

**Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 27, 2026 at 5:37 p.m.**

The Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District (UGRWCD) conducted a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors on Monday, July 27, 2026, at 5:37 p.m. at the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District, 210 West Spencer, Suite A, Gunnison, Colorado and via Zoom video/teleconference.

Board members present: Stuart Asay, Rosemary Carroll, Rebie Hazard, John Perusek, Don Sabrowski, Hannah Cranor-Kersting, Joellen Fonken, Brian Stevens, and Camille Richard.

Board member absent: Brooke Zanetell and Jeff Writer

Others present:

Amanda Aulenbach, Wet Meadows Program Director

Sonja Chavez, UGRWCD General Manager

Jules Iovino, UGRWCD Water Resources Fellow

Alisha Jackson, Thomas N. Stoeber, CPA

Leon Katona, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

John McCloy, UGRWCD General Counsel

Joshua Pike, Gunnison Country Times (Via Zoom)

Beverly Richards, UGRWCD Office/ Senior Program Manager

Tom Stoeber, Thomas N. Stoeber, CPA

Ari Yamaguchi, UGRWCD Water Resources Specialist

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Don Sabrowski called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m. There were nine board members present, which constitutes a quorum (six members).

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Director Hazard moved and Director Carroll seconded approval of the agenda. The motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Director Fonken moved and Director Stevens seconded approval of the Consent Agenda Items. The motion carried.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Perusek stated that he had no other information other than what was provided in the memo included in the board meeting packet.

5. DISCUSSION WITH TOM STOEBER, CPA REGARDING 2025 AUDIT

Tom Stoeber provided a brief description of the financial audit included in the meeting packet. He stated that the audit was a single year audit due to the transition to a new firm, McMahan and Associates. The District received a clean audit.

Director Asay moved and Director Hazard seconded approval of the 2025 Financial Audit. The motion carried.

6. 2027 BUDGET OFFICE APPOINTMENT

Director Carrol moved and Director Asay seconded the appointment of Sonja Chavez, General Manager as the 2027 Budget Officer. The motion carried.

7. GENERAL COUNSEL UPDATE

General Counsel McClow said there has been ongoing work on a fixed tiered system for the Colorado River system. This will include forecasts and model runs designed to provide information about keeping the elevations at Lake Powell at 3,500 feet. The model runs will help to maintain that elevation.

Counselor McClow also said there was a 10-year operations plan being developed by the Bureau of Reclamation which includes renegotiation every two years. This plan will include new rules around intentionally created surplus. A draft EIS was supposed to be released but no information had been received by staff at the time of the board meeting.

8. BASIN WATER SUPPLY UPDATE

Senior Program Manager Beverly Richards said she attended the State of Colorado Water Conditions Monitoring Committee meeting the day after her report was prepared. She presented some slides provided by Peter Goble, Assistant State Climatologist, at that meeting. The slides showed that temperature conditions continue to remain warmer than average. These also included information about precipitation throughout the state with June being the 17th driest in the period of record. The slides also showed that El Niño has begun and has the potential to be strong, particularly in October, November and December. Conditions are forecasted to return to ENSO Neutral by early spring of 2027. Though this is

the case, strong El Niño patterns do not always mean high snowpack years for the basin which is what is needed to bring the basin out of its current water deficit.

9. GENERAL MANAGER, COMMITTEE, AND STAFF UPDATES

- Miscellaneous matters presented by the General Manager included an update on strategic planning efforts, hire of new Administrative Specialist, the Western Slope Watershed and Forest Health Stakeholder meeting, and education and outreach events held since the previous meeting.
- A proposed UGRWCD Wet Meadows Program Data Sharing policy was presented and approval was requested from the Board.
Director Richard moved and Director Fonken seconded the approval of the Wet Meadows Program Data Sharing Policy as presented. The motion carried
- President & Taylor Local Users Group Chair, Don Sabrowski, provided an update from the July 7 and July 27, 2026 meetings. The July 7 meeting discussed water supply, CBRFC forecasts, WRF-Hydro forecasts reports, release recommendations, and voluntary fishing closures. The July 27 meeting discussed adjustments to releases based on current observations and forecasts.
- General Manager Chavez provided an update on discussions and presentations given at the Gunnison Basin Roundtable.
- Director Carroll provided an update on scientific endeavors in the basin. Director Stevens discussed the “Seeds of Success” program being run by the Bureau of Land Management.

10. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

Director Asay asked if it would be of value for the District to put on a short seminar for ditch managers throughout the valley, particularly those that manage ditches for HOAs. This seminar could discuss the benefits of a fall irrigation application on production. He suggested that this might be something that could be developed by CSU Extension. Director Kersting-Cranor was willing to consider this as part of CSU CE’s outreach to new rural landowners. UGRWCD will assist as needed.

11. CITIZENS’ COMMENTS

Leon Katona with CDPHE said he attended the wet meadows volunteer event and expressed appreciation to the Wet Meadows Team for the work that went into this event. He also said that CDPHE is currently working on an integrated report that spans a two-year period and includes 303d and 305b information. This report will be released at the end of August. There will be a Water Quality Control Commission meeting on October 13 where they will discuss Regulations 41 and 42 which include ground water standards and proposed updates to molybdenum standards.

12. FUTURE MEETINGS

Future meetings for the District were provided.

13. SUMMARY OF MEETING ACTION ITEMS

- Staff will provide information to the Board about the details of the East River Basin tour with the Colorado River District.
- Staff will work on a news article about water management of the reservoirs in the basin.
- Staff will work with CSU Extension on developing a Rural Landowners Education Day in order to connect people with resources.
- Staff will coordinate a presentation for board meeting about forest and watershed health.
- Leon Katona will be included on the agenda for the August board meeting to provide updates.

14. MATTERS PROPOSED FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Board President Don Sabrowski adjourned the public portion of the meeting so that the board could convene in executive session as stated in the agenda. General Counsel McClow stated the Board is authorized to meet in executive session pursuant to § 24-6-402(4)(b) and (e), Colorado Revised Statutes to receive advice from legal counsel.

Director Perusek moved and Director Richard seconded for the Board to go into Executive Session. The motion carried.

Director Perusek moved and Director Fonken seconded the adjournment of the Executive Session. The motion carried.

15. PUBLIC SESSION: POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

In Executive Session, the Board discussed the strategies and legal ramifications of addressing Blue Mesa Reservoir operations under extreme drought conditions and the Upper Gunnison's potential role in implementing strategies.

Director Asay moved and Director Carroll seconded to direct staff to lead the coordination of affected Gunnison Basin stakeholders to put forward a request to Reclamation to issue a supplemental EIS to the current Aspinall Unit Re-Operations Record of Decision on drought recovery. The motion carried.

16. ADJOURNEMENT

Board President Don Sabrowski adjourned the July 27, 2026 Regular Board Meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Rebekah Hazard, Secretary



Don Sabrowski, President