

**Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 27, 2020**

The Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District conducted a regularly scheduled meeting via Zoom video conference on Monday, July 27, at 6:00 p.m.

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

Others participating:

Sonja Chavez, General Manager
Paul Jones, Wet Meadows Program Coordinator
Jesse Kruthaupt, Trout Unlimited
John McClow, General Counsel
Beverly Richards, Water Resource Specialist
Jill Steele, Office Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board President Michelle Pierce called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The roll was called, and all board members were participating electronically.

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Bill Nesbitt moved and Julie Nania seconded approval of the agenda as amended. 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.

3. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Joellen Fonken moved and George Sibley seconded approval of the consent agenda items including approval of the June 22, 2020 meeting minutes, consideration of operating and of non-operating expenses. 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.

4. LEGAL MATTERS

John McClow said that the board received a redlined copy of the stipulation in the Taylor refill case.

The board member oath of office required by statute was revised by the General Assembly. He said that the form of oath provided to Judge Patrick had not been updated when the most recent board members were sworn in in June, but he does not see any problem with that. The revised oath eliminates the phrase “and that he will not be interested directly or indirectly in any contract led by said district”. Even though this is no longer required, the board agreed that it should adopt a policy addressing potential conflicts of interest.

John will draft a conflict of interest policy for the board's consideration at the August meeting.

5. MANAGER'S REPORT

Sonja Chavez said that the board received her report in their packets. In the report, she requests board approval for 4 items which were recommended by the Executive Committee:

1. Approve the recommendation from the Executive Committee for a new, thirty-hour per week, part-time Administrative Assistant position with no benefits in 2020 and a pay rate of \$20/hour which would begin on September 1, 2020;
2. Approve the changes to the District's Employee Handbook to reference part-time employees being entitled to only those benefits specifically provided in their Employment Agreements.
3. Approve an increase of \$14,540 in the General Fund Administrative Salaries line item for the remainder of 2020. This will cover the cost of the new part-time position in 2020 (\$12,149) as well as the proposed pay increase for Ms. Richards (Base salary increased to \$55,000 of which \$2,391 is payable in 2020). This increase is reflective of her degree, duties as Water Resource Specialist to the District, and primary support to the General Manager.
4. Approve the use of \$14,540 of the General Fund Contingency Line Item of \$24,000 to support the associated Administrative Salaries increases in 2020.

Bill Nesbitt moved and Rosemary Carroll seconded approval of recommendation to hire a new, thirty-hour per week, part-time Administrative Assistant position with no benefits in 2020 and a pay rate of \$20/hour which would begin on September 1, 2020. 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.

George Sibley moved and Julie Nania seconded approval of changes to the District’s Employee Handbook to reference part-time employees being entitled to only those benefits specifically provided in their Employment Agreements. 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.

Rebie Hazard moved and Rosemary Carroll seconded to approve an increase of \$14,540 in the General Fund Administrative Salaries line item for the remainder of 2020. This will cover the cost of the new part-time position in 2020 (\$12,149) as well as the proposed pay increase for Ms. Richards (Base salary increased to \$55,000 of which \$2,391 is payable in 2020). 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.

Bill Nesbitt moved and George Sibley seconded to approve the use of \$14,540 of the General Fund Contingency Line Item of \$24,000 to support the associated Administrative Salaries increases in 2020. 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.

Wet Meadows Project: Sonja Chavez said that included in her report is a request for board approval confirming that the District can enter into agreements for procurement of materials and services on behalf of Wet Meadows separate from the District’s procurement process. She consulted with General Counsel, and both agreed that Wet Meadows should be treated separately from the District’s procurement process because all of its funding for implementation (with the exception of \$6,500 for Youth Conservation Corps) comes from outside funding sources. Wet Meadows Coordinator Paul Jones is an independent contractor to the District and cannot have his work controlled or directed by the District. The District, as fiscal agent, does have a role in assisting Mr. Jones with contracting, legal and financial management and ensuring that Wet Meadows is adhering to grant procurement guidelines which may differ by funding entity.

Rebie Hazard moved and Bill Nesbitt seconded to confirm that the District can enter into agreements for procurement of materials and services on behalf of Wet Meadows separate from the District's procurement 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 |
| Don Sabrowski | yes |
| George Sibley | yes |
| Andy Spann | yes |

The motion carried, 11 - 0.

6. 2021 BUDGET

Appointment of Budget Officer

Bill Nesbitt moved and Michelle Pierce seconded to appoint Sonja Chavez as District Budget Officer. 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. BOARD/STAFF/COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPORTS

Treasurer's Report: Bill Nesbitt said that interest rates are going down. One of the District's certificates of deposit is going to be called. Rob Casacelli sent him some information this morning on a new investment, which he wants to discuss with the General Manager.

Education Committee: Bill Nesbitt said that the committee met, and much information was disseminated.

Sonja Chavez said that the committee went through previous list of items the group wanted to complete while trying to be fluid with the covid-19 issue.

