

HUERFANO COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Minutes of Board Meeting

January 23, 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 January 23, 2023 at 6:03 pm.

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

Secretary: Carol Dunn; **Attorney:** Steve Monson; **Engineer:** Steve Smith (by Zoom).

Guests: Rick Dunn, John Galusha, Steve Wardell; by Zoom: Jim Alt, Doug Winter.

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

Minutes: The minutes for the December 12, 2022 board meeting were approved on a White/Edmundson **motion**.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

Infrastructure improvements project – Monson reported GPIC needs to sign the easement agreement. It is a 5-year easement and does not take any future options off the table for HCWCD. Former Water Commissioner Doug Brgoch will need to show us on the map where the well should be placed. There was a White/Edmundson **motion** that the Board finds the agreement acceptable. Board approved. There is some question about where the futile call model stands at DWR.

NEW BUSINESS: No new water cases. The HCWCD case 2022CW3081 was amended to correct a legal description.

Arkansas River Basin Water Forum – Board decided to sign up for a \$1,000 sponsorship for the Water Forum. This will include 2 registrations to the Forum for King and Brown.

Huerfano Regional Augmentation Plan

Aspen River Ranch Tier 2 augmentation application – Steve Smith reported he is waiting for a reply from DWR Division 2.

Bear Bottom Ranch Tier 1 aug application – Applicant has drained a lake. Smith is trying to mesh engineering opinions. The estimate is applicant needs 4 af of Tier 1 water. Smith is confirming surface area of the remaining ponds. He expects to receive the amended application before the February HCWCD board meeting.

Mace Tier 2 aug application – Applicant has submitted a revised application. The new estimate is 4 af of Tier 2 water. **Motion** by White, seconded by Edmundson, to table the Mace amended application until the February meeting because of the need for further engineering and DWR contact. Board approved. Because of a conflict of interest, Mace did not vote.

SCG Alternate Pumping Request – Dunn reported the final payment was received from SCG regarding their alternate pumping request. King signed the amended agreement.

Thorne Ranch water – John Galusha brought a list of potential uses for the water on Thorne Ranch, which Huerfano County purchased in 2021. The County will be quantifying the water, which is estimated at 130-180 acre-feet. Shell had an SWSP on the water, which has expired. The County would like HCWCD to do the change case for the water and manage it. White/Edmundson **motion** to authorize HCWCD attorney to work with the County’s attorney to outline the steps needed to use a single application to merge Thorne Ranch water rights as a new source for the existing HCWCD augmentation plan. Board approved.

Cucharas Basin Storage Collaborative initial operations assessment has been prepared by Ryan Farr for the other Storage Collaborative members about exchange operations in 2023. There was a Mace/Brown **motion** to approve the initial operations assessment. Board approved. An operations committee meeting will be held in the near future. Monson recommends storing water as high as possible in the Cucharas watershed, as it would be better for diligence and an absolute water right. He said we will know in February if Pueblo Board of Water Works will have water available for lease.

Diversion and Recharge Pond – Steve Smith reported on the statement of work to install a concrete bottom siltation basin upstream of the recharge pond on the Wm Craig Ranch, as well as cleaning the recharge pond and filtration pipes. He will send an estimate for the work. **SCF Flood Mitigation Project** – After February 12, Dunn will arrange a meeting for the Core Group, including Lonnie Brown, plus Chris Sturm (CWCB), Jonathan Paklaian (ARWC) and Dave Steffan to discuss future projects.

Arkansas Basin Roundtable report – White reported on the ABRT meeting. The Ark Valley Conduit will take fresh water from Pueblo Reservoir to the Kansas state line.

Break – King called a break at 8:31; meeting reconvened at 8:41.

Bills – On a White/Edmundson **motion**, board authorized the transfer up to \$81,500 from ColoTrust savings and approved paying the following bills, which total \$149,292.30:

Mountain States Financial group: bookkeeping	\$170.00
Monson, Cummins, Shoheit & Farr: bd mtg, aug plan, GPIC, aug app, reservoirs	\$3,485.31
Dunn Write: contract, mileage, internet, phone, meeting & office supplies	\$2,050.41
Admin SCF Flood Mitigation grant	\$787.50
La Veta Carpentry: monthly website admin + monthly water analyst duties	\$350.00
Glatfelter Insurance: property & liability insurance	\$2,659.00
IOA, Walsenburg Insurance: Michael (Sandy) White bond	\$100.00
Applegate Group: water acctg, diligence engineering, aug plan participants	\$13,700.80
Postmaster: PO Box rental, annual	\$74.00
ARBWF: Water Forum sponsorship	\$1,000.00
Walsenburg Housing Authority: advance pmt for 2023 meetings (13)	\$130.00
American Express: CO Water Congress convention reg, software renewals	\$1,262.00
CWCB: loan payment (principal \$77,429.17, interest \$45,756.76)	\$123,185.93
San Isabel Electric: Monthly usage at SMAF	\$242.35
Spanish Peaks Library: January rent	\$65.00

At 8:47, there was a **motion** by White, seconded by Edmundson and approved by the board, to go into executive session to discuss matters involving the potential hiring of a local water rights consultant, PL-566 process, right of first refusal on augmentation water. Discussion 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/Mace **motion**, the executive session was closed at 9:28 pm, and the regular session was reconvened.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Scott King, President

Carol Dunn, Secretary