

UTAH WATERSHEDS COUNCIL MEETING
(unapproved) Meeting Minutes
Department of Natural Resources
Salt Lake City, Utah
January 10, 2023
9:00 AM

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair Corey Cram, Utah Assoc. of Special Districts Kris Hamlet, DEM Director
Vice-Chair Scott Paxman, Reclamation Project Rep. Ken White, USU Extension VP
(Virtual)
Warren Peterson, Water Attorney
Kim Shelley, DEQ Executive Director
Marcelle Shoop, National Audubon Society
Mark Stratford, Utah League of Cities & Towns
Rikki Hrenko-Browning, Industry Rep. (Virtual)
Craig Buttars, UDAF Commissioner (Virtual)

OTHERS PRESENT:

Todd Stonely, DWR Assistant Director
Rachel Shilton, Division of Water Resources
Shannon Clough, Division of Water Resources
Lanli Pham, Division of Water Resources
Laura Vernon, Division of Water Resources
Jake Serago, Division of Water Resources
Marty Bushman, Legal Counsel
Keith Denos, Provo Water Users Association (Virtual)
Jeff Budge, Provo Water Users Association

Todd Stonely announced that we will be starting the meeting late due to a fire alarm test being performed.

Meeting started at 9:05 a.m.

- 9:00-9:05 - Welcome (Corey Cram)

- Corey makes a motion to approve the agenda with the changes discussed, Kris Hamlet motioned approval, Warren Peterson seconded, and all approved. Motion passed.
- Changes in agenda:
 - Proposed Expansion of Cloud Seeding Program (Candice Hasenyager) moved from 9:30am to 9:15am due to radio interview
 - Update from Andy Rasmussen (The Langdon Group) moved from 10:30am to 10:15am
- 9:10-9:15 - Recommended Revisions to the Watersheds Council Act (Warren)
 - Add the State Engineer as a non-voting member of the statewide council.
 - Discussion to add a representative of land use planning agencies to the list of members for local watershed council.
 - Per the last meeting, both revisions were added and made official; however, there has been a little push back on the idea of adding a land use planning authority agency. According to the original act, additional interests could be added to accomplish the needs of a local council.
 - Warren proposes a motion to approve each of these item amendments.
 - Corey requests clarification in regards to adding a land use planning agency that could be either municipal or county and to seek out that person but not required.
 - Warren anticipates Corey's request.
 - Comment from Teresa Wilhelmsen. States that the state engineer is willing to participate and be a non-voting member of the statewide council.
 - Warren motioned, 2nd by Mark Stratford, All approved.
- 9:15-9:40 - Proposed Expansion of Cloud Seeding Program (Candice Hasenyager)
 - Candice discussed how water, clouds and snowflakes are formed. Utah ground seeding in the past has been with the use of ground-based manually operated generators. The Cloud Seeding Act of 1973 allows UDWR to permit and authorize projects as well as regulating all cloud seeding projects for the State of Utah.
 - We currently have two licensed operators, North American Weather Consultants and Emery County Water Conservancy District.
 - Suspension criteria of cloud seeding operations include excess snowpack accumulation, rain-induced winter floods, severe weather and other factors.
 - Cloud seeding area projects and budgets were presented.
 - Target and control analysis is utilized to gauge the impact of cloud seeding.
 - Cloud seeding projects are evaluated and reported on yearly and appears to be beneficial and worth the cost and provide a valuable return on investment.

- Opportunities exist to expand cloud seeding operations throughout Utah, but more funding is needed.
- More information regarding cloud seeding can be found at: water.utah.gov/cloudseeding/.

- 9:40-10:18 - Update on Great Salt Lake Activities (Laura Vernon)

