

**Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
Special Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 19, 2020**

The Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District conducted a special meeting via teleconference on Thursday, March 19, 2020, at 5:30 p.m.

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:

Sonja Chavez, General Manager
Noel Durant, Crested Butte Land Trust
Cheryl Cwelich, Crested Butte Land Trust
John McClow, General Counsel
Beverly Richards, Administrative Assistant
Jill Steele, Office Manager

CALL TO ORDER

Board President Michelle Pierce called the meeting to order 5:33 p.m.

The roll was called. All board members, except for Andy Spann, were present.

1. AUTHORIZATION FOR GENERAL MANAGER TO MODIFY EMPLOYEE WORK RULES AND SICK LEAVE IN RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

The manager said that she is seeking board authorization to modify employee work rules and sick leave policies in response to the coronavirus pandemic as follows:

1. Require senior staff to participate in business outside of the District via electronic means until further notice;

2. Temporarily suspend all business travel for senior staff until further notice;
3. Provide additional days of paid sick leave for staff in the event that they should contract COVID-19 and deplete earned sick leave in order to mitigate potential undue financial hardship from loss of work;
4. Institute a remote working policy that would allow staff to work from home in the case of possible or confirmed exposure to or contraction of COVID-19 or as a measure deemed necessary by the General Manager;
5. Continue the closure of the District Conference Room to all public use until public health risks have passed; and
6. Temporarily close the District office and require all staff to work remotely from home if needed necessary to protect the health and well-being of all staff.

Bill Nesbitt moved approval of the General Manager's recommendation to modify employee work rules and sick leave policies in response to the coronavirus pandemic as listed above. George Sibley seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was conducted. Results of the roll call vote:

Rosemary Carroll	yes
Joellen Fonken	yes
Rebie Hazard	yes
Stacy McPhail	yes
Julie Nania	yes
Bill Nesbitt	yes
John Perusek	yes
Michelle Pierce	yes
George Sibley	yes
Julie Vlier	yes

The motion carried, 10 – 0.

2. AMENDMENT TO ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION TO BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETING POLICY

The manager is proposing to amend the District's policy on electronic participation in board and committee meetings to include a new, second paragraph as follows:

“Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the President determines that there is an urgent need for the Board to conduct its regularly scheduled meeting through electronic means, Board members may participate and vote at such meeting, and attendance at such meeting will be considered to comply with the reorganization Decree.”

John McClow said that the final sentence of the policy should also be stricken.

Stacy McPhail moved and Joellen Fonken seconded to adopt the proposed revisions to the electronic participation in board and committee meetings policy which was adopted July 25, 2016.

A roll call vote was conducted. Results of the roll call vote:

Rosemary Carroll	yes
Joellen Fonken	yes
Rebie Hazard	yes
Stacy McPhail	yes
Julie Nania	yes
Bill Nesbitt	yes
John Perusek	yes
Michelle Pierce	yes
George Sibley	yes
Julie Vlier	yes

The motion carried, 10 - 0.

3. APPROVAL OF OPERATING AND NON-OPERATING EXPENSES **(MARCH)**

Board Treasurer Bill Nesbitt said the District may not meet its budgeted interest on investments figure in 2020 because interest rates are going down daily.

George Sibley asked about the invoice from Wilson Water Group. John McClow clarified that the invoice is for work relating to the economic impact study, not watershed management planning. Jill will check to be sure the bill was properly recorded in Quick Books.

A roll call vote was conducted. Results of the roll call vote:

Rosemary Carroll	yes
Joellen Fonken	yes
Rebie Hazard	yes
Stacy McPhail	yes
Julie Nania	yes
Bill Nesbitt	yes
John Perusek	yes
Michelle Pierce	yes
George Sibley	yes
Julie Vlier	yes

The motion carried, 10 – 0.

