

**Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
Annual Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 22, 2020**

The Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District conducted its annual meeting via teleconference on Monday, June 22, at 5:30 p.m.

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

Others present:

Sonja Chavez, General Manager
Cindy Dozier
Jim Gelwicks
Kenneth Hurst
Ryan Unterreiner, Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Nathan Coombs, Alamosa Radar Project
Garrett Cammans, North American Weather Consultants
Heather Dutton, Alamosa Radar Project
Paul Mowery
Jesse Bryan, UGRWCD Intern
Jesse Kruthaupt, Trout Unlimited
John McClow, General Counsel
Judge J. Steven Patrick
Beverly Richards, Water Resource Specialist
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

George Sibley moved and Bill Nesbitt seconded approval of the amended agenda as circulated.

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
Andy Spann	yes

The motion carried, 10 – 0.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE – JUDGE PATRICK

Judge J. Steven Patrick administered the oath of office to continuing City of Gunnison Division 8 board member Bill Nesbitt and to new, Taylor River Division 4 board member, Don Sabrowski.

4. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Bill Nesbitt moved and Joellen Fonken seconded approval of the consent agenda items (Approval of May 26, 2020 meeting minutes, approval of operating and non-operating expenses).

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

Rosemary Carroll	yes
Joellen Fonken	yes
Rebie Hazard	abstain, not present at May 26, 2020 meeting
Stacy McPhail	yes
Julie Nania	yes
Bill Nesbitt	yes
John Perusek	yes
Michelle Pierce	yes
Don Sabrowski	yes
George Sibley	yes
Andy Spann	yes

The motion carried, 10 – 0.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Current board officers are Michelle Pierce, President; Stacy McPhail, Vice-President; George Sibley, Secretary; Bill Nesbitt, Treasurer.

Michelle Pierce asked if the current officers are willing to serve, and if anyone else would like to be nominated for an officer position.

The current officers indicated they are willing to continue to serve. There was no interest indicated in any officer position by other board members.

Andy Spann moved and Rosemary Carroll seconded that the existing officers be re-elected by acclamation.

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
Don Sabrowski	yes
George Sibley	yes
Andy Spann	yes

The motion carried, 11 – 0.

6. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION APPOINTING FINANCIAL OFFICERS

Michelle Pierce said that Resolution 2020-01 serves to appoint as check signers the General Manager and the four, board officers. Bill Nesbitt said that this is an annual exercise.

Bill Nesbitt moved and Rosemary Carroll seconded approval of Resolution 2020-01 appointing financial officers.

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
Don Sabrowski	yes
George Sibley	yes
Andy Spann	yes

The motion carried, 11 – 0

7. RE-AUTHORIZATION OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Michelle Pierce said that Julie Vlier was on the finance, legislative, projects, and water administration committees. She asked if any board members would like to be added to any committees.

Julie Nania noted that she is serving on Watershed Management Planning committee, although her name is not listed.

As Taylor River Division representative, Don Sabrowski will be added to the Taylor Local Users Group. He said he would let Michelle know of any others he would like to join.

Bill Nesbitt moved and Rebie Hazard seconded reauthorization of the standing committees and that Julie Nania's name be added to the WMP committee list.

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
Don Sabrowski	yes
George Sibley	yes
Andy Spann	yes

The motion carried, 11 – 0

8. LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

John McClow said that he sent the board an update of this legislative session. The CWCB Projects Bill passed, and Water Education Colorado was deleted. This removes \$150,000 of funding.

John said that agreement has been reached with Ernie Cockrell on revising the Taylor refill decree. Now he will proceed to present it to the judge for adoption.

Don Sabrowski said he would like to meet with John to get up to speed. John will start by sending him the decree. There is a TLUG meeting scheduled for July 8 at 10:00 a.m.

9. MANAGER'S REPORT

Sonja Chavez said her report was included in the board packets, and she had a few updates.

Sonja welcomed the District's new interns. Jesse Bryan and Chris Medary. They have great skills and really impressed the interview team. Both will assist with the District's watershed management planning process.

Sonja said that she has officially changed Bev Richard's title to Water Resource Specialist. She said she has been very impressed with Bev. She has a master's degree and is an expert at what she does. The board congratulated Bev and agreed that the change in title was well deserved.

