

**Center of Colorado Water Conservancy District**  
**Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
**March 12, 2025**

The monthly meeting of the Center of Colorado Water Conservancy District was held on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at the main meeting room of the district offices located at 548 Front Street in Fairplay. Lisa McVicker, Board Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.

The members present in the office were Lynne Buchanan and Wallie Weld. Lisa McVicker, Craig Steinmetz, Chris Fuller and Dan Drucker were present by teleconference. Nola Knudsen, Administrator, was present in the office as was Lisa Barden Brown, Operations Manager. David Shohet, legal counsel, was present via teleconference.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Lynne Buchanan moved to approve the agenda as presented. Wallie Weld seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Chris Fuller moved to approve the minutes as presented. Lynne Buchanan seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

**2.1 Administrator's Report on Accounts:**

Nola Knudsen reviewed the March check register with the Board. The insurance invoice is only paid one time per year to GPE. Last year's bill was approximately \$4,800. There is only a small increase this year of a couple hundred dollars. Lisa Brown has reviewed the new policy to ensure it covers all the district requirements. Nola reported the Wheeler checks this month included some replacement funds for prior checks that were not received or cashed. In November, there had been problems with mail delivery to various places and it is believed this was another of those lost pieces of mail. The board decided it was not necessary to place a stop payment on those checks.

Invoices for the month of March totaled \$25,241.96. Cash assets remaining after payment of March invoices is \$2,593,168.20.

Nola Knudsen clarified another check was written for CUSP for annual dues in the amount of \$3,250.00. This amends the March invoices to \$28,491.96

## 2.2 Treasurer's Review:

Lynne Buchanan reporting the income for the month that included rent from Knudsen Counseling, utility payments from Dental Care and \$50 from HASP for Soda Springs for a total of \$1,264.40 and interest of \$.39. The Colorado Trust interest totaled \$7,981.36. Deposits from property taxes were \$278,847.90. Nola Knudsen said she spoke with High Country Bank about having access to the account online to see that checks are clearing and see that deposits are there.

Lisa McVicker said the bill pay system HASP has implemented has been working well. John Matteson, the HASP Operations Manager, emails out the invoices and requests approval from at least two Board members. Lisa said CCWCD would need approval from three board members. Then, John produces an electronic check. Most of the checks are repetitive. Lisa McVicker thinks this is the way to go as it will save time and remove the unpredictability of the mail system. Chris Fuller said there are two considerations. The first is allowing Nola access to the bank records online and needs to happen regardless. Secondly, Chris said the process is electronic bill pay. As long as there is separation of duties and security is set up, it is okay. Nola Knudsen said she prefers not to move to bill pay. Some checks can be quite large and having the entire board vote to approve may be important to maintain transparency for the public. Nola said to allow her to view the bank transactions on-line, she recommends having the Treasurer Lynne Buchanan be the administrator on the account. Lynne would then set her up as the sub-member.

Nola Knudsen reported High Country would be sending out requests to update all of the board member information regarding signatory authority. Nola asked the board members to look for the email and respond. Nola received information from Daisy Design regarding a bill for \$23.99 for renewal of an old domain name that was established several years ago. Lisa McVicker explained to the board members that years back, the district decided to acquire every variable of domain names related to the district name. We purchased five. Lisa doesn't believe we need to maintain that old domain. The board agreed.

Nola provided an update on the audit for the district. Nearly all required paperwork has been reviewed and sent to the auditor. We are winding down quickly and near the end. Lastly, Nola reminded the two Board members they will need to prepare their letters to request reappointment as a board member.

Chris Fuller made a motion to approve the invoices and warrants as presented. Craig Steinmetz seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

## **OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT**

### **Smelter Pipeline Reservoir (SPR):**

- I visited the SPR on Feb. 28th for a staff gage reading. The gage read 7.90 for 20.10 AF in storage. I visited one other time during February. The reservoir is still iced over. No snow plowing was needed last month.
- I am working on updating the accounting through February.

