

HUERFANO COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Minutes of Board Meeting June 17, 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 June 17, 2024 at 6:00 pm.

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

Secretary: Carol Dunn

Engineer: Steve Smith (by Zoom) and **Attorney:** Ryan Farr

Guests: Lenna Rauber, Doug Brgoch, Roger Tinklenberg; and David Steffan, (by Zoom).

Agenda: Approved on a Mace/Edmundson **motion**.

Minutes: The minutes for the May 13, 2024 board meeting were approved on a Mace/Edmundson **motion**.

Financial Reports: The financial reports were accepted as presented on an Edmundson/Mace **motion**.

OLD BUSINESS: none.

NEW BUSINESS:

There were no new water cases.

DWR river reports: For the Huerfano River, Lenna Rauber reported: 42 cfs on the upper Huerfano at Manzanares, 12 cfs at Badito, and 4 cfs at I-25. On the Cucharas River, Rauber reported: 34 cfs at Boyd Ranch, 13.9 cfs at Harrison Bridge, and .17 cfs at I-25.

Spring Creek Fire Mitigation Project: David Steffan reported by Zoom that the task at the Middle Creek flood warning gage is complete: rocks have been regraded and compacted; woody debris was cleaned up, piled up or moved. Some fencing had to be done to exclude cattle. Willow bushes were also planted. Pictures are forthcoming. Seeding is complete and has been rained on. The next phase of work, around the diversion, began on this date. A $\frac{3}{4}$ " rain on June 9 caused no problems. The revegetation that has come up is holding. Toll Gate ditch owner David Andreatta has committed up to \$15,000 in on-the-ground work in conjunction with the SCF flood mitigation work planned by Steffan.

Thorne Ranch discussion – King determined this would be held in executive session.

Huerfano Regional Augmentation Plan

Aug water application: The Flying Rockin' R LLC application is still under review by Applegate Group. Smith asked Christy Wykoff for additional information and hasn't heard back from her yet.

Augmentation water: We are diverting 1.1 cfs, with 0.7 cfs going into the recharge pond.

Meeting at Wm Craig Ranch: Kent Mace spent two hours with Mitchell Wardell on June 14. Wardells are on the ditch every day taking care of maintenance and diversion settings. It was suggested we get a solar charger for the three measuring station batteries. Mitchell has to recalibrate the SDR every 3-4 days. There may be a problem with weir operation or sand above the stilling well. Kent also met with Jasper Kenney. Kenney requested that HCWCD develop an access road, so we don't have to drive past his ranch house. Regarding revegetation, Brgoch has been working with NRCS to get a plan for the dryup acreage, including no-till seeding mixture, rotational grazing and fencing. The required % coverage will be set by NRCS. The plan for planting will probably be done at the end of summer or beginning of winter. The court decree requires that self-sustaining vegetation be achieved.

SMAF: Mace reported the reservoir is full. Amos continues to work on programming.

For the congressionally directed funding, which will go through USDA Rural Development, an application is needed, which includes a preliminary engineering report (PER) with environmental summary. Applegate Group prepared an estimate for those engineering reports. There was a White/Mace **motion** to approve Applegate preparation of the PER at \$32,400. Approved.

Arkansas Basin Roundtable report: King reported on the Shoshone water transaction. Legislative action will likely be needed to enable a change in the water uses. Southeastern Water Conservancy District is fighting the City of Aurora on their case to move water from the lower Arkansas basin.

Water consultant report: Brgoch reported there was a heavy rain event that did not generate any alarm notifications from the flood warning gages. He will contact Caleb Brown and determine if the system is working properly and if the phone list has been updated for notifications.

Public comments: None.

Break – King called a break at 7:09; meeting reconvened at 7:18 pm.

Bills: On a White/Edmundson **motion**, the board authorized the transfer of up to \$63,000 from ColoTrust savings and approved paying the following bills, which total \$65,856.99:

Mountain States Financial group: monthly bookkeeping	\$220.00
Monson, Cummins, Shohet, Farr: mtg, aug plan, flood gages, Pryor Ditch, Thorne	\$3,143.80
Dunn Write: contract, mileage, internet, phone, office supplies, flood gage padlocks	\$2,199.46
Admin SCF Flood Mitigation grant	\$596.25
La Veta Carpentry: monthly website admin	\$200.00
Monthly water analyst contract	\$200.00
Doug Brgoch: monthly water consultant contract	\$500.00
Applegate Group: Aug plan acctg, admin, bd mtg, Ranch/Kenney, flood warn gages	\$8,450.86
David Steffan: SCF remediation coord, seeding, planting, including materials	\$3,602.25
Double M Excavating: SCF mitig project, earthwork @Middle Crk flood emerg gage	\$42,000.00
Sadie Wardell: Wm Craig water operations; ditch ripping and maintenance	\$825.00
Mace Water & Land: Operations of SMAF Mar 2024	\$1,862.00
IOA/Walsenburg Insurance: Bond for Mace	\$100.00
American Express: CO Water Congress mbr renew, White conf registration; office	\$1,229.54
San Isabel Electric: monthly usage at SMAF	\$662.83
Spanish Peaks Library: monthly rent	\$65.00

At 7:19, there was a **motion** by White/Mace and approved by the board to go into executive session, joined by HCWCD consultant Brgoch and engineer Smith to discuss purchase of Thorne Ranch water rights and any commensurate terms and conditions therewith. 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 a White/Edmundson **motion**, the executive session was closed at 7:58 pm, and the regular session was reconvened.

The attorney was advised to draft an offer to Huerfano County for the Thorne Ranch, which the board will consider at the July meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Scott King, President

Carol Dunn, Secretary