

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
SAN JUAN WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING – AUGUST 18, 2025, 4 pm

Attendance

A Regular Meeting of San Juan Water Conservancy District was held Monday, August 18, 2025, at 4 pm in person at 46 Eaton Drive and on Zoom.

The following Directors were present in person: Bill Nobles, Rod Proffitt, John Kappelman, Randy Cooper, and Susan Nossaman. Also present in person was Sally High (SJWCD Executive Assistant).

Attending on Zoom were Director Candace Jones, Jeff Kane (SJWCD Attorney), Terri (Pagosa Sun), Josh Pike (Pagosa Sun), Michael (otherwise unidentified), and Craig Hoover (BHI Engineering).

Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the San Juan Water Conservancy District (SJWCD) was called to order by Director Nossaman at 4:00 pm. A quorum was present.

Consideration of Executive Session

Director Nossaman read the legal description of reasons that Directors may enter Executive Session. Director Nobles moved to enter Executive Session for the specific purpose of receiving legal advice about PAWS proposed sale of Running Iron Ranch and related litigation (Case #24CV30069) filed in Archuleta County District Court. Director Cooper seconded. A roll call vote resulted in unanimous approval. Guests on Zoom were placed in the waiting room. Executive Session commenced at 4:05.

Director Cooper moved to end Executive Session. Director Kappelman seconded. A roll call vote resulted in unanimous approval. Executive Session ended at 4:39. Guests on Zoom were readmitted to the Regular Meeting.

Consideration of Actions Regarding Running Iron Ranch and Related Litigation (Case No. 24CV30069 filed in Archuleta County District Court), settlement negotiations, and public statements.

Director Jones moved that SJWCD invite PAWS to a Joint Work Session of the respective Ranch Committees for the purpose of discussing the management of Running Iron Ranch and that the Work Session include Justin Ramsey, PAWS Manager. Director Cooper seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Consideration of Attorney's Report

Attorney Jeff Kane provided additional legal wording in case Directors choose to enter Executive Session to consider water rights cases. No Executive Session was needed for this meeting.

Kane recommended that individuals who volunteer with the SJWCD / Monica Nigon Watershed Restoration Project sign a waiver of liability. Kane stated he would review and revise a waiver used by the Gunnison District to fit SJWCD's needs.

Kane provided updates on five water rights cases. No actions were proposed at this meeting. Directors should expect to consider action at the September Special Meeting.

- Bureau of Land Management's Treasure Pass Ditch Cases. The final decrees appear to be close. Southwestern WCD has succeeded in insisting that opposers' water rights are protected and that BLM is prohibited from diverting water unless there is more water than needed by other water users. SJWCD has insisted that the ditch not be expanded and that their water rights are secure.
- Boot Jack Ranch Case. The water rights in question affect Lodge Pond and Chipper Pond, plus a small irrigated area. Kane proposed that Boot Jack's rights be subordinate to SJWCD water rights. Kane stated that he continues to insist that Boot Jack accept that condition. A final decree is expected before the September meeting.
- Caribou Ditch (neighbor of Boot Jack Ranch) requested additional water rights to use an unusually large amount of water for a small area. Kane will review the expected decree and update SJWCD when more information is available.
- Hidden Valley Case. Responses to all opposers and more requested information are being reviewed. Hidden Valley requested to refill the pond due to evaporation and seepage from a relatively shallow pond. There is little precedent. Kane will update SJWCD about an expected decree.
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife's Piedra Pass Ditch Case. Kane will be analyzing a proposed decree and reporting to SJWCD.

Discussion of RFP for Engineering Design Professional Services

Directors received documents from four engineering firms in the Board Packet. The documents provide context for the draft RFP also submitted in the Board Packet. Directors were asked to send comments to Directors Cooper and Riehm by 5 pm, August 22. Four firms will be sent the final RFP.

A Zoom meeting with the Bureau of Reclamation will be noticed as a Work Session on August 21 for 12 noon. Registration is required.

An additional Special Meeting in August may be required to consider approval of the RFP and its budgetary impact in 2025.

Consideration of Actions Related to SJWCD's Watershed Restoration Project with Monica Nigon

Directors received documents related to Chama Peak Land Alliance's screening of the "Thinking Like Water" film on September 9 and the initial volunteer gathering at Turkey Springs on September 13. Monica needs about 20 volunteers to build the two planned Zeedyk structures or Zuni holes.

At the film screening, Christi Bode will act as emcee. A panel of water professionals, including Chris Pitcher, will answer questions from audience members after the film.

Monica is communicating with Josh Kurz about additional sites. She is locating and collecting rocks. Director Nossaman suggested rocks at her ranch be used. A tent will be used for volunteer lunch. Directors offered suggestions to ensure the success of the event, like taking plenty of photographs. Monica assured the Forest Service that monitoring of the site would be ongoing.

Director Jones made a motion to authorize \$200 from SJWCD's Training budget line for lunch on Saturday, September 13. Director Nobles seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Consideration of Letter of Support for Pagosa Area Recreation Grant Application

Directors received the request from PARC and a draft letter of support in the Board Packet. Director Proffitt moved to approve and send the letter of support written by Director Jones. Director Nobles seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Updates from Directors

- San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership will meet this Friday, August 22, from 9 to 11 am at the County Administration Building.
- 2-3-2 will meet on September 24 in Antonito, Colorado. The invitation will be forwarded to all directors.

Strategic Objectives Reports (when needed)

Strategic Objective 1: Redefine the financial partnership for Running Iron Ranch.
(Directors Tedder, Riehm, Cooper, Proffitt)

Strategic Objective 2: Make the case for a reservoir at RIR by defining feasibility and demand. (Directors Cooper, Hagberg, Kappelman)

Strategic Objective 3: Engage with the community, including PAWS, on a project that advances a common community interest, like a planning/municipal water demand study and/or wildfire mitigation (Directors Hagberg, Nobles, Nossaman, Tedder)

Consideration of Approval of Record of Proceedings from 7/21 Special Meeting

Director Nobles moved to approve the Special Meeting Record from July 21. Director Cooper seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

A Special Meeting was scheduled for Monday, September 15, at 4 pm. There being no further business to come before the Board, the Special Meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm.

SAN JUAN WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT
By /s/ Sally High
Executive Assistant for Board of Directors

DISTRICT SEAL

FINAL