### **Chatfield Reallocation Project (CRP):**

- The first CRMC meeting for 2025 was held on February 26th. The next meeting will be in April.
  - o The reallocation pool held 12,800 AF as of Feb. 25th, and Denver's Recreation Pool was holding 26,600 AF. With warm temperatures at the end of February, ice was rapidly melting.
  - o This year's tree removal project was nearly complete, set to wrap up by Feb. 28th. More trees than estimated were able to be removed within the set budget, with a total of 5,381 trees having been removed as of Feb. 25th. ERO will revisit the remaining affected stands this spring, mostly on the east side of the reservoir near Plum Creek, and map them for removal recommendations next winter. A proposed budget for additional tree removal next winter is projected to be presented at April's meeting.
  - o Despite the tree removal effort, the bird EFU's have remained acceptable in the Fluctuation Zone, but the full monitoring report is not yet finalized and will be presented at an upcoming meeting. Charly Hoehn was very optimistic about this.
  - o Off-site monitoring in the Sandstone and Schmidt Open Space areas has been successfully completed for five years, and management and monitoring of these areas have now been turned over to Douglas County. This means a reduction in operating costs in this category for CRMC next year.
- Accounting has been updated through January 31st. There was 131.43 AF in storage.
- The OAC met on Feb. 26th, and Matt Loose provided some updates:
  - o The downstream call on the river was 1909, and DWR anticipates it will remain on that 1909 call through most of March.
  - o The end of the water year for Chatfield Reservoir is March 31st. Wheeler will be

reviewing the accounting, to ensure that the individual accounting matches the master accounting spreadsheet so that the right amounts can be carried over into the 2025 water year.

o Matt reported that CCWCD's storage would remain stable for the remainder of winter, but that we would be looking for opportunities to exchange water upstream later this year.

### **James Tingle Reservoir (JTR)**

- Accounting for January was received in February. On January 31st, CCWCD had 73.34 AF in storage. The accounting for February was just received, and on February 28th, there was 71.98 AF in storage for CCWCD.
- The requested amount of one acre-foot was released in February. About 4.20 AF is planned to be released in March.
- Wheeler prepared a memo to address the recommended amounts of Randall Ditch and Sessions Ditch credits that CCWCD retain this year. The memo accompanies this report. The recommendation is to retain a total of 75.7 acre-feet, comprised of 17.3 AF of Sessions Ditch credits and 58.4 AF of Randall Ditch credits. This leaves approximately 119 AF available to offer to lease.

**Additional Information:** Lisa Brown said she had a meeting with David Shohet and Matt Loose to discuss recommendations regarding excess Randall and Sessions Ditch water. It is just over 119af that we can offer to lease to Highlands Ranch Water. Matt Loose has calculated what we need to cover our consumptive use obligations. David Shohet said after we give 5af to the county, we have 195af of the Randall and Sessions that is available to Center. David said he and Matt have been figuring what HASP needs for the last several years. HASP will need 76af. Presently, we have 119 ft left for lease. All of our reservoirs are topped off. Matt is optimizing all of our water. The 119af is truly excess to Center this year. David's recommendation is to offer the lease of this water to Highlands Ranch Water first, which is our obligation under the agreement. If they are not interested, we can look to others.

Lynne Buchanan moved to authorize David Shohet, Matt Loose and Lisa Brown to offer a water lease to Highlands Ranch Water for the annual lease. If Highlands Ranch is not interested, the water can be offered elsewhere just for rest of the water year. Wallie Weld seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

### **South Platte Enhancement Board (SPEB):**

- The SPEB meeting was held virtually on February 19th, which I attended. The March meeting will also be virtual, but April will be in person at Denver Water, which I will plan on attending. I would also like to offer our conference space for one of this summer's meetings, held on the third Wednesday of each month.

**Additional Information:** Lisa Brown said typically 10-12 persons attend in person. The rest of the SPEB board has expressed interest in coming to Park County in the summer time. The board agreed. Lisa said she would probably try to tie the meeting into some kind of field trip outing such as up to Montgomery Reservoir.

- I informed the SPEB members about the ongoing tree removal at Chatfield.
- Denver Water's representative to SPEB will be giving a presentation on the South Platte Protection Plan to the AWRA (American Water Resources Association) Symposium on May 2.
- The U.S. Forest Service reported that they are operating under a hiring freeze, staff reductions, with grants and new permits on hold.
- Mike McHugh, a former SPEB member, joined the meeting and informed us that Stewardship West will be working with the owners of Glen Isle, located on the North Fork of the South Platte, to do fire mitigation work on the property this summer. They also have a planned operation near Tarryall Reservoir, in the Webber Gulch area, that is currently on hold. I reached out to him for more information regarding this and he said that that project is in the permitting process and they are working on mapping cultural resources in the area. I also provided him with CCWCD's grant information.

### **Snowpack Report:**

- On March 12, the Upper South Platte River Basin snowpack was at 100% of median. The South Platte Basin as a whole was at 103%. There are 45 days until median peak.
- The local SNOTELs were as follows: Hoosier Pass: 101%, Buckskin Joe: 85%, Rough & Tumble: 96%, and Michigan Creek: 95%.
- The manual Snow Survey took place at the end of February. On February 26th, Mosquito

Creek was at 89%, and Horseshoe Mountain was at 91%.

### **CCWCD Website Issues:**

- I asked Daisy to update Briggs Cunningham's biography to acknowledge his passing and his years of service to CCWCD. If it's decided to add an "In Recognition of Service" page, she suggested putting it under the "About Us" heading tab.

