

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**SAN JUAN WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT**  
**SPECIAL MEETING - MARCH 20, 2023, 4pm**

**Attendance**

A Special Meeting of San Juan Water Conservancy District was held Monday, March 20, 2023, at 4 pm in person at 46 Eaton Drive Suite 5 and on Zoom.

The following Directors were present in person: Al Pfister, Susan Nossaman, Candace Jones, and Bill Nobles. Prospective Board Members, Chuck Riehm and Robert Hagberg, were present.

Also present were Sally High (SJWCD Executive Assistant), Bill Hudson (Pagosa Daily Post and PAWSD), Josh Pike (Pagosa Springs SUN), and Kim Elzinga (contract writer).

On Zoom were Directors Rod Proffitt and Joe Tedder, Laura Spann (Colorado Water Conservation Board), and (again) Kim Elzinga.

**Call to Order**

The Special Meeting of the San Juan Water Conservancy District (SJWCD) was called to order by Chairman Al Pfister at 4:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

**Revisions to Agenda**

The Board considered Revisions to Agenda. No revisions were necessary.

**Declarations of Conflicts of Interest**

The Board considered Declarations of Conflict of Interest. No Conflicts of Interest were identified.

**Public Comments (limited to 3 minutes please)**

Chairman Pfister opened the meeting to public comment. Bill Hudson (Pagosa Daily Post and PAWSD Board) suggested that the Town of Pagosa Springs be approached about leasing the 20-acre parcel (of San Juan River access on the Running Iron Ranch). The lease income could be used for the construction of workforce housing across the highway, a previously made suggestion by Mr. Hudson to both PAWSD and SJWCD. Mr. Hudson also requested that SJWCD's partnership with PAWSD be added to the letter to the Southern Ute Tribe. No other public comments were offered.

### **Updates from Chairman**

- Directors were reminded that the Southwestern Water Conservation Board's 2023 Water Seminar is scheduled for Friday, March 31. Two registrations are available. Both Hagberg and Riehm are interested in attending.
- Chairman Pfister contacted Aspen Springs Metro District, Carey Brown, who agreed to take information about extending the municipal water line to the Metro District Board.
- The annual Water Information Project (WIP) Water Fest is May 10 at Fort Lewis College in Durango. The Fest is for Middle School students from schools throughout the basin. Volunteers are needed and registration information is in an email previously sent to Directors by Chairman Pfister.

### **Introduction of Laura Spann and CWCB Grant Opportunities**

Laura Spann, CWCB Regional Water Plan Water Manager, described her availability to help navigate funding from federal sources and the 2022 Colorado Water Plan. The recently legalized sports betting revenue benefits Water Plan grants. Chairman Pfister invited Laura, headquartered in Durango, to attend a future board meeting in person. Laura indicated interest in hearing from Directors regarding the three Strategic Objectives.

### **Consideration of Directors' Reports on Three Strategic Objectives**

*Objective One: Advance the San Juan River Headwaters Project (SJRHP) as one resource for meeting agricultural, municipal, environmental, and recreational water needs of the San Juan Water Conservancy District (SJWCD) community.*

Chairman Pfister explained that he and Director Secrist were on the committee to move Objective One forward. A new Director will be added when Judge Wilson approves two new Directors. An outreach has been made to the Southern Ute Tribe about collaborating in advancing SJRHP. The PAWSD Board has been questioned about their support. He contacted the Bureau of Reclamation about their grant opportunity for a small reservoir program of up to \$30 million and up to a 30,000-acre foot reservoir. Prior to application, SJWCD would need to accomplish preliminary engineering studies and cost estimates.

*Objective Two: Consider strategies beyond water storage for meeting agricultural, municipal, environmental, and recreational water needs of the SJWCD community.*

Director Jones explained that an understanding of ground water should be gained in order for SJWCD to effectively communicate with the community. She contacted Colorado Division of Water Resources Commissioner, Joe Crabb, who explained that he will be available in future weeks for further consultation. Both the Colorado Ag Water Alliance and the newly introduced System Conservation Pilot Program (SCPP) are relevant when evaluating ag water management. Director Nossaman has consulted with Joe Crabb in the past. The Water Enhancement Partnership (WEP) has identified \$8.6 million dollars of (grant eligible) projects to improve ag water efficiency. Director Nossaman reminded Directors that SJHFHP shares this objective to conserve water.

*Objective Three: Educate the SJWCD community about the water resources of the Upper San Juan River Basin and related issues, including SJRHP, water resource planning, water conservation, and the work of SJWCD.*

Directors Tedder, Nobles, and Proffitt worked on Objective Three. Director Tedder described a local professional educator who may be asked to design educational field trips for adults, to use ArcGIS, to build a video with an aerial tour of the District. A local videographer has been identified to accomplish these goals. Director Pfister stated that a story map exists for each of the nine basins within the Southwest Basin Implementation Plan, including the San Juan. In addition, a professional writer has been contracted to create six articles for publication in coming months.

Laura Spann recognized several opportunities in Directors' reports that may qualify for CWCB grant collaboration. Specific to Objective One, the Water Plan grant program prioritizes new storage projects, while the Water Supply Reserve Fund, administered by the Roundtable, funds more aging infrastructure. She suggested contacting CWCB's Matt Sterns to discuss engineering studies. At the preplanning or planning stage, a project requires a 25% match. The construction or implementation stage requires a 50% match. Funding partners' contributions count toward matching funds. Mr. Riehm asked for examples of successful applications from past storage projects. Laura explained how those examples can be accessed and offered to help find them.

