

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
SAN JUAN WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING - APRIL 17, 2023, 4 pm

Attendance

A Regular Meeting of San Juan Water Conservancy District was held Monday, April 17, 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, Bill Nobles, Chuck Riehm and Joe Tedder. Also present were Sally High (SJWCD Executive Assistant), Joe Crabb (Division 7 Colorado Division of Water Resources), Bill Hudson (Pagosa Daily Post and PAWSD), and Josh Pike (Pagosa Sun).

Directors Rod Proffitt and Rob Hagberg attended by Zoom. Others on Zoom were Jeff Kane (SJWCD Attorney), Randi Pierce and Terri House (Pagosa Sun), and Joe Crabb (recording).

Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the San Juan Water Conservancy District (SJWCD) was called to order by Chairman Al Pfister at 4:01 p.m. A quorum was present.

Revisions to Agenda

The Board considered Revisions to the 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

Chairman Pfister opened the meeting to public comment. Bill Hudson (Pagosa Daily Post and PAWSD Board) again addressed Directors about a preliminary

proposal to build workforce housing on 5.49 acres of the Running Iron Ranch. He distributed a new handout, titled “Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation Housing Project.” He stated that other local entities were being approached with this proposal. The proposal has been considered by both the PAWSD and SJWCD Boards. No other public comments were offered.

Consideration of Attorney’s Report

Directors received a copy of Attorney Kane’s report in the Board Packet. Attorney Kane addressed: the Court Order Appointing Directors Hagberg and Riehm; the recently filed Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and United States Forest Service (USFS) regarding the Treasure Ditch Water Rights Cases; two Bootjack Ranch Water Rights applications including maps; and the preliminary Statements of Opposition to two Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) transbasin and transmountain requests to divert water from the Piedra River and San Juan River to the Rio Grande Basin.

Several parties filed opposition to CPW’s two applications, including the United States and Colorado Water Conservation Board.

Director Tedder asked Attorney Kane to estimate SJWCD’s 2023 expenses in Water Rights Defenses, in order to prevent budget overruns. Tedder and Kane agreed to talk later.

Consideration of Colorado Division of Water Resources Presentation

Directors considered a presentation by Joe Crabb of Division 7 of Colorado Division of Water Resources. Crabb reminded the board about his responsibilities and geographic area served. He described the Division of Water Resources’ involvement in water right applications and his duty to observe/verify each site under consideration. Discussions included National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Seasonal Precipitation Outlook and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Colorado Basin River Snow Water Equivalent. Regarding water availability for agricultural water users, Crabb stated, “Winter is starting later and ending earlier,” meaning that snow pack may not translate into irrigation water in the growing season.

Colorado Division of Water Resources maintains diversion records. Crabb's Division 7 oversees 5,000 water rights. Crabb summarized several water diversions including Treasure Pass, Don La Font 1 & 2 and South River, San Juan Chama, Azotea, Dutton Ditch, Park Ditch, San Juan Intake (PAWSD municipal), and Pagosa Springs Pipeline (PAWSD Snowball). Crabb invited SJWCD to contact him for clarifications, whenever necessary.

Updates from Chairman

Director Pfister filed a required form for permission to address the Southern Ute Tribal Council about the Headwaters Project.

Director Pfister described the successful SJWCD participation representing water issues at Geothermal Greenhouse Partnership's recent Environmental Film Festival.

Director Pfister confirmed a SJWCD field trip to the Running Iron Ranch 20-acres on the San Juan River. Attending will be Directors Jones, Tedder, Pfister, a representative from Archuleta County, Toby Rowher of Water Enhancement Partnership, and the SJWCD Executive Assistant. The field trip is scheduled for Saturday April 29 at 8 am.

Director Pfister met with John Whitney, aide to Senator Bennet's office. Whitney confirmed that Senators Bennett and Hickenlooper share an interest in identifying funding sources for the Headwaters Project.

Director Pfister contacted Aspen Springs Metro District about extending a PAWSD treated water line to improve water availability with a new fill station. A public meeting of the Aspen Springs Metro District with PAWSD representation will take place May 9 at 6 pm. Representation by SJWCD is optional.

Consideration of Approval of Records of Proceedings

Directors approved Records of Proceedings from the February 20 Regular Meeting, March 8 Work Session, March 9 Joint Work Session with PAWSD, and

March 20 Special Meeting. Director Jones moved for approval. Director Nossaman seconded. The vote to approve was unanimous.