### **Grant & Scholarship Announcements:**

- Advertisements have been placed in both the Flume and the Ute Country News.
- I have received one scholarship application and a few preliminary inquiries about the grant opportunity.

**Kenosha Trout Club (KTC):** No changes since last report.

**Michigan Creek Restoration Plan (MCR):** No changes since last report.

**Bar Star Corporation (BSC):** No changes since last report.

**Indian Mountain Plan (IMP):** No changes since last report.

**Guffey-area Augmentation Plan (GAP):** No changes since last report.

**Division Two Delivery (DTD):** No changes since last report.

### **Currant Creek Two (CCT):**

- I stopped by the property last week and all was in order. However, a large ponderosa pine near the property entrance has died and we might want to consider taking it down. Lynne Buchanan said there were some others that are also dead.

**Individual information:** Lisa Brown asked about the best email to use for District information. She wanted to get the correct email address from Wallie Weld that is not a shared email. Wallie provided a personal email for board use.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

4.1 Discuss a "Recognition of Service" page for the website and appropriate acknowledgement of past Board members. Lisa Brown informed the board where the recognition page is located on the web-site. This is where In Memoriam will be along with recognition of past and current contributors to the Board. Nola indicated she had talked to Gary Hodges and the service for Briggs Cunningham will be April 26. He will work on getting a picture to her. Nola also spoke

with Amanda Gardner who will provide a picture of James Gardner. Nola was unable to reach Evelyn Whatley, James Tingle's wife. She has gathered information from some obituaries and is compiling what she can for the web-site. Lynne Buchanan is going to search back through some of the slides from Burro Days to locate a picture of Briggs Cunningham.

4.2 Discussion of water law class for Park County Citizens: David Shohet and Lisa Brown have been working on an outline for the water law class; he just sent it out to the Board. David provided an overview of what he suggests would work well. He said he would educate the public without being really technical, using legal terms and keep it as straight forward as possible. He proposes 3 hours total with 30 minutes social hour before, with one and a half or three quarters presentation time. It could be followed with 20 minutes for questions and another 30 minutes for social interaction.

David put together questions for things such as do we want food or anything special. What about the room set up. Do we want just chairs? Then what handouts will we have and what about zoom and recording? David began putting together a rough outline of what we can do. It can include the CCWCD entity history, 20 minutes on water law 101, ground water and exempt well permitting, then pond and pond enforcement. We could include 15 minutes on augmentation plans and the HASP augmentation plan. Rather than have David lecture for the whole time, we could have DWR talk about administration of water rights and some of the things going on in the South Platte River basin and the Headwaters. David had at one point reached out to Aurora and we could have other water users talk about their use in Park County. Then at the end, we could have a short panel discussion about future partnership and cooperation about what we can all do for protection of the waters in Park County. This was just for a rough discussion of we can have and we wanted board input if we were headed in the right direction.

Lisa McVicker thinks the exempt well looks good, and also with a little information for people who are new and are thinking about how to apply for an exempt well permit. And in terms of other water, the connection with the Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District. Thinking about Division 2, at least acknowledging those Twin Lake shares and the fact that Arkansas river water really does go through Park County on its way to Colorado Springs. David Shohet said he thinks we might be trying to pack a lot into this. While important, division 2 is really a small piece of a bigger pie. Chris Fuller likes it too. She said we might want to set up camera that will record all sound but only pictures of the panel of speakers. This would be more appropriate for the website rather than the whole class. Parks and Wildlife suggestion with Aurora is a good idea. We don't want just water utilities, but water users and people that have to be responsible for water. Lisa Brown said Parks and Wildlife own Tarryall Reservoir and they have ranches where they irrigate so they could be a good user group. David Shohet said there is the CWCB that might be a good group because they have so many mini stream flow rights throughout the county. They do come at it at a different perspective from maintenance. Lisa McVicker said by the April meeting we could put a date on the calendar and start advertising. Nola Knudsen suggested advertising at least a month in advance.