Sonja said that Bill Nesbitt obtained another estimate for building painting. Today, Bill was outside the building while the City of Gunnison was working on electrical service. They noticed that the cement pad next to the building by Sonja's

office is beginning to erode and move away from the building. This is problematic because water can get in there and exacerbate the issue.

Bill Nesbitt said that he and Frank Kugel noticed this a year ago. It was not as serious then, and funds were not budgeted for the repair. He said that now it has gotten quite a bit more serious and the City is concerned that the pad could move and pull electric lines away from the building.

Sonja congratulated Jill Steele, and the District in general, on the successful audit.

Bill Nesbitt said he had an exit interview with Paul Miller, the District's auditor. He said that everything looked good. There is a mechanical, Quick Books issue that he is unsure how to solve. He and Jill will continue to look into ways to solve this.

Sonja said that she and Michelle spoke and tentatively plan to have the July board meeting in person. The logistics for social distancing will need to be figured out. It may be necessary to allow the public to attend only by telephone. If any members of the board or staff are concerned, or fall into any high risk category, they will be accommodated.

11. UPDATE ON UPPER GUNNISON CLOUDSEEDING AND SNOTEL SITES – GARRETT CAMMANS (NORTH AMERICAN WEATHER CONSULTANTS)

Garret Cammans of North American Weather Consultants gave a presentation to the board on the Gunnison County Cloud Seeding Program. He said that they received a waiver to continue operating under Colorado's "Essential Business" designation.

The Gunnison County Cloud Seeding Program operates from November 15 – April 15. There are fifteen manually operated generators, one remotely operated generator, near Lake Irwin, one weather station, and one microwave radiometer. He showed a map of generator locations and pictures of the generators. This was the 18th operational season for the UGRWCD. The current permit is in year three of five. The CWCB provided a grant to subsidize the costs of operating the Cloud Seeding Program for the 2019-2020 season. Some of the funding comes from the lower basin states. During this recent operational season, 1500 hours of generator seeding was budgeted, a total of 1,315 generator hours were recorded, and one storm event was not seeded due to avalanche risk. Of those hours, 111.5 were from the remote generator near Lake Irvin. The final report for the season is currently being completed. Garrett said that annual cloud seeding operations have resulted in an 8% increase in liquid water, an increase in stream flows of 47,000-106,000 acre feet, and

an increase in precipitation of 5-12%. The estimated cost per acre foot of this increased water is \$1.04 - \$2.35.

Bill Nesbitt asked how this cost per acre foot compares. Garrett said it is low compared to many. He said contributing factors to the low cost include the U-shape of the basin, making it perfect for cloud seeding, and the varied use of equipment. Remote generators are very expensive and using only one keeps costs lower.

Rosemary Carroll inquired about the increase in wet water during dry years, when it is most needed. Garrett said that water yield is usually same in wet or dry years, and ranges from 5-12% based on the type of mathematical model used. He said that during dry years, NAWC may seed and operate generously or for longer periods during a storm.

Don Sabrowski asked for data on the average number of storms seeded in a season. Garrett said he would get that information for Don.

10. ALAMOSA RADAR – Q&A WITH HEATHER DUTTON AND NATHAN COOMBS

Heather Dutton and Nathan Coombs showed an informational video on the Alamosa Radar project.

Costs for the San Luis Valley radar project have totaled \$1,171,957.96 with post-warranty, annual costs estimated in the range of \$25,000-\$40,000. The CWCB will contribute \$375,000 to the project.

Bill Nesbitt asked if the data is proprietary. Nathan said it is not.

Rosemary Carroll suggested that the Projects Committee convene to discuss the radar project.

12. DISCUSSION OF UGRWCD EQIP APPLICATION IN SUPPORT OF LONE PINE DITCH PIPING

Sonja Chavez said that it has come to her attention that the Lone Pine ditch, on the West side of the Ohio Creek Valley, has had frequent blow outs. There are multiple users along the ditch, which irrigates approximately 400 acres. A one-mile segment of the seven-mile ditch is planned to be piped in order to mitigate this problem.

