

HUERFANO COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Minutes of Board Meeting August 28, 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 August 28, 2023 at 6:01 pm.

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

Secretary: Carol Dunn; **Guests:** Doug Brgoch, Dave Steffan, Jim Alt, Lenna Rauber, Ed Diemer, Amos Mace, Jeff Montoya, Gary Vezzani, Fred Eccher; **By Zoom online:** Steve Smith, Engineer.

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

Minutes: The minutes for the July 17, 2023 board meeting were approved on a White/Brown **motion**.

Financial Reports: There was a White/Brown **motion** to accept the July financial reports as presented. Board approved. On a White/Edmundson **motion**, the board decided to cash the certificate of deposit at First National Bank in Trinidad and move the money to ColoTrust.

OLD BUSINESS: Thorne Ranch – Huerfano County Commissioners will meet with the HCWCD board for discussion on August 30 at 12:30 at the Huerfano County Community Center in Walsenburg.

NEW BUSINESS: There were no new water cases.

River reports: Lenna Rauber reported the call on the Huerfano River is #10 as of today; #7 was off Wednesday and back on today. Ed Diemer reported the Cucharas River call is #5 (Walsenburg). He has met with augmentation plan operators in the basin. The water commissioners are sending daily emails to water users on river conditions; the users are accountable to contact the WC and ask for water. The river conditions are also available on the DWR website.

Huerfano Regional Augmentation Plan

Bear Bottom Ranch (Tier 1 aug application) – Notice of inclusion has been published. Deadline for comments is October 24, 2023. The lease for 4 af of temporary aug water is finished and paid. Applicant is submitting an augmentation plan to DWR using the leased water as their replacement source. This was further discussed in executive session.

Mace (Tier 2 aug application) – The notice of inclusion has been published; comments are due by September 14, 2023.

Siete Inc – Smith reported Siete's construction schedule keeps shifting, which affects how HCWCD can augment their depletions. He suggests working on getting administrative approval to take water from the Cucharas, which would enable HCWCD to utilize the leased Twin Lakes water that was transferred into La Veta Lakes. Smith said Siete has used about 1 af, but he's unsure where they pulled it from. Neither Siete nor Huerfano County has involved Rauber. The additional amount County Road & Bridge leased was supposed to be taken by the end of July, but it hasn't. The board will discuss with the County during the meeting on August 30. Meanwhile DWR is developing comments on the Siete application for water needed in 2024.

Redwing Ranch (Christie Wyckoff) – Rauber reported Wyckoff is considering getting aug water from HCWCD.

SCG Overpumping – SCG's attorney, Susan Ryan, told Farr they are investigating water trucking operations and will be in touch about their remedy to the overpumping. Farr will send a letter warning about the penalty rate cost for overpumping.

Recharge Pond & Water Operations – Mace reported the cleaning work on the recharge pond hasn't been finished. There is a sand bed at 17 feet, which provides the potential to get a couple more years of water infiltration use out of the pond. Smith and Mace are collaborating on inserting a pipe with a sock filter to infiltrate the sand bed. There is no cost estimate yet. There is still an option to use SMAF

for releases, but Smith doesn't advise using our "savings bank" of water in SMAF. There was a **motion** by White/Brown for Mace to work with Applegate Group on a temporary fix – based on future numbers – so the recharge pond can continue to be used. Board approved.

Rauber asked for more continuous communications with the Wardells on water operations at Wm Craig Ranch. They need to keep Wes at Applegate Group and Rauber in the loop.

SMAF –Straightline Construction performed the pumphouse repair at the end of July. Mace reported it was fixed as well as could be done without further damaging the foundation. The repairs alleviated the pressure on the pipe. Foam was added under the slab. The pump pad will be shimmed, and the sidewalk needs to be finished before Straightline will bill HCWCD. Mace noted there is no valve at the reservoir and recommended one be added at the same time the riprap project is done.

