

HUERFANO COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Minutes of Board Meeting September 23, 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 September 23, 2024 at 6:01 pm.

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

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

Guests: Gary Vezzani, Doug Brgoch, Pauline Adams, Amos Mace, David Steffan, Ed Diemer, Lenna Rauber, Jacob Topping, Dale Lyons.

Agenda: Added the draft budget; approved on a Mace/Brown **motion**.

Minutes: The minutes of the August 26, 2024 board meeting were approved on a Mace/Brown **motion**.

Financial Reports: Financial reports were accepted as presented on a Mace/Brown **motion**.

A draft budget for comment was included in the board packets.

Old Business: **Thorne Ranch**—Farr contacted the County's attorney to confirm a meeting is wanted. She is making contact with the County about it.

New Business: There were no new water cases.

It is with a heavy heart that we have notified the District Court of the vacancy created by the passing of Director Sandy White. The legal notice will be in the local newspaper on October 3.

DWR river reports: For the Huerfano River, Lenna Rauber reported: 24 cfs on the upper Huerfano at Manzanares, 12 cfs at Badito, and 7 cfs at I-25. The call is #27. Ed Diemer reported on the Cucharas: 9 cfs at Boyd Ranch, 3 cfs at Harrison Bridge, and 0 at Highway 10. The call is #3 on the upper Cucharas and #5 on the lower. There is a possibility to perform the desired water exchange (about 3 af) up the Huerfano after the Welton stops sweeping; it would take 2-5 days. Lenna will find out and let Steve Smith know.

Jacob Topping, Regional Representative for US Senator Bennet, was introduced and expressed his interest in the projects HCWCD is involved in. He was provided with a copy of the 2022-2023 report of activities HCWCD filed early this year with the District Court. He will also get information for us on the Water Project Navigators Act that was recently introduced in the US Senate.

HUERFANO REGIONAL AUGMENTATION PLAN

Augmentation water application – The renewal lease for Tier 3 water has been sent to Bear Bottom.

Recharge pond: Wardell was having trouble getting enough water into the recharge pond. Some maintenance is needed by Mace Water & Land; ideas for maintenance will be discussed with Smith.

Admin fee: Dunn revised the recommended 2025 participant administration fee: Tier 1 = \$2,264; Tier 2 = \$283; Tier 3 = \$158.48.

SMAF: Amos Mace, Mace Water & Land (MWL) provided a written report. Winter transition is coming up. Will be working on an operations manual for SMAF. Discharge valve will be needed before spring. Kent is planning to purchase it. A new grounding ring is needed; the cost is estimated at \$3,000 from Alpine Electric – **motion** by Brown/Edmundson to authorize the expense. Dunn will ask the insurance company about protection against the risk of someone hacking into the SMAF controls.

Liner repair (Rural Development grant) – Applegate is nearly finished with the engineering and environmental reports needed for the USDA Rural Development grant application.

Gary Vezzani, Walsenburg Sand & Gravel, was asked to develop an estimate for Kent Mace to load and haul rock from a pit near Gardner to place on the reservoir embankment as part of the liner repair project.

REPORTS

Arkansas Basin Roundtable: Brgoch reported on the meeting. Everyone was shaken by the loss of Sandy White, who was well respected in the field of water law and on the boards that he served. He will be missed. CDPHE had a presentation on the Clean Water Act. The agency is conducting studies on how to revise the Act that was struck down by the Supreme Court.

Water consultant: Brgoch reported that it seems Jasper Kenney told NRCS that the revegetation plan for Wm Craig Ranch was no longer needed. NRCS is still ready to develop the plan. Kent Mace will confer with Kenney and Brgoch. Brgoch also reminded that the flood emergency gages are typically shut down in October.

Public comments: None.

Break – King called a break at 7:08; meeting reconvened at 7:22 pm.

Bills: On a Mace/Brown **motion**, the board authorized the transfer of up to \$7,500 from ColoTrust savings and approved paying the following bills, which total \$15,711.35:

Mountain States Financial Group: monthly bookkeeping	\$220.00
Monson, Cummins, Shoheit, Farr: mtg, Thorne Ranch, augment'n plan, Bear Bottom	\$3,051.35
Dunn Write: contract, mileage, internet, phone, office supplies, audit	\$2,290.90
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, apps; bd mtg; Twin Lakes; SMAF liner	\$6,385.90
Sadie Wardell: Wm Craig water operations; ditch maintenance August	\$720.00
Mace Water & Land: Operations of SMAF August 2024	\$1,862.00
World Journal: Legal ad for Notice of Board Vacancies	\$46.20
San Isabel Electric: monthly usage at SMAF	\$170.00
Spanish Peaks Library: monthly rent	\$65.00

At 7:28, there was a Brown/Edmundson **motion**, approved by the board, to go into executive session, joined by HCWCD consultant Brgoch and engineer Smith to receive legal advice concerning the proposed decree provided by Welton Land & Water Company in water case 23CW3051. Discussion in the executive session included 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 Mace/Brown **motion**, the executive session was closed at 7:56 pm, and the regular session was reconvened.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.

Scott King, President

Carol Dunn, Secretary