**Meeting of the**

**Yellow Jacket Water Conservancy District**

**Thursday December 28**

**1:00 to 3:00 p.m.**

**Meeker Library**

**490 Main Street, Meeker, CO 81641**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Directors Present Staff Present

Kelly Sheridan Scott Grosscup

Ben Rodgers

Paul Neilson Others Present

Shawn Welder Erin Light, Division Engineer, Water Division 6

Bailey Franklin Betty Kracht, Water Commissioner

Anthony Theos Diedre McNabb

Doug Overton, County Commissioner

Approval of Minutes from May 24, 2023

Director Franklin moved to approve the minutes from the May 24, 2023 meeting, Director Neilson second, all in favor.

Public Comment

There were no members from the public wishing to discuss items not on the agenda.

Treasurer’s Report and Approval of Accounts Payable

Director Franklin presented an update on 2023 budget, including legal and engineering fees incurred through November. He also indicated a portion of the District’s reserves had been put into a four-month CD that matured in September generating additional interest income. Director Neilson moved to pay outstanding invoices as presented and to pay any December billings provided such billings are within the budget for 2023, Director Welder second, all in favor.

Adoption of 2024 Budget

Director Franklin moved to open the budget hearing for the 2023 budget, Director Theos second, all in favor.

Scott stated notice of the budget was published in Garfield, Moffat and Rio Blanco Counties, copies of the budget were made available to the public, and a copy was presented to the Board on October 12, 2023. He did not receive any comments from the public on the budget.

Scott then presented the budget. He indicated despite recent legislative changes and revised property assessments, the District was able to maintain the existing mill levy at 0.209 mills. The budget proposed additional development and discussion with potential funding agencies, as well as putting additional monies into reserves. Discussion followed.

Director Franklin moved to adopt the Resolution to Set Mill Levy for 2024 at 0.209 mills, Director Rogers second, all in favor.

Director Franklin moved to approve the Resolution to Adopt Budget as presented, Director Theos second all in favor.

Director Rogers moved to adopt the Resolution to Appropriate Sums of Money, Director Neilson second, all in favor.

Director Franklin moved to close the budget hearing, Director Neilson second, all in favor.

Moffat County MOU

Scott stated Moffat County is proceeding with approval of an umbrella plan for augmentation in areas of the Lower Yampa River. This plan would allow future contractees within the county to augment out of priority depletions without obtaining their own separate augmentation plan. Augmentation could occur directly or by exchange by releases from Elkhead Creek Reservoir. Portions of the area to be served are located within areas that are also included within the District’s boundaries. Moffat County has requested a Memorandum of Understanding between it and the District, whereby the District would support and approve the plan.

Discussion followed about the benefits of the augmentation plan, the service area, and how it would operate. Division Engineer Light indicated her office had filed a statement of opposition to the water court application and that it was looking at the extent of the exchange reaches. The total service area to be covered under the plan could change depending upon further investigation.

Director Franklin moved to approve the MOU as presented, Director Neilson second, all in favor.

Lake Avery Enlargement

Scott Grosscup stated there has not been much progress since the last meeting on the Lake Avery enlargement. Applegate Group is still in the process of finalizing its report to a memorandum format. Budget constraints have also limited the ability to advance to next stages of development.

Director Franklin discussed internal meeting at Colorado Parks and Wildlife (“CPW” ) noting CPW remains interested in the project. CPW has requested the final report from Applegate Group of the flood hazard analysis. He also stated, CPW is working on dam rehabilitation work. CPW anticipates drawdown of Lake Avery in August 2024 leaving a partial pool, then fully draining the reservoir in 2025. Work would begin in June. It is not clear when the work will be completed and the reservoir will begin refilling. CPW will perform seismic analysis and boring, which may be helpful information to future reservoir enlargement. Discussion followed concerning public support and feasibility of the project.

Online Presence

Directors discussed hosting providers and potential legal concerns that may arise with new legislative changes to require websites to be ADA compliant and additional costs that may incur. Director Welder and Scott will talk with a website consultant to ask for a mock up, and to better understand concerns with ADA regulations and whether further pursuit is reasonable based on District finances. They will report to the Board at its next meeting.

Appointment to Committees

The Board discussed appointments to various committees.

White River PAC – Director Neils moved to appoint Director Franklin to serve as the District’s designee to the White River PAC with Director Sheridan to serve as an alternate, Director Theos second, all in favor.

Basin Roundtable – Director Theos moved to retain director Welder as the District’s designee on the Basin Roundtable, Director Franklin second, all in favor.

New Business

Scott reported the initial lease term with the White River Highland Ditch expires March 31, 2024 and requested authority to begin discussions on re-negotiating the lease. Director Neilson moved to appoint Director Sheridan as a negotiator of possible amendment and renewal of the existing lease, director Franklin second, all in favor.

Ms. Dierdre McNaab, who arrived after the public comment section of the meeting, discussed the Wolf Creek Reservoir project and concerns she has with transparency with that project. She also discussed the potential benefits provide upstream storage would have to serve the entire county. She encouraged the board to expand access to information.

Director Welder reported on the purchase of the Shoshone Power Plant by west slope entities.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:26.