

# WASHINGTON COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

## Minutes of Meeting of Board of Trustees

January 3, 2018

Minutes of a public meeting of the board of trustees of the Washington County Water Conservancy District, held on Wednesday, January 3, 2018, at 533 East Waterworks Drive, St. George, Utah beginning at 6 pm. Those board members present for the meeting were: Chair Ed Bowler, Zachary Renstrom, Howard Bracken, Kevin Tervort, Ken Neilson, Chris Hart and Jon Pike. Also present were General Manager Ron Thompson, Associate General Managers, Barbara Hjelle, Corey Cram, Brie Thompson, legal counsel Jodi Richins, and Secretary Roberta McMullin. Other guests at the meeting are set forth on the attached sign-in sheet. Ed Bowler conducted the meeting and welcomed those present.

The first item on the agenda was a discussion of succession planning. Ron Thompson told the board that they need to start talking about what to do when he leaves the district and how that will be handled. He said he would suggest creating a position called deputy general manager and then this person would work with Ron for at least a year. Under the rules he could create the position, but he would like to change the rules so that the position is filled by the board so that the board is involved in the process and comfortable with who fills this position. Ron said we will need to go through the public process for this hiring.

A copy of a proposed administrative policy was passed out to the board for their review. Also, a draft handout of a job description for a deputy general manager was passed to the board for their consideration and review. Copies of both draft documents are attached to these minutes. Ron said his proposal would be a committee be formed of the general manager and three board members to interview the applicants and then bring their selection back to the board as a whole to approve or not approve. He said he would like to advertise the position and adopt a policy in February and get applications in by late February or March and then do interviews and start moving this process forward. Ron is willing to do this process however the board would like, but to start the process moving forward. Ron said he is not asking for this to be approved tonight but in February. He suggested the board could review this and suggest any changes they may have.

Jon Pike asked if the person in the deputy new position would automatically become General Manager. Ron said that is what he would be happening, but the board would still have to approve that. Jon suggested if the candidate for the deputy position is applying for this thinking he is going to go into the general manager position, it might make a difference to applicant. Ron reminded the board that the board has the authority, at any time, to remove the general manager. Board, by majority vote, can remove a general manager at any time. The deputy general manager position would be under the direction of the general manager. Ron said his concern is that someone should work with him at least a year to understand all this position entails.

Chris Hart asked if this position is intended to be a permanent position. Once this person goes into the general manager position does this deputy position end? Ron said the board would have to decide this.

Ron said he could put this on the board agenda for February unless the board does not want to move in this direction. Ron said he would like to pass something on this at the February board meeting. Ed Bowler proposed that the board review this and perhaps set another meeting before the February board meeting to move this forward.

Jon Pike said he likes this approach. He added that Ron has been here a long time and has the institutional memory that needs to be passed on to another person as much as possible. He also emphasized there needs to be a clear statement that the intent of this position is to take Ron's place. That needs to be understood by those who would respond to this so we find the best person available and they need to understand this is an intermediate step to that position.

After discussion it was decided to have a board meeting for this purpose on **Tuesday, January 16 at 5 pm.** All the board agreed to this date and to review the documents before that next meeting.

**Progress Reports:**

**Lake Powell Pipeline** – Barbara Hjelle reported that progress is being made. She said we chose to file a petition for a declaratory order from FERC. That left everything in limbo. (penstock – ask BGH) – American Rivers has asked to participate. We have asked for an expedited review and they have asked for a lengthy review. These are two things that might have come out in the press that she may not have talked about before so she wanted the board to be aware of them.

**Sand Hollow Regional Pipeline** – Corey Cram said they have made progress. They finalized the conservation measures for the tortoises. They are going through the state office of US Fish and Wildlife Service. As soon as that is done they are going to give it to the BLM and start the Environmental Assessment (EA) process and that should go pretty quickly. He said they are still hoping to start construction this calendar year.

**Ash Creek Reservoir Project** - Corey told the Board the district has moved on to TransCon as the consultant on this project. They understand the project. They have had preliminary discussions with BLM and are getting that process in high gear again.

**Public information report** – Karry Rathje told the board the four objectives for public information.

1. Educate and increase support of water districts efforts with policy & community leaders as well as the general public.
2. Ensure accurate information is available and shared with interested stakeholders.
3. Expand, diversify and empower community spokespersons.
4. Increase outreach collaboration with our municipal partners.

Strategies will include

- Print media
- Broadcast media – TV. Radio
- Social media
- Newsletters
- Eblasts
- Brochures
- Websites
- In-person meetings
- Events
- Tours
- Direct mail
- Speakers bureau

She also discussed the tracking effort which involves tracking media results to make sure monies are being spent as well as possible. She discussed a recent animated ad on the Spectrum site and the positive response to that. She also showed some results from social media with various pictures and video clips and how much they had been viewed. She said this helps her figure out where we get the biggest bang for our buck.

She suggested some ways to help in this effort:

- Follow, like and repost social media posts
- Submit letters to the editor
- Be an active spokesperson, engage others
- Distribute district creative materials
- Hyperlink municipal websites to [wcwcd.org](http://wcwcd.org) and [lpputah.org](http://lpputah.org)
- Include information on water supply, use, projects, etc. in municipal newsletters, bill inserts, etc.

Karry told the board our main goal is to keep residents informed with accurate, timely and correct information. She said she is always happy to take any other suggestions or recommendations anyone might have.

### **Manager's report** –

1. Ron reminded the Board of upcoming **Utah Water Users Conference**. Our dinner will be March 19, 6 pm at Dixie State University, Gardner Ballroom and the conference will be the 20-21 at the Dixie Center.
2. Ron told the Board the past month has been incredibly busy with **impact fees** because the fee went up this week. Two million dollars in impact fees came in four days of last week. Twenty-six million dollars last year in impact fees. We added another \$11 million in promissory notes and there is \$14 million in outstanding promissory notes.
3. **Watershed** – Ron said in terms of the water year it does not look good. There has been no precipitation from the beginning of the water year until now. Traditionally February and March are the big water months. The reservoir carry over is very good. Sand Hollow is 3 ½ feet from full. They are taking Kolob down to approximately 900 -1000 af. Quail Creek still has some room to fill up, but we should get it where we want it by the end of

spring. Ron said this could be driest year since he has been general manager if something doesn't change.

4. **Miscellaneous -** Ron said as we look at the district facilities, a lot our getting older. Ivins Reservoir, for example, will be 120 years old this year.

The staff is working hard and performing extremely well. Ron said he appreciate the board and that they are engaged and thanked them for all they do.

Chris Hart thanked Ron and the district for the water history book for Christmas and said it is very interesting and he is really enjoying it.

Ed Bowler asked for comments from the audience and there were none.

The December minutes will be approved at the next board meeting.

**The meeting was adjourned.**

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