SCF Flood Mitigation Project – David Steffan reported on the site tour on July 26. Attendees included TJ Burr (NRCS, Denver); Derek Quintana (NRCS, Walsenburg); Doug Brgoch, who helped orient participants to the treatment area. Steffan will provide a written report and project update to be filed with CWCB. Potential projects could involve: rebuilding floodplains; restoring a ditch diversion (recommended in Enginuity Strategic Analysis); J-hook structure for headcut at road and Tollgate ditch; possible fish barrier to protect the greenback cutthroat population upstream; habitat improvement; sediment capture; other structures suggested in the SA; additional work at flood emergency gage location. Big boulders and large cottonwoods that are present could be used, as well as cross-vane weirs, beaver dam analogs (woven, created beaver dams). Although the last rain events have been spotty, grasses and forbs have grown up thick in the area.

Emergency gages – The board suggested HCWCD request funding from La Veta and Walsenburg to continue to monitor the emergency gages for two more years. Dunn will notify Matt Hardesty that we do not want DWR to decommission the gages. Dunn will find out how much money remains on account at OTT/HydroMet. Also, Joey Talbott reportedly has a radar for one of our emergency gages. Dunn will inquire about it.

Infrastructure Project – Farr reported no news from Great Plains on permission for HCWCD to put in the final monitoring well. Division Engineer Rachel Zancanella clarified DWR's position on the need for the monitoring well. Subsequently, Monson sent a license agreement to GP, which has received no response.

PL-566 Project – Brown reported there is no date yet from Jones & DeMille Engineering for the stakeholder meeting to be held in September.

Director terms expiring: Sandy White, Lonnie Brown. White's letter has been received.

Arkansas Basin Roundtable report – The Colorado River Compact was discussed. Colorado is in compliance; any problems involve the lower basin states. The new director of CWCB is Lauren Lis.

Break – King called a break at 7:39; meeting reconvened at 7:56.

Bills – On a White/Edmundson **motion**, the board authorized the transfer of up to \$90,000 to ColoTrust savings and approved paying the following bills, which total \$24,882.56:

Mountain States Financial group: monthly bookkeeping	\$200.00
Monson,Cummins,Shohet,Farr: mtg, aug plan, exchg, GPIC, Thorne; Mace	\$5,979.71
Dunn Write: contract, mileage, internet, phone, meeting & office supplies	\$2,191.65
Admin SCF Flood Mitigation grant	\$1,260.00
La Veta Carpentry: monthly website admin + monthly water analyst	\$400.00
Applegate Group: mtg, water acctg/projectn, Wm Craig ops, DRMS ann rpt; PL-566	\$7,231.25

Doug Brgoch: monthly contract	\$500.00
CDPHE Water Quality Control Div.: SMAF construction permit renewal	\$351.00
David Steffan: remediation coordinator contract	\$497.44
Sadie Wardell: water operations contract, June & July	\$1,290.00
Mountain View Baptist Church: meeting room for PL-566 meeting	\$25.00
World Journal: Publish legal, Mace Tier 2 Notice of Inclusion	\$64.68
IOA/Walsenburg Insurance: Bonds for Brown, King, Edmundson, Dunn	\$425.00
Dixon, Waller & Co: Audit of HCWCD 2022 financials	\$4,150.00
San Isabel Electric: Monthly usage at SMAF	\$251.83
Spanish Peaks Library: monthly rent	\$65.00

At 7:57, there was a **motion** by Brown/Mace and approved by the board to go into executive session, joined by the District’s consultant, to discuss: upcoming discussion with Huerfano County about terms and conditions for potential IGA concerning change of Thorne Ranch water rights; lease with Bear Bottom for SWSP water; late payments from participants; Siete timing issues to meet HCWCD requirements for augmentation water; decommissioning of emergency warning gages; final monitoring well for Infrastructure grant project. 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); 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); and determine positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategy for negotiations, and instructing negotiators pursuant to CRS 24-6-402(4)(e).

On an Edmundson/White **motion**, the executive session was closed at 9:40 pm, and the regular session was reconvened.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:40 pm.

Scott King, President

Carol Dunn, Secretary