**4. APPROVAL OF 2020 DISTRICT GRANT AND WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEES' FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Grant Committee and the Watershed Management Planning Committee met to evaluate grant applications that were received by the District. The recommendation was to fund the following projects as follows:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Biebel #1 and #2 Diversion Improvement Project | \$ 10,000 |
| 2. Gothic Field Raw Water Irrigation Project | \$ 50,000 |
| 3. Gunnison and Tomichi Valley Ditch Modernization | \$ 21,775 |
| 4. Little Mill Creek Relief Restoration Project* | \$ 3,200 |
| 5. Lower May Bohm Ditch Irrigation Control Improvement
(WMP) | \$ 17,500 |
| 6. Mountain Roots Irrigation Project Phase 2*
(WMP) | \$ 16,937 |
| 7. Pete's Lake Multipurpose Enhancement Project
(WMP) | \$ 36,960 |
| 8. Shady Island River Park Project* | \$ 30,000 |
| 9. Slate River Integrated Monitoring Project*
(WMP) | \$ 6,000 |
| 10. Slate River Working Group Project Implementation
(WMP) | \$ 33,900 |
| 11. Solar Pump for Vegetable Irrigation
(WMP) | \$ 2,928 |
| 12. Taylor Park Erosion Control and Riparian Restoration | \$ 15,000 |

13. Tomichi Creek Restoration Project	\$	0
14. Upper Gunnison Multiple Diversion Project (WMP)	\$	11,800
15. Vouga Reservoir Dam Restoration and Rehabilitation	\$	<u>50,000</u>
	Total recommended for funding – Grants	\$200,000
	Total recommended for funding – WMP	<u>\$106,000</u>
	Total	\$306,000

*Pending submittal of additional information requested by Committee.

Stacy McPhail moved to approve the recommendation of the Grant Committee and the Watershed Management Planning Committee to approve total grant funding of \$306,000; of that amount \$200,000 will be funded through the District’s Grant Program, and \$106,000 will be funded through the District’s Watershed Management Planning process. A roll call vote was conducted. Results of the roll call vote:

Rosemary Carroll	yes
Joellen Fonken	yes
Rebie Hazard	yes
Stacy McPhail	yes
Julie Nania	yes
Bill Nesbitt	yes
John Perusek	yes
Michelle Pierce	yes
George Sibley	yes
Julie Vlier	yes

The motion carried, 10 – 0.

5. DISCUSSION OF CANCELLATION OF MARCH 23, 2020 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Bill Nesbitt moved, and Rosemary Carroll seconded to cancel the March 23, 2020 regular board meeting. A roll call vote was taken. Results of the roll call vote:

Rosemary Carroll	yes
Joellen Fonken	yes
Rebie Hazard	yes
Stacy McPhail	yes
Julie Nania	yes
Bill Nesbitt	yes
John Perusek	yes
Michelle Pierce	yes
George Sibley	yes
Julie Vlier	yes

The motion carried, 10 – 0.

Sonja Chavez said that she feels it is prudent to close the District’s office immediately, and she plans to close effective tomorrow. Staff have been working on a remote work plan, which she shared with board:

I. DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSURE

A. Phone System: All calls will be forward to Bev’s cell phone during office hours. Outside of office hours the greeting will be modified to say “Hello, you’ve reached the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District. The District office has been closed due to public health concerns related to the spread of coronavirus. We are still conducting business of the District via remote working. Staff will be checking voicemail messages regularly throughout the day or you can contact us by going to our website at: www.ugrwcd.org and clicking on the CONTACT link at the top of the webpage.

B. District Emails through Website: All are sent directly to Bev’s email with a cc to Sonja and can be forwarded to applicable staff or board member as necessary.

C. District Mail: Sonja will check daily and bring inside the office. Other staff members will also be checking periodically to make sure important items are being addressed.

D. Message on Front Door: OFFICE CLOSED DUE TO PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS RELATED TO CORONAVIRUS. BUSINESS OF THE DISTRICT IS BEING CONDUCTED REMOTELY. IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CALL 970641-6065 OR EMAIL US AT: SCHAVEZ@UGRWCD.ORG.