Consideration of Treasurer's Report

Director Tedder, Treasurer, included in the Board Packet the 2023 Budget versus Actual statement through April 14 and an AIR form advising consideration of accepting the budget documents. Key points were outlined in the Board Packet and briefly discussed. By transferring funds into the Colorado Trust, SJWCD will earn close to \$8,000 in 2023. Director Nobles moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Director Nossaman seconded. Unanimous approval.

Consideration of Expenditures for Website

Director Tedder provided an AIR form proposing an expenditure of \$3,600 to improve the SJWCD website. Transition to the newly identified WordPress theme is not to exceed \$2000. Ongoing website maintenance at \$400 per month for 4 months is \$1,600. The goal is for sjwcd.org to become the "go-to" website for water information. The new website expenses come from \$10,000 budgeted for public education.

Director Jones moved to authorize the Objective Three committee to manage the transition and initial maintenance of the website. Director Riehm seconded. Unanimous approval.

Director Jones moved that an amount not to exceed \$3,600 be expended for website transition for the next four months. Director Nobles seconded. Unanimous approval.

Consideration of Remote Meeting Technology

Director Jones proposed the purchase of Anker PowerConf Speakerphone to facilitate hearing SJWCD Board meetings on Zoom. Director Jones moved to expend the purchase price of an Anker PowerConf Speakerphone from Amazon. Director Riehm seconded. Unanimous approval.

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.

Director Pfister reported that he had discussed cost estimates for dam construction with Peter Hurley, an engineer from Kiewit, and engineer Steve Harris. He discussed grant opportunities with Laura Spann, who had learned from CWCB that she is not to imply commitments about funding. Spann is still willing to help SJWCD, but she likely will not attend a SJWCD meeting in the near future. A CWCB grant for technical assistance may be available to assist SJWCD in applying for federal funds, such as the Bureau of Reclamation small reservoir grant.

Director Pfister asked new Directors Riehm and Hagberg to assist with either Objective One or Objective Two. Director Riehm asked to help with Objective One. Director Hagberg will help with Objective Two. Three board members now sit on each Strategic Objective Committee. Directors can help with any issue in which they have an interest.

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

Directors Jones and Nossaman explained that the topic of ground water/wells is being brought to conclusion. Future topics are Forest Health and Agriculture. Southwest Water Conservation District and Watershed Enhancement Partnership identified \$8.6million of water-saving agricultural infrastructure improvement projects. SJWCD will support Forest Health Partnership's actions, like upcoming tours of the Plumtaw Fire site. SJHFHP will premiere a Plumtaw Fire and Forest Health film, made by Christi Bode Skeie, on Wednesday May 17 at the Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts.

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.

Kim Elzinga's first article was submitted to the Pagosa Sun on April 17, 2023. Writing the second article about Transmountain Diversions is underway.

Director Tedder asked for \$400 (at \$40 per hour) more to manage the website for four additional months (eight months total). Director Tedder described an \$1800 expenditure to fund Josh Kurz's plans to host three educational field trips at \$600 each. Kurz proposed to Director Tedder (1) an interactive graphical index about water on SJWCD's website for \$500 and (2) an interactive story map from the headwaters of the San Juan River to the mouth of the Colorado River for \$1,500. These expenses will come from the \$10,000 education line item.

Director Tedder proposed total expenditures of \$11,000. This does not include a film suggested by Josh Kurz and Christi Bode Skeie.

Director Nobles moved to expend another \$2,800 to move forward on the Objective Three Committee's educational plans. Director Tedder seconded. A definitive itemized Statement of Work was requested, to include a description of services, deliverables, a timeline, and estimated costs. The Statement of Work will be presented at the May Special Meeting. Unanimous approval.

Director Jones reminded the board about the proposed scorecard, a tool to track progress on each of the three Strategic Objectives. It will be included on the agenda of the May 15 meeting.

Director Pfister stated that he would contact the new office landlord about improving SJWCD's internet service.

A Special Meeting was scheduled for Monday May 15 at 4 pm.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Regular Meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm.

SAN JUAN WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

By /s/ Sally High

Executive Assistant for Board of Directors

DISTRICT SEAL