

# HUERFANO COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

## Minutes of Board Meeting

February 26, 2024

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 February 26, 2024 at 6:02 pm.

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

**Secretary:** Carol Dunn

**Engineer:** Steve Smith; **Attorney:** Ryan Farr

**Guests:** Doug Brgoch, Amos Mace, Pauline Adams, Gary Vezzani, Fred Eccher, Tor Tschanz, Dale Lyon; **by Zoom:** Lenna Rauber, David Steffan.

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

**Minutes:** The minutes for the January 22, 2024 board meeting was approved on a White/Mace **motion**.

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

**Auditor:** There was a White/Mace **motion** to accept the Letter of Engagement with Ronny Farmer to audit the HCWCD 2023 financials. Board approved.

OLD BUSINESS: Ryan Farr reported he has been in touch with the State Land Board about putting the Water Infrastructure Project monitoring well at the former Cucharas #5 reservoir. They are amenable but want details. Brgoch advised that we may have to wait until next winter to get onto the sediment bed because of spring moisture that is there now.

NEW BUSINESS: There were no new water cases.

**2024 Meeting Schedule** – The board agreed to change the scheduled board meeting dates to March 18 and May 13.

**DWR river reports:** Lenna Rauber reported the Welton will be turned on next week if there's water. DWR sponsored a well-attended meeting for Cucharas ditch users earlier in the evening with Rachel Zancanella, District Engineer. She has postponed the change of the futile call policy until April 2025.

**Spring Creek Fire Mitigation Project** – David Steffan provided a written report and reported by zoom on visits to potential project sites with NRCS and Huerfano County Road & Bridge. The initial focus will be on channel maintenance around the Middle Creek stream gage, to either rechannel or fill in with rocky deposits. He is planning that just after spring runoff. He still wants to plant native grass seeding and willow starts before the snow season ends. Brgoch advised David he may have a problem getting permission from David Andreatta to clear away the existing pile of woody debris.

### Huerfano Regional Augmentation Plan

Steve Smith submitted annual projections for the augmentation plan to show we have adequate supplies to meet demand for the next year.

**Siete, Inc** – The Siete, Inc. use of water has not followed the monthly schedule they established. Smith said they may ask to take the planned water later. There are about 2 af left in La Veta Lakes that Siete can use. They are now keeping up with the weekly projections, although most of them are zero.

**SMAF** – Kent Mace reported the releases from SMAF have been made according to Applegate instructions. The Siemens water meter is being worked on, and the Maces are trying to find a responsible person for advice on the communicator or cable that is needed.

**Recharge pond** – The Wm Craig ditch has been damaged by cattle and will be worked on soon by Sadie and Mitchell Wardell. Rauber suggested the diversion might also need some work.

**Flood Emergency Warning Gages** – An RFP has been developed by Applegate Group to monitor and operate the five remaining gages. The RFP was sent to four companies; the deadline is March 6.

**Colorado Water Congress convention** – King and Mace reported the sessions were mostly about the lack of water and figuring out how to cope without water. Becky Mitchell is passionate about Colorado’s water and telling the lower basin states to only take the amount of water they’re entitled to. Jones and DeMille met with King, Mace and Steve Smith during the convention. They reported we’re on track for the PL-566 project – hopefully being fast tracked. Amos Mace thanked the board for enabling him to attend in Lonnie Brown’s place.

**Arkansas Basin Roundtable report** – White and King attended the meeting. Rachel Zancanella’s presentation was about the Kansas Compact. Meetings are open to the public in person and by Zoom.

**Break** – King called a break at 7:59; meeting reconvened at 8:13 pm.

**Bills** – On a White/Edmundson **motion**, the board authorized the transfer of up to \$19,500 from ColoTrust savings and approved paying the following bills, which total \$25,618.56:

Mountain States Financial group: monthly bookkeeping & 1099 forms prep	\$340.00
Monson, Cummins, Shoheit, Farr: mtg, Pryor Ditch, Great Plains	\$3,359.50
Dunn Write: contract, mileage, internet, phone, mtg exp, PO Box, printer paper	\$2,392.16
Admin SCF Flood Mitigation grant	\$472.50
La Veta Carpentry: monthly website admin and monthly water analyst	\$400.00
Doug Brgoch: monthly water consultant contract	\$500.00
Applegate Group: mtg; aug acctg; Wbg Ditch HCU; flood warning gages	\$11,903.75
David Steffan: remediation coordinator contract for January and February 2024	\$1,003.66
American Express: Ark River Basin Water Forum sponsorship	\$500.00
OTT Hydromet: Hydromet Cloud iridium modem svc. 2024, 5 emerg’y warn gages	\$3,404.50
Pinnacol Assurance, Workers Comp 2024	\$190.00
Scott King: Expenses to attend Colorado Water Congress convention	\$846.11
CDPHE Air Pollution Control Div: Annual emission fee, SMAF	\$3.99
San Isabel Electric: monthly usage at SMAF	\$237.39
Spanish Peaks Library: monthly rent	\$65.00

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At 8:15, there was a **motion** by Mace/Edmundson and approved by the board to go into executive session, joined by the District’s water consultant and engineer to discuss: water rights acquisition and commensurate terms and conditions; legal arguments concerning the proposal futile call policy of DWR; adjustment to water supply limitations; congressionally directed spending; Thorne Ranch owned by Huerfano County. 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/Mace **motion**, the executive session was closed at 9:10 pm, and the regular session was reconvened. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

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Scott King, President

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Carol Dunn, Secretary