Sonja said that the City of Gunnison Recreation Center is participating in the *2020 World's Largest Swimming Lesson* this year in place of the youth swimming instruction they previously provided due to covid-19 and limitations on how many may attend. This year, they will distribute t-shirts with the UGRWCD name or logo on them.

Sonja said she plans to contribute \$2500 toward a Gunnison Conservation District grant proposal for a film series. There will be two short films, one targeted at middle school and high school students, and a third documentary film aimed at college students and adults focused on the history of the Taylor Reservoir Agreement. All films will be utilized in the school district or at Western, will be featured on the District's website, and can also be used in many different types of outreach events.

Gunnison Basin Roundtable: Julie Nania said the GBRT met via Zoom about the Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) process. They discussed how they would like to direct the BIP update topic and approved a scope of work for Gingerich. They also are looking into watershed and forest health and would be happy to share with the group. They discussed the direction of the IBCC and came up with six topics to look into further:

1. Demand Management – Equity
2. Funding – Impacts to the basins and the water plan
3. Conceptual Framework - TMD's and how things apply to 3rd parties
4. Climate change and drought

5. ATM's – progress and policies
6. Forest Health and Impacts to Water

An electronic poll will be conducted to weight those items.

The board identified items 2, 4, and 6 as the primary items upon which to focus.

Taylor Park Reservoir: Don Sabrowski said he attended his first TLUG meeting on July 22. He was impressed by the cordial tone of the meeting. He said the group recommended that releases remain at 300 cfs to help rafters and irrigators. Even though inflows continue to decrease, Erik Knight of the Bureau of Reclamation said there is still time to adjust flows if needed. The goal is year-end storage of 69,000 acre feet.

Andy Spann said that flows would likely have to be adjusted beginning in early August in order to meet the 69,000 acre feet target. He thinks it is a good idea to have monthly meetings of the TLUG.

Rosemary Carroll asked if Erik Knight mentioned if the cooler, wetter weather will make a difference. Sonja said Erik indicated that after the July 15 time frame things do not change much.

Drought Contingency Planning Update: John McClow said that the CWCB initiated the feasibility study last year. Eight work groups were formed, with a ninth for tribal affairs. All the work groups have reported in, and the entire report is 205 pages. Because of the length, the board has received the executive summary and a link to the complete report. There will be a full-day outreach in September, which will be the opportunity for the board to discuss public input. He will let the board know the date of that meeting when it is scheduled.

John said that he received a second draft of the economic impact study by Harvey Economics. He made a few minor edits and suggested that they trim down the exec summary. He hopes to have the final version soon.

The board discussed having a presentation for landowners who participated in the study once the study is complete. There was support from the board to do this.

Projects Committee: Sonja Chavez said that the board received the committee's report in their packets detailing discussion and action items identified. Andy Spann asked if the District were the applicant in its partnership with the Gunnison Conservation District. Sonja clarified that the GCD is the applicant.

Watershed Management Planning: Sonja said there is no update at this time. Chris Medary has been doing a great job. Jesse Bryan had an issue come up and has had to step away for a couple of weeks.

Sonja said that the Upper Gunnison has collaborated with the Gunnison Conservation District and submitted an application for \$25,000 of grant funding in support of Irrigation System Optimization Planning (SOP) in the Ohio Creek Basin. The District still plans to move forward with a WaterSMART grant application in January of 2021 in support of SOP efforts throughout the entire Upper Gunnison basin.

Wet Meadows Project Update: Paul Jones said his report was included in the board's packets. Two additions: He received a call from the Forest Service that there was an additional \$20,000 available on a quick turnaround timeframe. He said that between the NFWF grant and others, the Wet Meadows project will have sufficient funds over the next 2 years to meet the contract needs as well as getting work done on the ground. The match funding for his salary is also secured for the next 2 years.

Update on Scientific Endeavors within the District: Rosemary Carroll said that covid-19 has had an impact resulting in many scientists not being able to do field work.

8. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

George Sibley said that the adaptive management group working with the Forest Service in Taylor Park will have field trip to one of the timber sales sites on Thursday, August 13.

Julie Nania said that at the CWCB meeting last month, a range of grants were awarded that we were not anticipating getting funding this year which was good news. HCCA received some funding and was able to leverage some UGRWCD funding.

Rebie Hazard said that, at the CRWCD meeting, the board decided to go ahead with the ballot initiative in November to increase the mill levy and become “de-Bruced.”

9. CITIZEN COMMENTS

No citizens requested to speak.

10. FUTURE MEETINGS

The next UGRWCD board meeting will take place on Monday, August 24, 2020.

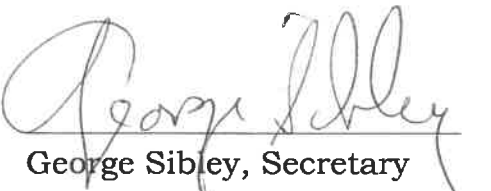
11. SUMMARY OF MEETING ACTION ITEMS

John McClow will draft a policy regarding potential conflicts of interests for next meeting.


12. ADJOURNMENT

Board president Michelle Pierce adjourned the July 27, 2020 meeting at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


George Sibley, Secretary

APPROVED:


Michelle Pierce, President