Regarding Objective Two and a potential ground water study in the Upper San Juan, Laura stated that CO Ag Water Alliance Drought Resiliency Project is applying for more funding from CWCB. The CWCB staff contact is Greg Peterson. *(Due to low band width, Laura left Zoom and called Director Pfister to be heard on the phone. All Zoom participants were asked to turn off their video.)*

Laura mentioned the PO566 (Colorado Integrated Tax) monies available through Roundtable. Director Pfister acknowledged that WEP is discussing PO655 with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and Southwestern Water Conservation District.

Regarding Objective Three, Laura recognized the adult field trips and video production as innovative and possibly aligned with Water Plan funding. Director Nobles asked about matching funds and Laura confirmed that 25% is the norm. In-kind contributions qualify.

Director Jones asked whether grants are competitive or first-come. Laura explained that considerations are competitive. The scoring process and funding deadlines are described on the CWCB website. Director Pfister repeated an invitation for Laura to attend a board meeting.

The need for a simple reporting system to record progress within the Strategic Objectives was discussed. Directors Jones and Tedder agreed to present a tracking system at a future meeting.

Director Tedder asked Directors to contemplate the list of articles brainstormed by Kim. He asked for approval for Kim to write two articles about (1) the reason and mission of SJWCD and (2) SJWCD's opposition to transmountain diversions.

Kim stated that news articles in journalistic style are more likely to be published by the Sun. The Board will review articles by email, offer revisions, and approve the submission of each article. An Objective Three committee member will send each draft article to Directors and comments should be returned to the same Objective Three committee member.

Director Jones suggested scheduling a field trip to acquaint relevant community members with the “twenty-acre parcel” on the San Juan River on the Running Iron Ranch property. Directors agreed to schedule that educational tour to take place a few weeks in the future.

Director Pfister stated that Renee Lewis is available to write grants for SJWCD. Renee is able to attend the next SJWCD board meeting.

#### **Consideration of Accepting the Resignation of Rachel Suh**

Attorney Kane sent Rachel Suh’s resignation to Judge Wilson. Director Nobles moved to accept the resignation. Director Nossaman seconded. Unanimous approval.

#### **Considerations of Applications of Robert Hagberg and Chuck Riehm**

Directors considered two applications for Board membership. Both candidates sent letters to Judge Wilson. Chairman Pfister asked each of the two board applicants, Robert Hagberg and Chuck Riehm, the standard questions establishing their motivations to serve and intentions to collaborate in reaching the goals of SJWCD. Both applicants affirmed their initial understanding of SJWCD and willingness to serve. Director Nobles moved to approve both applications. Director Jones seconded. Unanimous approval. Attorney Kane will send SJWCD approval to Judge Wilson.

#### **Consideration of Treasurer’s Report**

Director Tedder provided a Budget vs Actual report through March 15. Directors had no questions.

The purchase of a speaker and/or other technological aides to enhance communications through Zoom was suggested. Directors agreed that ideas be sent to Director Jones. Purchase will be decided at the April Regular Meeting.

### **Consideration of Funding Geothermal Greenhouse Partnership Educational Activities**

Directors considered a sponsorship of the 2023 GGP Environmental Film Festival, scheduled for April 14 and 15 to kick off Earth Week. As in the past, SJWCD has an opportunity to address attendees about water issues and introduce water films. Director Nobles moved to fund GGP with a \$250 sponsorship. Director Nossaman seconded. Unanimous approval.

### **Consideration of Office Lease Extension**

Directors considered extending the office lease with a new building owner. The building at 46 Eaton Drive is under contract and a lease extension has been offered with an increase of \$10 per month. Director Nobles moved to accept the lease extension. Director Jones seconded. Unanimous approval.

### **Consideration of Renewal of Executive Assistant Contract**

Directors considered renewing the contract with Sally High, Executive Assistant. Director Nobles moved to renew the updated contract. Director Nossaman seconded. Unanimous approval.

### **Consideration of Earth Week Activities**

Directors considered participating in community Earth Day, Saturday April 22, in Centennial Park. SJWCD Directors will engage the public and distribute printed materials. Director Pfister suggested water and bird stickers be purchased. Director Jones moved to expend an amount, not to exceed \$100, for the booth fee and educational stickers. Director Nobles seconded. Unanimous approval.

### **Consideration of Letter to Southern Ute Tribal Chair/Council**

Director Jones amended the letter to reflect that more than one partner is involved in the Headwaters Project. Director Jones moved to send the revised letter. Director Nossaman seconded. Unanimous approval.

To conclude the meeting, Kim Elzinger asked Directors to answer a series of questions so that she could determine the “voice” of SJWCD. “This is a branding exercise.” She passed out answer sheets on which Directors were to write answers to Kim’s questions. Five questions were asked. Kim will contact the two directors who were on Zoom to ask them the final 2 of 5 questions. *(Zoom connection was tenuous and seemed to be deteriorating. Zoom connection was lost due to low band width.)*

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Special Meeting was adjourned at 6:27 pm.

SAN JUAN WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

By /s/ Sally High

Executive Assistant for Board of Directors

DISTRICT SEAL