

HUERFANO COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Minutes of Board Meeting October 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 October 23, 2023 at 6:01 pm.

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

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

Guests: Doug Brgoch, Amos Mace, Ed Diemer, Lenna Rauber; Joshua Godwin, CWCB. Dave Steffan and Doug Winter by Zoom.

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

Minutes: The minutes for the September 25, 2023 board meeting were approved on a White/Brown **motion**.

Financial Reports: There was a White/Brown **motion** to accept the October financial reports as presented. Board approved. The 2024 Budget was approved for publication in the World Journal. It will also be available on the HCWCD website.

OLD BUSINESS: Thorne Ranch – Huerfano County has listed the unirrigated rangeland of Thorne Ranch for sale.

NEW BUSINESS: There were no new water cases.

River reports: Lenna Rauber reported the call on the Huerfano River is #10 as of today. Leaves are starting to fall, so the flow from the tributaries is picking up. Ed Diemer reported the Cucharas River is very low, with no flow at Highway 10. There was discussion about moving the leased transmountain water from where it is stored (La Veta Lakes) to Maria Lake so it can be used by Siete Inc.

New CWCB project manager – Joshua Godwin was introduced and talked with the board about current projects. Earlier in the day, White, Mace, Brgoch, and Brown provided a thorough tour of HCWCD projects, including PL-566 plans.

Huerfano Regional Augmentation Plan

Bear Bottom Ranch (Tier 1 aug application) – Deadline for comments on participation is October 26, 2023. The lease for 4 af of temporary aug water is for the SWSP they have applied for. No water has been used on that lease yet, so they would like a credit toward 2024. This was discussed further in executive session.

Siete Inc – Smith reported we may have Siete draw their aug water from the south La Veta Lake or borrow the water from Maria Lakes and pay it back during the storage season. Siete wanted to start taking the water in the first week of November. Applegate Group advised approval of the Siete lease.

Recharge Pond – Steve Smith reported water is running into the recharge pond; 7-10 af may go through it this fall, which takes the pressure off storage in SMAF. The new storage projection for SMAF is looking better.

SMAF – Work on the pumphouse slab stabilization is finished. Wiring will be worked on next. SMAF is at full pool. Releases will begin October 24. Metering of the water coming out of the reservoir has been a problem. That will be addressed by Amos Mace working with Lenna Rauber and will also involve hardware and software.

SCF Flood Mitigation Project – David Steffan met with Sky Tallman about collaborating on past and future work in the Middle Creek basin. David will provide examples of work HCWCD has done on the burn scar, priorities and desired outcomes. Regarding access, David was invited to the County

Commissioners meeting on October 10 for an overview of the project with an aerial map. A site visit was arranged for John Galusha and two Road & Bridge personnel to discuss road improvements. David has tentatively scheduled H&H (Huff brothers) contractors to develop access to the project site. **Flood emergency warning gages** – Smith reported typical maintenance will be needed for the gages, otherwise they are essentially self-running, with occasional firmware updates. Applegate obtained the login for the Hydromet Cloud where the data is stored. Matt Hardesty dropped off the velocity radars and cables at La Veta Town Hall. Sky High Engineering is interested in the contract to maintain the gages; they have worked with Matt Hardesty. The system typically is shut down November 1 and reenergized on May 1. Regarding the gages, Brgoch reported all the equipment is missing from the North Abeyta site. The Pass Creek site will be removed and stored. Gages remain at five sites for 2024. Joey Talbott at DWR has been asked to turn the gages off. Batteries will need to be stored. Smith will talk with Hardesty, then notify Dunn to contact Sky High Engineering for an estimate.

Director terms renewed: Sandy White, Lonnie Brown. The “Oath of Director” was performed for both.

Arkansas Basin Roundtable report – Brgoch reported on WSRF funding for infrastructure and roundtable contributions. Plans are to shut down Shoshone Power Plant and sell the nonconsumptive water.

Break – King called a break at 7:53; meeting reconvened at 8:11 pm.

Bills – On a Mace/Brown **motion**, the board authorized the transfer of up to \$45,000 from ColoTrust savings and approved paying the following bills, which total \$61,156.44:

Mountain States Financial group: monthly bookkeeping	\$200.00
Monson, Cummins, Shoheit, Farr: mtg, aug plan, exchg, GPIC, Thorne	\$6,069.50
Dunn Write: contract, mileage, internet, phone, postage	\$2,055.72
Admin SCF Flood Mitigation grant	\$1,361.25
La Veta Carpentry: monthly website admin	\$400.00
La Veta Carpentry: monthly water analyst	\$567.91
Doug Brgoch: monthly water consultant contract	\$500.00
David Steffan: remediation coordinator contract	\$550.96
Sadie Wardell: water operations contract, August	\$555.00
Straight Line Construction: Sheep Mtn Aug Facility pumphouse piers, stabilization	\$48,858.00
San Isabel Electric: monthly usage at SMAF	\$173.10
Spanish Peaks Library: monthly rent	\$65.00

At 8:15, there was a **motion** by White/Mace and approved by the board to go into executive session, joined by the District’s consultant and engineer, to discuss: contracts with Siete Inc, Huerfano County and Bear Bottom Ranch; acquisition of existing water rights for benefits in both Huerfano and Cucharas basins. 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/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.