

**RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING
December 4, 2024, at 10:00 A.M.
8805 Independence Way
Alamosa, CO 81101
And By Zoom Teleconference**

Present: Greg Higel, President; Zeke Ward, Secretary/ Treasurer; Cory Off, Director; Peggy Godfrey, Director; Mark Deacon, Director; Mike Kruse, Director; and, Elliott Salazar, Director.

Absent: Armando Valdez, Vice-President; and, Doug Gunnels, Director.

Staff and Consultants: Pete Ampe, Hill & Robbins, P.C.; Amber Pacheco, Deputy General Manager; Chris Ivers, Program Manager; Angelo Bellah, Program Manager; Wylie Keller, Water Resource Specialist; Clinton Phillips, Davis Engineering; Rose Vanderpool, Program Assistant; Linda Ramirez, Program Assistant; Crystal Benavidez, HCP Coordinator/Program Assistant; Kylie Gregg, Office Manager; April Mondragon, Administrative Assistant; and, Michael Carson, Database Administrator.

Guests: Chris Lopez, Rio de la Vista, Paul Formisano, Monica McCafferty, Heather Dutton, Bob VanIwaarden, Brian Cook and, Karla Shriver.

CALL TO ORDER

President Greg Higel called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m. There was a quorum present for the meeting. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF AND GUESTS

President Higel welcomed all those present and asked for introductions.

APPROVE AGENDA

President Higel asked for changes or a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made by Peggy Godfrey to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Mike Kruse and unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

President Higel asked for approval of the following minutes:

- October 15, 2024-Quarterly Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Mark Deacon to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mike Kruse and was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

President Higel asked for public comment. Paul Formisano provided information on the Water 201 class being offered at Adams State University in the Spring as well as the State of the Basin Symposium on March 29, 2025.

REVIEW OF BIDS AND ACTION TO APPROVE A DESIGN/BUILD TEAM FOR THE DISTRICT'S GARAGE/WORKSHOP PROJECT

President Higel asked for a review of bids and action to approve a design/build team for the District's garage/workshop project. Amber Pacheco reported on the bid proposals sent to the Board and described the bid process. Ms. Pacheco highlighted the qualifications of the companies and explained they were both highly qualified. She reported Alcon's timeline was one (1) month sooner, and VanIwaarden has had experience with the District building. Discussion was held on the construction companies' number of years of experience, time it takes to pave, and when the garage could be utilized.

A motion was made by Cory Off to approve moving forward with hiring VanIwaarden as the contractor on the garage/workshop project. The motion was seconded by Elliott Salazar and unanimously approved.

Cory Off suggested the District show their appreciation with a gift certificate to Alcon Construction.

REVIEW AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING SUBDISTRICT NO. 1 NORTH STAR PURCHASE

President Higel asked for review and possible action regarding Subdistrict No. 1 North Star purchase. Amber Pacheco went over the purpose of the purchase of two (2) quarters from North Star Farms to secure a water supply for replacements on Saguache Creek for Subdistrict No. 1. She explained the other options explored by Subdistrict No. 1 and the Board of Managers approval to move forward with the purchase from North Star. Peggy Godfrey commented on the discontinued use of the wells by North Star and how Subdistrict No. 1 would make replacements using an augmentation well in wet years.

A motion was made by Peggy Godfrey to approve Subdistrict No. 1's purchase of two (2) circles from North Star. The motion was seconded by Mark Deacon.

Mike Kruse reported on the complexities of making replacements to Saguache Creek and the lack of water for sale. Discussion was held on the amount of consumptive use Subdistrict No. 1 will gain from the purchase, changes to the model, replacement timing requirements, location to drill an augmentation well, and post-plan depletions.

The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

REVIEW AND POSSIBLE ACTION-SUBDISTRICT NO. 4 BOARD OF MANAGER NOMINATION

President Higel asked for review and possible action for the Subdistrict No. 4 Board of Manager nomination. Chris Ivers reported on Pete Stagner's nomination by Bob and Judy Bunker to serve and represent them on Subdistrict No. 4 Board of Managers. He explained how Mr. Stagner has served on the Board since formation and would no longer qualify due to the sale of his family ranch but could qualify as a representative for the Bunker's.

A motion was made by Peggy Godfrey to nominate/reappoint Pete Stagner to the Subdistrict No. 4 Board of Managers. The motion was seconded by Mark Deacon and unanimously approved.

REVIEW AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING SUBDISTRICT NO. 3 WELL PURCHASE

President Higel asked for review and possible action regarding Subdistrict No. 3 well purchase. Angelo Bellah presented the well decree and Purchase and Sale Agreement on the well Subdistrict No. 3 is seeking to purchase. He highlighted the Subdistrict's sustainability focus and went over the five (5) year pumping history. Mr. Bellah provided the acre-foot amount of water that will remain in the aquifer and assist Subdistrict No. 3 with sustainability. He also went over the loan terms of the owner-carry finance agreement.

A motion was made by Cory Off to approve Subdistrict No. 3's purchase of the Soward's well. The motion was seconded by Mike Kruse and unanimously approved.

REVIEW AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING A CWCB LOAN REQUEST FOR SUBDISTRICT NO. 5

President Higel asked for review and possible action regarding a CWCB loan request for Subdistrict No. 5. Amber Pacheco explained how Subdistrict No. 5 needs to secure additional water in wet years to remedy depletions. She explained the first loan covers depletions in average and dry years. Chris Ivers reported needing four (4) additional quarters in order to increase consumptive use. He provided the purchase price per quarter, the amount of CFS needed in June of a wet year and the plan to drill additional augmentation wells. Mr. Ivers provided the amount of the first loan and the requested amount of the second loan. He went over the number of farm units in Subdistrict No. 5, the average acre-feet pumped per year, current fee rates and the loan interest rate.

A motion was made by Mark Deacon to approve the CWCB loan request for Subdistrict No. 5. The motion was seconded by Mike Kruse and unanimously approved.

REVIEW AND POSSIBLE ACTION-FUNDING REQUESTS

President Higel asked for review and possible action on funding requests:

- *Primary Water*

A motion was made by Cory Off to deny the Primary Water funding request. The motion was seconded by Peggy Godfrey and unanimously approved.

- *Waterwise Landscaping Project*

Heather Dutton gave a description of the project and explained the goal to improve water ethic, water savings and education. She highlighted other possible funding sources. Karla Shriver explained how the projects will be good examples for the San Luis Valley to demonstrate water conservation in other areas besides agriculture.

A motion was made by Cory Off to approve the Waterwise Landscaping Project funding request.

Amber Pacheco explained having funds available within the budget for these types of projects. Ms. Shriver further explained how the projects will demonstrate to the community how to be a part of the solution to conserve water. Ms. Dutton commented on the water supplies of the towns.

The motion was seconded by Mark Deacon and unanimously approved.


OTHER DIRECTOR REPORTS

President Higel asked for other Director reports. There were none.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for January 21, 2025.



President



Secretary/Treasurer