

**WASHINGTON COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY  
DISTRICT**

Minutes of Meeting of Board of Trustees

November 10, 2015

Minutes of a public meeting of the board of trustees of the Washington County Water Conservancy District, held on Tuesday, November 10, 2015, beginning with a work meeting at 3:00 p.m. at 533 East Waterworks Drive, St. George, Utah. Those board members present for the meeting were: Chair Ed Bowler, Jim Ence, Howard Bracken, Ken Neilson, Zachary Renstrom, Tom Hirschi and Jon Pike. Also present were General Manager Ron Thompson, Associate General Manager, Corey Cram, Brie Thompson and Secretary Roberta McMullin. Ed Bowler conducted the meeting and welcomed those present

**The first item on the agenda was a discussion and presentation by General Manager Ron Thompson.** Ron told the board he had been working on an analysis of various questions regarding water allocations. He will have more information on another spreadsheet for a future board meeting based on this discussion.

**The next item on the work meeting agenda was a discussion on the proposed draft 2016 budget.** Copies of the proposed preliminary budget were distributed. A copy of the preliminary 2016 budget is also attached to these minutes. Ron reviewed current cash in the bank as of November 1, 2015, and all the estimated revenues with the total project funds to 12/31/2014 being \$102,178,034. He also reviewed the estimate expenses to year end 2014 and for each fund. The total anticipated expenditures to the end of 2014 are \$3,381,993 leaving net available funds of \$98,796,041. He also reviewed and answered questions on the analysis of the 2016 budget cash flow which shows total available funds of \$135,354,626 and total fund expenditures of \$91,392,761 leaving available funds for reserve funds at \$43,961,865. He went over the reserve fund balances for each of the different funds which totaling \$43,961.

Ron next reviewed the 2016 general fund budget and the areas of increase in that fund. He also told the board there are three additional employees he would like to hire under this 2016 budget – an attorney to learn Barbara’s job, the desert garden superintendent who was hired as a temporary employee, and an IT intern who he would like to make a full time employee now.

Ron reviewed the remaining budgets for each fund. There was some discussion after which Ron explained that at the 6 pm meeting tonight the Board can approve the preliminary 2016 budget and then at the December board meeting they will need to approve a final budget.

**2016 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule -** The board discussed what night to set the meetings for in 2016. This last year we had the meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday except during the interim legislature when we changed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday. After discussion of what would work best for board members, the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month was suggested and discussed. It was decided the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month would be the best date for board meetings in 2016. Ron reviewed other conference dates in 2016 for NWRA Summer Conf. (Aug. 3-5 Sun Valley, ID); Utah Water Users (March 15-17, St. George); NWRA Annual conf. (Nov. 30-Dec. 2, San Diego, CA). Roberta will prepare a schedule of meeting dates and conferences for 2016 for the next meeting.

The board took a break before the 6 PM meeting.

**6:00 Meeting:** All board was present for this meeting but Jon Pike who was excused for another meeting. Also present were Ron Thompson, Corey Cram, Julie Gillins, Karry Rathje, Judie Brailsford and Roberta McMullin, Secretary. Other guests at the meeting included: Richard Kohler, Nicole Hancock from the water conservation subcommittee, Rick Wheadon (Carollo Engineering) and Dustin Shaffer (Sunrise Engineering.)

Ed welcomed those present and conducted the meeting.

**Ratifying the award of a grazing and management lease of 80 acres of property near Kolob Reservoir** was the first item on the agenda. Ron asked the board to ratify the award of a grazing and management lease of 80 acres the District owns on property near Kolob Reservoir. They had a Dutch auction or bid and Larry Blake bid the highest at \$10,600. Ron reminded the board that this lease comes up every five years. The District has owned the property for about 20 years and we have been putting it out to bid. This year they did a Dutch auction and Duke Cox and Larry Blake were the last bidders and were bidding against each other but Larry Blake was the high bidder. It went up to almost double of what has been paid before. Larry Blake also had it prior to the last five years. They have to do irrigating and manage the property. Ron said that it is the staff's recommendation to award to the bid to Larry & Kelly Blake, the high bidders.

*Jim Ence made a motion to ratify the award of the grazing and management lease for \$10,600 to Larry and Kelly Blake. Howard Bracken seconded the motion and all voted aye.*

**The next item on the agenda was a public hearing on the district’s Water Conservation Plan –**

*Tom Hirschi made a motion to go into a public hearing on the water conservation plan. Ken Neilson seconded the motion and all voted aye.*

Julie Gillins, Water Conservation Coordinator for the district, passed out copies of the draft conservation plan to the board, staff and those present. Julie introduced Nicki Hancock and Richard Kohler who are both members of the workgroup that has been working on this. Julie indicated that each of the cities were represented on the committee along with other community members. Julie showed a list of the 16 workgroup members.

Julie did a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the draft conservation plan. She said the workgroup came up with a list of suggested conservation measures for evaluation. A preliminary evaluation was done by Maddaus Water Management. There are 18 conservation measures currently being offered. Maddaus identified five additional measures that would help us reach a 35% reduction in water use by 2060.

Julie identified the six measures that are the top water savers;

Top Water Savers

Measure Number	Measure Description	Water Savings (MGD)
17	Real Water Loss Reduction*	2.1
9	Conservation Pricing*	2.1
27	Require Efficient Toilets and Urinals	1.0
22	Billing Report Education Tool**	0.8
2	Smart Irrigation Controller Rebates*	0.4
1	Financial Incentives for Irrigation Upgrades*	0.4

\*Included in current plan  
 \*\*Will be included in plan update

The conservation plan is structured as follows:

## Plan Structure

**CHAPTER 1:** Introduction

**CHAPTER 2:** Water Resources: Current Water Supply

**CHAPTER 3:** Water Demand: Current Water Use

**CHAPTER 4:** Water Conservation: Achievements, Activities and Current Practices (BMPs)

**CHAPTER 5:** Future Water Resources and Demand Projections

**CHAPTER 6:** Water Conservation Recommendations and Goals

**CHAPTER 7:** Conclusion

Julie told the board that they followed the State's template for the conservation plan. She indicated that Table 2.3 in the draft plan needs some correction on the totals.