4.3 Follow-up discussion on Arkansas River Basin Water Forum: Lisa Brown said she really enjoyed the forum. Becky Mitchell was a key note speaker who talked about the 2007 guidelines

being renegotiated. The issue was the lower basin states are still taking their full allotment per year which works out to 8.5-million-acre feet despite the drought. They need to be taking less during drought years; it draws down Lake Powell and Lake Mead. There was a discussion about ground water augmentation and how that was born out of scarcity. Lisa thought this might be a good thing to help people understand in the water law class. They talked about the 1972 well use rules, the 1994 ground water measurement rules where they finally started measuring the high-capacity wells on the Arkansas River water basin. There was a water 101 panel that talked about public water ownership and that it belongs to the people of the state not just the person that owns the land with water going through it. They had chief Judge Gregory Styduhar, Division two district court judge talked about importance of water rights determination and about the Water Rights Determination and Administration Act of 1969 which tied ground water wells to surface water, created the seven water divisions of the state based on the water basins, and created the water referees. Lisa said he also talked about his years as a raft guide and had some fun slides to show. There was another talk about the shared responsibility across district boundaries and that agricultural success is something to be encouraged. You can see housing developments on a piece of formerly agricultural land. Now, everyone has a well and what is that doing to the water supply. There were various tours each day. Lisa went to a tour of the water works park down on the river. They removed a dangerous feature which was a low head dam that was an obstruction that was dangerous to recreators. They built a beautiful play park that is working well. It has fish ladders incorporated into it. On the second day, Lisa attended the El Pueblo history museum.

Wallie Weld was there as well and thanks board for allowing him to go. Wallie said much like we are related to other districts; those guys are related to different states. There is a different legal scenario; they have interstate and made that very prominent. The surface and ground water being the same was a concept he understood. They are very connected and that was important to understand. Fountain Creek is anywhere from a nice creek to overflowing its banks and flooding like crazy in other areas. Their ability to manage is a little different from ours. Wallie went to a movie called Mirasol about the influence of water on our lives; everything from being able to take a drink to grow the food we have. It just brought everything back into focus about how important water is. He is excited to be on the board and keep the water in Park County. Lisa McVicker asked if that movie was public. David Shohet said it was still private but they would have showings for groups. They may be willing to do a showing for Center, perhaps during a joint meeting. Lynne Buchanan was there but not feeling well. Wallie said the Pueblo Museum is about the city but a fair portion of it was about the steel strike. It decimated the city. They had pictures of the rioters. Lisa Brown said it is great networking and David Shohet suggested she meet Greg Felt, the Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy General Manager. She may have conversations with them at some point related to our division two augmentation plan.

David Shohet said his is a powerful board that can pull a lot of big speakers. David said there is sort of an undertone Colorado Springs is really expanding; they have been adding annexations left and right. They were a little “tarded and feathered” for the two days with a lot of people jabbing at them saying we understand Colorado Springs is growing but you have to grow in a more responsible manner. If you come into our backyard, you can expect some fights if you

expect to take water. They are looking for water as they continue to expand. They are expanding at rates doubling the size of their city. This has the Arkansas River folks concerned.

4.4 548 Front St. Building updates: Lisa Brown said she reached out to the Breckenridge Building Center and got some quotes for a door. These are metal clad solid wood doors. The quote from Weather Shield is \$2,522, from Marvin for \$3,521.00 and she received a call from a representative from Pella Windows and Doors. Alex Chavarria did contact Pella and is planning to do this work. The Pella representative and Alex will prepare a quote for the district. Craig Steinmetz said a cut sheet would be very helpful from these suppliers for the board to look at. A question to Alex would be do you plan on installing this door regardless of whose door we choose.

Craig said when CCWCD decided to go with natural gas over propane, we were quoted prices that were half of the price of propane and natural gas per pressure ounce. Craig said we would like to keep track of our monthly bills to monitor what we are paying with natural gas. Nola said she would put together a spread sheet of costs from last year and this current year. Nola was wondering about the heat tape in the gutters. She asked if there was a sensor that would turn it on and off or should she switch off the breaker when not needed. Craig asked for two copies of one bill each showing the old bill and new one. Lisa McVicker reminded the board the building was open in November and December during construction and the electricity and propane were higher during that period.

David Shohet said the lease with the Dental office ran out and asked if the Board would like to renew the lease. David will reach out to them to see if they are interested in a three-year lease.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

5.1 Discuss long-range planning for CCWCD: Tabled to next meeting

## **UPDATE ON LEGAL ISSUES**

David Shohet said there was not much to report on. We are in several water court cases. The first one is the Rosalie change case that Alison Gorsevski is handling. She just recently came to an agreement with the state, the last opposer, and received a pretty positive result. That case will be wrapped up in 30-45 days. Otherwise, these cases are in a continual pattern of the applicant providing the decree and engineering and the opposers provide comments. All cases are in front of the referee. David also sent out Wheeler's monthly operations report.

6.1 Adjourn to Executive Session – not needed

6.2 Reconvene as Public Meeting

6.3 Act on Executive Session Matters - NA

## **PATRONS COMMENTS**

None – Welcome to Lily, CCWCD's newest pet attendee.

## **DIRECTOR'S ISSUES**

None

Wallie Weld moved to adjourn the meeting. Lynne Buchanan seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 2:39pm.