

CARSON WATER SUBCONSERVANCY DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND
CARSON RIVER WATERSHED COMMITTEE MEETING
September 18, 2019, 6:30 P.M.

Minutes

Vice Chairman Thaler called the meeting of the Carson Water Subconservancy District (CWSD) to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Storey County Courthouse Museum, 26 South B Street, Virginia City. Roll call of the CWSD Board was taken and a quorum was determined to be present.

CWSD Directors present:

Brad Bonkowski, Treasurer
Stacey Giomi, Director
Barry Penzel, Director
Steve Thaler, Vice Chairman
Larry Walsh, Director
Mike Workman, Director

Absent CWSD Directors: Carl Erquiaga, Ken Gray, Jack Jacobs, Ernie Schank, & Fred Stodieck.

Roll call of the Caron River Watershed Committee was taken which included CWSD Directors present and Committee Members: David Griffith and Austin Osborne. Committee Member Don Jardine was absent.

Others present:

Kathy Canfield, Storey County
Brenda Hunt, Watershed Program Manager
Edwin James, General Manager
Patrick King, Attorney
Shauna Langan, River Wranglers
Debbie Neddenriep, Water Resource Specialist II
Catrina Schambra, Administrative Assistant/Secretary to the Board

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Committee Member Osborne.

Item #4 – Discussion Only: Public Comment – None

Item #5 – For Possible Action: Approval of Agenda

Director Penzel made the motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Walsh and unanimously approved by the Board.

Item #6 – For Possible Action: Approval of the Board Meeting Minutes of July 17, 2019

Director Giomi made the motion to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of August 21, 2019 as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Workman and unanimously approved by the Board.

CONSENT AGENDA

[Item # 7 Pulled for further discussion concerning updated handout.]

Item # 8 - For Possible Action: Approval of Payment of Bills for August 2019

Director Workman made a motion to approve Consent Agenda Item #8 as presented. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Osborne and unanimously approved by the Board.

Item # 7 - For Possible Action: Approval of Treasurer's Report for August 2019

Mr. James explained that there had been a large negative number being reported on the General Fund Balance Sheet due to Ms. Schambra accounting for transactions made in FY 19-20 that were attributable to the FY 18-19 budget. She learned how to post the transactions to the previous year and remove it from our current year financials and so the report was updated to reflect this. Ms. Schambra has been learning the accounting aspect of Quick Books which gives us a clearer financial picture between yearend and the audit in October and will help make our books more audit friendly and cost efficient in the future.

Director Giomi made a motion to approve the August Treasurers Report as amended. The motion was seconded by Director Bonkowski and unanimously approved by the Board.

****END OF CONSENT AGENDA****

Item #9 – For Discussion only: Presentation on River Wranglers Program

Shauna Langan has been an AmeriCorps Member assigned to work with the River Wranglers program for the past 11 months. When her term expired, she was hired as the Outreach and Education Coordinator for River Wranglers! She is very happy in her new position and thanks CWSD for all their support.

Today River Wranglers started the new Carson River Workday Pilot Program which brings together 4th Grade GATE students from Seeliger Middle School and Pioneer High School students in the Leadership Program. This is a year-long, one-on-one mentoring program that RW has never tried before. They will participate in field trips to the river for adventurous learning and fun.

River Wranglers estimates at least 50% of the kids that participate in their programs have never been to the river before. Last year they reached approximately 5,000 kids with their educational program. They learn about bugs and water quality, take nature walks and learn stream assessment just to name a few activities. They are having fun while learning about the Carson River and living in the watershed. It's a great program!

No action was taken.

Item #10 – For Possible Action: Letter to US Forest Service regarding the proposal to introduce beaver into Faith Valley

Mr. James announced the issue and shared his thoughts on the pros and cons of the idea of introducing beaver into the watershed. There was robust discussion among the Board.

Ms. Hunt pointed out the positive aspect in that the beaver would help ease erosion. Mr. James says most beaver dams will be blown out by the melt flow in wet years, however this

idea is to have dozens of beaver dams that are reinforced by manmade “help” to get them started, which would withstand river flow and impact movement of the water and our access to our water rights.

Committee Member Osborne asks why the beavers would need help. Mr. James suggests that it would be to make the dams more durable to withstand high flows. Director Bonkowski says beaver dams were never meant to be permanent in their natural state – so why try to make them unnatural? And what about the impact on vegetation and trees? Mr. James says the beavers would wipe out the Aspen trees.

Committee Member Griffith says his understanding is that the type of beavers that are being proposed here are not native beavers to this area. These are non-native and bigger and would do more damage than the smaller Mountain Beaver that is native to the Sierras. Mountain Beaver are small, blind and live underground.