- Great Salt Lake (GSL) is important to the environment and Utah's economy.
- Historic elevation tracking of the Great SL since 1847. Historic average is about 4200 ft, currently 4189 ft, historic low 4188 ft in 2002 and historic high 4211 ft in 1986.
- Where does it all come from? Major inflows to the GSL come from Brea River: 38%, precipitation: 32%, Jordan River 17%, Wever River 10%. Average inflows: 2 million acre ft. 2020 & 2021: 1 million acre ft.
- GSL Salinity current conditions: Gunnison Bay 25-28%. Gilbert Bay: 18.7% Ideal range for Gilbert Bay is 12-16% we are currently well above that now.
- Laying the groundwork. Studies were done in regards to drying saline and other lakes around the world and the consequences and economic implications it will have if the GSL dries up.
- The Great Salt Lake Advisory Council (GSLAC) prepared water strategies to provide marching orders or guidance to educate, engage and save water. 2022 was the Year of Water on Capitol Hill and significant legislation passed to help save GSL.
- Direct and indirect impacts, \$500 million in funding, water trust, Secondary metering, outdoor landscaping modifications etc
- New GSL Basin Planner. HB429 Great SL Amendments, develop and implement an integrated surface and groundwater assessment for GSL watershed, state water strategy, GSLAC studies, so many more to have resilient water supply.
- Modifications to the causeway is a way to control salinity in the lake, by raising the berm less salt flows from the north arm into the south arm of the lake.
- For more details about GSL, see: www.greatsaltlake.utah.gov

- 10:18-10:37 - Discussion on providing advice to governor and legislature on water issues (Corey)

- Watersheds Council Act 73-10G-305(f) - Provide advice to the governor and the legislature on water issues.
- Corey Cram asked a question about how best to work with the governor's office.
- Kim Shelley comments: Be cautious how we want to approach the governor, make sure it is one of our top priorities.
- Corey Cram asks a question about who we can work with from the governor's office.

- Kim Shelley responds - Laura Hansen would be a great person to invite to our future meetings.
- Corey Cram: Kris Hamlet any thoughts?
- Kris Hamlet responds. We could have a possible cabinet level discussion or provide a written summary/report.
- Corey Cram: What would be the best time to submit that?
- Todd Stonely: The legislative committees we report to usually meet in November. The Utah Water Task Force has meetings more frequently.
- Warren Peterson: I asked Executive Director Joel Ferry if he wanted something more formal than that for this year and he said no.
- Marcelle Shoop: Future agenda items, what is the role of this larger council and where is it going?
- Corey Cram: Could we have a follow-up with legislative committees and follow up with the governor's office in where we need to be?
- Teresa Wilhelmsen: Legislative meetings - Have reports ready in Sept/Oct. It would be better than in Nov. since that is crunch time.
- Warren Peterson: Don't have to wait for the Nov meeting.
- Marcelle Shoop: Suggested future topics for the council to consider - Amy Hawes to attend and provide an update to the group, future GSL Enhancement Water Trust provide update, update following legislative session..
- Corey Cram: Great topics/ideas.

● 10:37-10:45 - Update on local watershed council formation from Andy Rasmussen (The Langdon Group)

- Working on five local councils: Bear River, Weber River, Jordan River, Utah Lake, and West Desert (robust list of stakeholders, making sure we get their feedback). Provide the results in February and shortly thereafter will come to council for certification.
- Talked about organizing documents
- Get list of participating members
- Shooting to be set up by March (Bear River)
- Marcelle Shoop: For each of those five watersheds that are included in the GSL Watershed Council, how can a representative from the GSL Watershed Council be chosen to sit on the council?
- Andy Rasmussen: Good question Marcelle. We will need to be more intentional about that one specifically in the next few months.
- Warren Peterson: I'm looking at the statute, and it looks like it could run concurrently. Looking 73-10G-306(C & D).
- Todd to follow up with Legal Interpretation on 73-10G-306(C & D). Confirmed.

- 10:45-10:48 - Recommended Actions to Increase Public Awareness of the Council (Todd Stonely)

- The division is setting up an email subscription service (Constant Contact) that people can subscribe to to receive notifications, etc.
- We will add council members to it and utilize subcategories to help distinguish what correspondence goes to who.
- Broader purpose is to advertise on our website, the councils, when the meetings are, etc. Hoping we can have approval to work with the chairman and interim news we should provide.
- Branding: We hope to create logo for the council and run that by the chairman for approval.
- Corey Cram: Please move forward.

- 10:48-10:50:15 - Approval of minutes from the October 5th Meeting (Corey Cram)

- Minutes very good
- Warren Peterson: Few items to correct offline
- Motion to delay approval until next meeting, Marcelle Seconds, all in favor.

Public Comments? None.

- 10:51-10:53 - Wrap-up & Confirm Upcoming Council Meeting April 12th 9am, DNR Auditorium

- 10:53- Adjourn