Julie said she was here to get any input from board members or anyone else present. They hope to get this conservation plan approved next month in December at the Board Meeting.

Ed invited the board members or audience members to make comments on the water conservation plan.

Ron Thompson asked Julie if the cities are going to adopt this as their plan or write their own separate plans. Julie said they can use this plan as a template for their own plans.

Julie told the board about the 2016 workshops that have been created for the Red Hills Desert Garden and The Garden at Tonaquint. There will be one workshop at The Garden at Tonaquint and one at the Red Hills Desert Garden each month throughout the year. Some of the other activities at the gardens will be at the annual garden fair the first week in May during Water Week, a water walk with the Mayor of St. George and a Fall Festival in October. Also they will be doing holiday lighting at the Red Cliffs Desert Garden. The new desert garden is getting a lot of visitation with over 8,000 visitors since a counter was put up after the garden was open to measure visitors.

Ron asked Richard Kohler who was in the audience and has a lot of experience

with water and landscaping, etc. and has been serving on the conservation workgroup, if he felt this conservation plan is moving us in the right direction.

Richard Kohler said yes he believed we were on the right track with this draft water conservation plan. One measure he said he would like to speak about is one conservation program that we should not pursue which is the rebate for removing turf. He described the costs of this program in California. A 2013 study show they only saved about 18.2% more than under traditional landscape. He said that means it cost approximately \$210,000 per a.f., which by comparison for the LPP project, the costs for water is \$11,200 per a.f.

Julie said they would leave this draft open for comments until November 24 and then bring it back to the December board meeting for approval.

There were no more comments offered and the following motion was made.

***Tom Hirschi made a motion to close the public hearing. Zach Renstrom seconded the motion and all voted aye.***

**The next item on the agenda was approval of the preliminary 2016 budget** – Ron said he had already walked through the proposed budget in the work meeting. The board has reviewed the proposed preliminary budget and there were no further questions.

***Tom Hirschi made a motion to approve the 2016 proposed preliminary budget. Ken Neilson seconded the motion and all voted aye.***

**Ron Thompson gave status reports on the following projects:**

Ron asked Karry Rathje to give a report on the **public outreach efforts** of the district.

Karry said the district is continuing with radio and print ads. They are advertising a variety of things on water conservation, wise use of water and the need for new resource development. The Fall Waterline recently ran. Karry said we are seeing a continued amount of coverage. The district is getting 1.16 mentions in media a day. A lot of that recently has been on city council elections and their feelings on the Lake Powell Pipeline. There has also been a lot of coverage on the economists who claimed that we can't afford to repay the Lake Powell Pipeline debt. We have secured the worksheets for that analysis and have shared that information with

Jeremy Aguero. Karry said we are evaluating those worksheets and hope to set up a meeting with those economists in early 2016 to discuss their model. Karry said it appears that they are misunderstanding the Lake Powell Pipeline financial model and the development act. She said this has given the district a great opportunity to work with local reporters trying to understand the financing.

Karry said she is going to develop a communications strategy plan to stay in front of important messages and key messages. The district is working on this with the state. She said we will be working with community officials to continue to be voices of support.

Karry said there will be a Prepare 60 forum for Cedar City and St. George on December 1. The district will also be hosting a roundtable for newly elected officials.

Ken Neilson said Washington City does a monthly newsletter that is included with the utility bills and it has been very effective. If there is any information that the district would like us to include in their monthly newsletters, let them know.

**Lake Powell Pipeline (LPP)** - Ron told the board that the preliminary license drafts on the LPP will all go in by December 1 to FERC. The comment period will be 90 days. After comments have been addressed, the final application will go into a two year process to write the final environmental impact statement.

The engineers have been working on a preliminary price estimate. Ron said the engineers estimate is estimating costs four or five times more than on other projects built recently. He said he feels like they are a national firm that doesn't have feeling for local prices. He said it is very frustrating but they will work their way through it.

Ron said the LPP management committee continues to meet monthly and the staff is working daily on different components and issues.

**Sand Hollow Wells** – Ron said the drillers are working on wells at Sand Hollow right now. They are down about 200' so it isn't going very fast. They hit water at about 18' and have cased the top of it. They will probably go down about 600'. Ron said the district will probably do at least two more wells after this one and with the one they already have that will give four wells to help control the groundwater.

**Water treatment plant (WTP)** – Ron reported to the board that the WTP is functioning very well. They are starting to wrap up the water season as water demand is going down as usual for this time of year. The upgrade work is about finished and the WTP crew is doing a very good job.

**Weather** – Ron said that we will be in a fairly significant El Nino year and we need to be prepared to gather as much water as we can. He said he worries about having more rain but less snow. We are dependent on our pipelines with off stream storage. If the runoff is shortened even by six weeks, we will have to manage our way through that with redundant resources.

**Approval of minutes** of October 2015 Board of Trustees Meeting.

*Jim Ence moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ken Nielson and all voted aye.*

**Calendar items** – Various upcoming calendar items were reviewed:

December 2      Office Christmas party

December 8      Board meeting and public hearing on budget

December 16-18 Colorado River Water Users Conf. – Las Vegas

**Meeting adjourned** – There was no further business and upon motion the meeting was adjourned.