Director Giomi would be interested to know if there are other ideas that are not so invasive and destructive that are being considered. Regarding the draft letter, it says we are open to other options. If we are, what are they? We should state them in the letter.

Director Thaler says he agrees with Committee member Osborne on this, why would we mess with Mother Nature? He thinks that CWSD should state it is against this in the letter. Or better, invite the USFS to come to address our Board, present their idea and discuss the water rights issues and the effects on downstream counties.

Director Penzel suggests (regarding the possibly moving our water rights) there would be costs involved, i.e. decommissioning a dam, that the USFS should be responsible for. He thinks we must stress the effects on all entities downstream. We should respectfully ask that we get an informative presentation to our 14-member Board to discuss all the pros and cons, including water rights issues and water flow.

Director Bonkowski reiterates his question on the purpose of the beavers if they plan to build the dams themselves. Ms. Hunt suggests that it may be a financial decision to have the beavers help in the management of the river to save money.

Director Giomi made a motion that the letter to the U.S. Forest Service be edited to incorporate the concerns of our 14-Member Board and requesting a presentation that will address the impact of this project to our water rights and the river flow to the six counties we represent. The motion was seconded by Director Penzel and unanimously approved by the Board.

Item #11 – For Discussion only: Review the Marlette Video

Mr. James introduced the Marlette Video that was produced by CWSD in 2010 showing the history of the lake and its use as a water source.

No action was taken.

Item #12 – For Discussion only: Update on Carson River Permits

Ed James and Patrick Kind met with State Lands and Conservation District representatives to discuss the permit process. The consensus was it try to implement the Truckee permit process universally and our goal is to help facilitate this process of river projects by conservation districts.

Director Walsh asked if there is a plan to include all conservation districts, that can be used everywhere? Patrick King says the consensus is to make this process as broad as possible. This

can be focused on the Carson River first, and then it can be used as a template for other areas. State Lands can then use it as template for all other conservation districts.

Director Giomi asked for clarification – CWSD is not issuing the permits, rather we are facilitating the process? Mr. James responds, yes, we are helping the entities move forward. Helping with language, etc. State Lands was not aware that an agreement existed; this is the first time the new Executive Director has seen the agreement.

Mr. James is hoping to have the process in place in time for next years' river projects.

Director Giomi suggests we write it and present it to them to get the ball rolling.

No action was taken.

Item #13 – For Discussion Only: Staff Reports –

Mr. James reported the following:

- We will be filming for the CWSD Video at the October Board meeting. Dress nice!
- We will be releasing water from Lost Lakes on October 1.
- Will have FEMA projects funding information at the October Board meeting.

Brenda Hunt reports:

- CRC Retreat October 23, 1-4pm at WNC; Topics will include Geomorphology 101, River Projects & Funding.

Legal – None

Correspondence – None

No action was taken.

Item #14– For Discussion Only: Directors Reports –

- Director Bonkowski asks for a Water Year Numbers Report and a Lahontan Report at next meeting. He will ask Ernie to provide information. He also reported that Carson City is finishing up construction of their inter-tie-line for moving Minden water to the Quill plant; it should be done by December. Once that is completed, Minden Water can be sent to Lyon County, Douglas County and anywhere in Carson City. All this water comes from Carson Valley.
- Director Giomi reported it has been approved by the State Board of Examiners and Carson City “in concept” for a 2-year agreement on improvements; it’s a temporary agreement to get to a permanent agreement. He is hoping to have a permanent agreement before next legislative session.
- Director Thaler wanted to just say for the record, he believes CWSD is a model in what we do. This being the final field trip of the summer, and seeing what we all do in our counties -- how it’s all the same but different; yet we all come together as a 14-member Board representing 6 counties and manage to get to a consensus almost every time on most issues. He commends the Board on a job well done.

No action was taken.

Item #15 – For Discussion Only: Update on activities in Alpine County –

Committee Member Griffith reported the following:

- Save the Paiute Trout Program is happening now and looks to be a success. They are being physically moved from Coyote Valley Creek to the falls below in Silver Spring

Creek. The Paiute Trout has the distinction of having received federal protection as one of the first animals listed under the Endangered Species Act.

- Lahontan Water Quality & CA State Water Quality Directors are all attending Leviathan Tour this Friday, September 20. He will be attending also. He noted the first tour filled up fast and a second is being scheduled.
- Alpine County now has 2 traffic lights; both of which are associated with construction projects.

No action was taken.

Item #16 – For Discussion Only: Update on activities in Storey County –

Committee Member Austin Osborne Reported the following:

- Thank you all for coming to Virginia City tonight!
- Storey County is moving forward on the Gold Hill Sewer Project and he is very happy about that.

No action was taken.

Item #17 – For Discussion Only: Public Comment – None

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Erquiaga adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catrina Schambra
Secretary to the Board