhance private and public water ways and uses in the Upper Gunnison Basin."

The Projects Committee developed suggested projects criteria guidelines as follows:

- Projects should provide for the leveraging of the District's taxpayer dollars, mutual aid and/or sharing of costs for the development
- Projects should work to maintain or improve existing agricultural water supplies
- Projects should work to identify and maintain or improve existing municipal and industrial water supplies
- Projects should quantify, protect and maintain or improve environmental and recreational water uses
- Projects should establish criteria for baseline water quality and quantity to be able to identify water project improvements and avoid any negative impacts from the development of the project
- Projects descriptions should include a description of the beneficial relationship(s) created by the project

The Projects Committee recommended funding the George Smith No. 2 Ditch emergency repair, up to \$10,000, for engineering.

The Committee discussed the Marshall Creek flooding at Sargents. Some of the landowners, along with Saguache County, have come up with some remedies for the problem; therefore, it was decided not to pursue this project at this time.

Julie Vlier provided a draft Request for Qualifications and a draft Service Agreement for the Projects Committee's consideration. She said she would like to develop a prequalified range of consultants to use when vetting projects. The consensus of the Committee was that both documents contained adequate information.

Julie Vlier said that the board received a red-lined version of the policy for consideration of grant requests. The suggested change would be to include emergency funding guidelines for projects outside of the usual grant cycle. A new, proposed criteria was added to the existing grant request guidelines as follows: "16. If the Board of Directors determines, in its sole discretion, that an event has occurred that constitutes an emergency such that time is of the essence in completing a project that otherwise qualifies for financial assistance, and the Board is willing to appropriate additional funds for a grant, the Board may consider an application for assistance for such a project at any time."

John McClow said that the board has two actions to take: One is to ratify the Committee's recommendation to invest up to \$10,000 in funding for the George Smith No. 2 Ditch. The second is to adopt the revision of the Grant Program policies for consideration of funding outside of the grant cycle. It is necessary to state, in writing, that the District accepts no responsibility for the project. The grant funding agreements already state this, and it needs to be articulated to the project proponents.

**Julie Vlier moved the Projects Committee's recommendation to provide up to \$10,000 in funding for the George Smith No. 2 Ditch emergency repair, and to adopt the revision of the Grant Program policies for consideration of funding outside of the grant cycle. Funds for this will be taken from the funds budgeted for the short-term purchase of Aspinall water which did not take place. A motion from a committee requires no second. The motion carried.**

## **7. DINNER BREAK**

**Watershed Management Planning:** George Sibley said that the District obtained an extension on the report until December 31, 2019. He said they are still waiting for information to come in from some of the consultants. A lot of the information is in the editing stage. The plan is to have the report together by the September meeting in time to distribute in board packets.

**Wet Meadows Project Update:** Tom Grant had not yet arrived.

**Update on Scientific Endeavors within the District:** Rosemary Carroll said that the Gunnison River has been submitted in a proposal from the USGS to be the next generation of water observation systems. The Delaware River basin is the main one, and the USGS is looking for a western one.

Rosemary said that she has small proposal funded by the Desert Research Institute looking at novel methods that can be used in tributary systems in order to improve forecasting.

Frank said that the CWCB has identified a need for more stream gages and has funding available. Erin Wilson reached out to him to ask for a list of potential gages. He reached out to stakeholders and made a suggested list of historic USGS gages to reactivate.

Rosemary Carroll said that Dave Gochis is currently in Tincup working on data download and satellite communication from the Snotel Lite installation near Mirror Lake.

## **9. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**

Bill Nesbitt suggested taking Julie Nania off the Education Committee and adding Joellen Fonken. Both Julie and Joellen agreed.

Michelle Pierce said that Joellen Fonken is hereby appointed to the Education Committee and that Julie Nania is no longer on that committee.

Frank said that today he gave a presentation to children at Mountain Roots at the Gunnison Middle School community garden.

Bill Nesbitt said that a child recently recognized him in the grocery store and said to him, "You gave me a water book."

**Julie Nania moved and Bill Nesbitt seconded adoption of Resolution 2019-3 honoring Kathleen Curry for her service to the district. The motion carried.**

Michelle Pierce said that the CWC summer conference is coming up. Board members interested in attending should contact Bev Richards.

Bill Nesbitt recommended attending the pre-conference seminars.

## **10. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

No citizens requested to speak.

## **11. FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Colorado Water Congress summer conference will take place August 20 – 23, 2019.

The Watershed Management Planning Committee will meet August 12, 2019.

Frank said that the Aspinall Operations meeting will take place August 15, 2019 at the Elk Creek Marina from 1:00 – 3:00. It is open to the public, and it is interesting to see all the different stakeholders that participate in this process.



## **12. SUMMARY OF MEETING ACTION ITEMS**

1. Frank will work with consultants on the George Smith No. 2 Ditch project
2. John will prepare a disclaimer for the emergency grant contracts.

Julie Vlier asked about the Harvey economics outreach meeting. Frank said that Ed Harvey gave a presentation to the Gunnison County Stockgrowers. There were 18 people in the audience. A lot of great feedback was received, for which Ed was very appreciative. The plan is to have a survey of three ranchers in each of the three major agricultural basins, which are Ohio Creek, Tomichi Creek, and the East River.

Michelle Pierce recessed the meeting at 6:53 p.m.

Michelle Pierce reconvened the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

**Wet Meadows Project:** Tom Grant gave an update on the current status of the Wet Meadows Project. He said that the website is now functional.

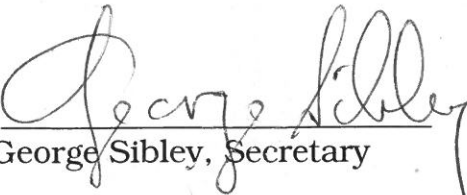
Tom is continuing to secure funding for the Wet Meadows Project. He recently received notification of approval of a grant from the National Forest Foundation, the Forest Service, and two from the Bureau of Land Management.

Julie Vlier asked about a plan for Tom's replacement. Tom said that the plan is to get the main partners together and see what they want to do, and to talk about the funding and timeline. Tom said he hopes someone will be hired by the first of the year, and that his goal is to stay on the job through October. Julie thanked Tom for all his good work on this.

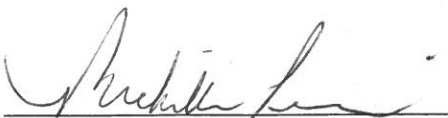
## **13. ADJOURNMENT**

Board President Michelle Pierce adjourned the July 22, 2019 meeting at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
George Sibley, Secretary

APPROVED:

  
Michelle Pierce, President