

HUERFANO COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Minutes of Board Meeting

December 11, 2023

The monthly meeting of the Huerfano County Water Conservancy District, which had been properly noticed and was available for public participation, was called to order by President Scott King in person at Walsenburg Housing Authority, 220 Russell St, Walsenburg on December 11, 2023 at 6:04 pm.

Directors: Scott King, Kent Mace, Sandy White, Beaver Edmundson, Lonnie Brown.

Secretary: Carol Dunn; Engineer: Steve Smith by Zoom; Attorney: Ryan Farr

Guests: Rick Dunn, Doug Brgoch.

Agenda: Accepted on a White/Mace **motion**.

Minutes: The minutes for the November 27, 2023 board meeting were approved on a White/Mace **motion**. Brown abstained.

Financial Reports: There was a White/Edmundson **motion** to accept the November financial reports as presented. Board approved.

BUDGET HEARING – King convened the hearing, which was properly noticed in the local newspaper, at 6:25 pm. Dunn read the draft budget numbers. There were no public comments. Due to Colorado legislation enabling late certification statewide by county assessors of final assessed valuation, the final mill levy amount for 2024 is still undetermined. The budget resolutions were not considered at this time. On a **motion** by Brown/White, a special meeting was set for January 8 at noon in La Veta to adopt the final 2024 budget, consider the budget resolutions and certify the mill levy. The budget hearing adjourned at 6:31 pm.

OLD BUSINESS: Bear Bottom Ranch lease – Farr has worked on the lease document with the customer's attorney. The requested lease renewal is for 3.5 af of temporary Tier 2 "if and when" aug water for the customer's SWSP. The Mace/White **motion** to execute the lease was approved.

Monitoring well – A meeting is scheduled for December 19 among Steve Monson, David Bower and Rachel Zancanella about the easement for the needed monitoring well in the sediment bed of the former Cucharas #5 reservoir.

NEW BUSINESS: Water case 2023CW3050 – Town of La Veta application for finding of reasonable diligence on water right for La Veta Town Reservoir enlargement. There was a White/Mace **motion** to take no action on this case. Approved.

DWR river reports: none.

Meeting dates: A proposed list of 2024 board meeting dates was presented. Board members will check their calendars and let Dunn know if changes are needed by the January 22, 2024 meeting.

PL-566 application update –Monson contacted Blongshia Cha at NRCS on December 11 to check on the status of the PIFR.

Huerfano Regional Augmentation Plan

Siete, Inc – Steve Smith reported Siete has been doing a better job of notifying Applegate Group of meter readings and weekly projections, information needed by Smith to handle the augmentation releases. Although the original plan was for Siete to take 1 af in November and 2 in December, he said current projections will not add up to 3 af before January and suggested the leased water be scheduled to later months. About 1/3 af was moved from La Veta Lakes to date, with fire hydrants being part of the process.

SMAF – Releases from the reservoir are on track per Applegate instructions. Amos Mace is still working with Siemens on programming. Smith will communicate with Water Commissioner Lenna Rauber monthly.

Recharge pond at Ranch – Smith reported the ditch leading to the recharge pond has been damaged by cattle. Mace will contact Sadie Wardell about doing maintenance on the ditch.

Mace Land & Water – Farr used the MLW estimate from Amos Mace to develop a contract for this. However, we need to know the hourly rate that will be billed for time beyond the estimate before the agreement can be signed. There was an Edmundson/White **motion** to approve the agreement once the hourly rate is inserted. Board approved with Kent Mace abstaining.

Flood emergency warning gages – Smith received from Matt Hardesty an overview of responsibilities required. Hardesty is willing to initially advise the firm that takes over administering the gages. It was decided to get bids. Smith will develop a request for proposals with Hardesty's assistance.

Arkansas Basin Roundtable report – none.

Break – King called a break at 7:18; meeting reconvened at 7:33 pm.

Bills – On a White/Brown **motion**, the board authorized the transfer of up to \$30,000 from ColoTrust savings and approved paying the following bills, which total \$27,941.99:

Mountain States Financial group: monthly bookkeeping	\$200.00
Monson, Cummins, Shoheit, Farr: Bd. mtg, aug plan, Great Plains	\$5,291.75
Dunn Write: contract, mileage, internet, phone, board dinner gifts; mtg snacks	\$2,127.78
Admin SCF Flood Mitigation grant	\$776.25
La Veta Carpentry: monthly website admin and monthly water analyst	\$400.00
Doug Brgoch: monthly water consultant contract	\$500.00
Scott King: Director annual stipend and mileage expense	\$3,634.02
Sandy White: Director annual stipend and mileage expense	\$2,845.73
Lewis Edmundson: Director annual stipend and mileage expense	\$2,419.65
Lonnie Brown: Director annual stipend and mileage expense	\$2,726.19
Kent Mace: Director annual stipend and mileage expense	\$5,681.55
American Express: La Plaza annual dinner, gifts; meals for 2 VIP mtgs	\$1,095.73
San Isabel Electric: monthly usage at SMAF	\$178.34
Spanish Peaks Library: monthly rent	\$65.00

At 7:35, there was a **motion** by White/Brown and approved by the board to go into executive session, joined by the District's consultant and engineer, to discuss: potential acquisition of other water rights; futile call policy; Maria-Stevens Reservoir. Discussion in the executive session included purchase, acquisition, lease or sale of real, personal or other property interest as in CRS 24-6-402(4)(a); and conference with an attorney representing the District for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions pursuant to CRS 24-6-402(4)(b).

On a White/Brown **motion**, the executive session was closed at 8:12 pm, and the regular session was reconvened.

There was a White/Brown **motion** to instruct that an estimate of the historic consumptive use be developed for the water right discussed in executive session. Board approved.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:14 pm.