E. Financial: Bill Nesbitt and Stacy McPhail will be the local designated check-signees during this period. Staff recommending that we designate the check signing day on or as close to the 15th day of each month. Staff will coordinate with identified Directors.

II. REMOTE WORKING

A. Authorization: On-going remote working authorization will be considered by the General Manager on a weekly basis and will be founded on most up-to-date County public health recommendations, individual staff members personal or family need to self-isolate, confirmed COVID-19 test result and requirement to quarantine, or need to care for an immediate family member who has fallen ill due to coronavirus. B. Staff Work Hours: 8am – 5pm (morning and afternoon mini-breaks; lunch breaks at individual's discretion). Jill may be the one staff member coming to the office more frequently due to the nature of her work and due to limitations with use of Quick Books software when using VPN.

C. Staff Use of Personal Cell Phones (During Office Closure): If staff members do not have unlimited data plans and individual is remote working during the period of the office closure, the District has offered to cover cell phone expenses. D. Daily Check-ins: The General Manager will check in each morning with staff (via phone or email). On-going communication via email will be occurring throughout the day as is normal/typical. Staff is also educating ourselves on the use of Zoom video to help facilitate close communication and regular interaction which is important to our team here at the District. E. Board Needs During Closure: If the Board needs anything from staff during the period of closure, please contact Sonja or John via email or by cell phone and we will be sure to get you any support you may need.

III. FUNDING TO SUPPORT AUTHORIZATION OF ADDITIONAL PAID EMERGENCY SICK LEAVE (REQUEST TO BOARD IN PROGRESS)

Authorization of additional paid sick leave is an emergency measure to prevent potential undue financial hardship during the coronavirus pandemic and to encourage staff to take sick leave rather than try to come to work if they or their loved ones are ill which may only contribute to the on-going spread of the virus. At the moment, all leave balances (sick and/or personal leave) are greater than 100 hours (with the exception of Sonja who is at 48). The General Manager has conservatively identified approximately \$4,000 in the existing budget (not considering the District Contingency Budget Line Item) that could be earmarked over the next few months to support the Emergency Sick Leave Fund: - \$1,000 computer purchase - \$1,000 equipment (other) - \$500 travel savings - \$500 General Manager's discretionary fund - \$500 furniture - \$500 Board meeting expenses - * As a reminder, the Board also has a designated \$24,000 contingency budget line item in General Fund.

IV. PREPARING FOR APRIL 2020 BOD MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE AND/OR ZOOM VIDEO

Staff will likely be reaching out to Directors to get a better idea of their technological capabilities at home (e.g., Smart phones, laptop or desktops with video capability) so that we can plan for conducting Regular Board meeting(s) electronically during this public health crisis. We are happy to conduct one-on-one training via telephone in order to get everyone up to speed (i.e. Zoom Video, Zoom Webinar, etc).

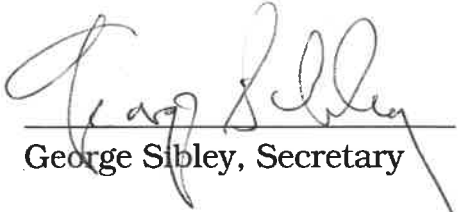
Sonja said that if the Board needs anything from staff during the period of closure, to please contact Sonja or John via email or by cell phone and we will be sure to get you any support you may need.

Michelle Pierce asked if there were any public comments.

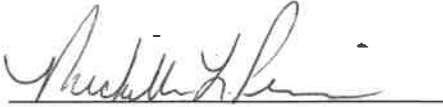
Noel Durant, of the Crested Butte Land Trust, thanked the Board and the Watershed Planning Committee for their efforts and said he is grateful for the partnership.

Board President Michelle Pierce adjourned the March 19, 2020 meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


George Sibley, Secretary

APPROVED:


Michelle Pierce, President