A possible source of funding would be an NRCS EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) grant.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, increased soil health and reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, improved or created wildlife habitat, and mitigation against increasing weather volatility. Sonja said that the District could be the applicant and would need to come up with 25%. Funding was recently increased up to \$900,000 for irrigation districts.

Sonja asked for board input. The EQIP grant is authorized by the Farm Bill. While the Farm Bill has changed from the 2018 version, the guidance has not yet been released. An Equip applicant has to have control over the water. The District would not fit that role, but that could be one of the changes made to the guidance.

Bill Nesbitt asked if the Castle Mountain HOA had been approached about sharing costs. Jesse Kruthaupt said that Castle Mountain (now Ohio Meadows), Horse River, and Eagle Ridge, homeowners, have been approached.

Michelle Pierce said this is well worth investigating. As Jesse showed, there could be many projects that could come from this.

Bill Nesbitt asked Sonja what she needs in order to move forward. Sonja said she wants to spend time exploring with Jesse, and to spend time with NRCS. At this point, she wants to know if the board objects to her moving forward and exploring.

Andy Spann suggested approaching the Conservation District as another funding avenue to consider. Sonja agreed, saying that the Gunnison Conservation District could be an applicant as well.

13. BOARD/STAFF/COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS

Treasurer's Report: Bill Nesbitt said there was not much to report. The ten-year bond market is still at an all-time low. He said that the District has 17.67 months of operating expenses on hand.

Bill said he expects the District's JP Morgan Chase CD to be called.

Property tax revenues for the year are average, per the Gunnison County Treasurer.

Approval of 2019 Audit:

Bill Nesbitt moved and Stacy McPhail seconded to approve the 2019 audit as presented.

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
Don Sabrowski	yes
George Sibley	yes
Andy Spann	yes

The motion carried, 11 – 0.

Taylor Park Reservoir: Sonja Chavez said that releases out of Taylor Park Reservoir were increased to 300 cfs on June 15 and will remain at that rate through the end of July. If there are any changes, she will let the board know.

Andy Spann said that the June 9 meeting summary states that changes could be made in September. He feels that September is too late, and that if we need to move water, we should do it now.

Drought Contingency Planning Update: Sonja Chavez said that the Economics of Local Governments work group has met, and the next CWCB meeting is July 15.

Watershed Management Planning Update: The committee has not met since the last board meeting. The board received information in their packets. There were no questions.

Wet Meadows Project Update: Paul Jones gave an update on the Wet Meadows project. The project was just awarded \$53,000 on top of the \$60,000 award from

Joellen Fonken	yes
Rebie Hazard	yes
Stacy McPhail	yes
Julie Nania	yes
Bill Nesbitt	yes
John Perusek	yes
Michelle Pierce	yes
Don Sabrowski	yes
George Sibley	yes
Andy Spann	yes

The motion carried, 11 – 0.

15. CITIZEN COMMENTS

No citizens requested to speak.

16. FUTURE MEETINGS

The Gunnison Virtual State of the River Meeting – June 24, 2020.

The CRWCD water and lunch webinar will take place June 30, 2020, from 12-1:15.

The Taylor Local Users Group will meet on July 8, 2020 at 10:00.

The GBRT plans to meet in person July 20, 2020

Sonja will send out a doodle poll to schedule an Education Committee meeting.

The next UGRWCD board meeting will take place July 27, 2020.

17. SUMMARY OF MEETING ACTION ITEMS

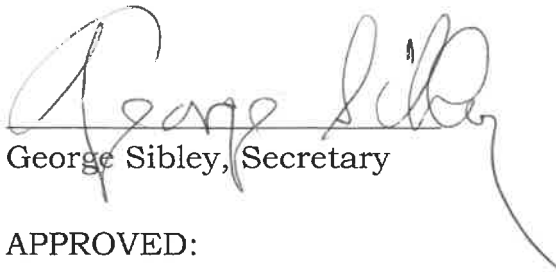
The Education Committee will meet after July 4.

Schedule a Project Committee meeting to discuss the radar project.

18. ADJOURNMENT


Board President Michelle Pierce adjourned the June 22, 2020 meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



George Sibley, Secretary

APPROVED:



Michelle Pierce, President