

## UTAH WATERSHEDS COUNCIL MEETING

[Approved] Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2023

1:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.

Department of Natural Resources Auditorium  
1594 W. North Temple  
Salt Lake City, UT

YouTube 'LIVE' stream:

<https://youtube.com/live/mjT5e9ttH9Y>

### COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

- **Scott Paxman**, Vice Chair, Reclamation Project Rep.
- **Warren Peterson**, Water Attorney
- **Rikki Hrenko-Browning**, Industry Rep.
- **Kim Shelley**, DEQ Executive Director
- **Joel Ferry**, DNR Executive Director
- **Nathan Dausg**, Bear River Local Watershed Council
- **Marcelle Shoop**, Environmental and Conservation Groups Rep.
- **Mark Stratford**, Utah League of Cities and Towns (Virtual)
- **Ken White**, USU Extension VP (Virtual)
- **Craig Butters**, UDAF Commissioner
- **Dustin Jansen**, Division of Indian Affairs Director (Virtual)

### OTHERS PRESENT:

- **Todd Stonely**, Division of Water Resources (DWR) Director
- **Candace Hasenyager**, DWR Director
- **Dan Adams**, The Langdon Group
- **Eric McCulley**, Utah Reclamation Conservation and Mitigation Commission (Jordan River Local WC)
- **Evan Curtis**, Governor's Office of Planning and Budget
- **Andy Rasmussen**, The Langdon Group
- **Peter Gessell**, The Langdon Group
- **Hollee Wood**, The Langdon Group
- **Christie Hansen**, Bear River Local Watershed Council chair
- **Rick Smith**, Davis and Weber Canal Company (Weber River Local WC)
- **Sterling Brown**, Strawberry Water Users (Utah Lake Local WC)
- **Rich Mickelson**, Timpanogos Special Service District (Utah Lake Local WC)
- **Corey Pierce**, Spanish Fork City (Utah Lake Local WC)
- **Joe Crawford**, Central Utah Water Conservancy District (Utah Lake Local WC)
- **Darren Hess**, Weber Basin Water Conservancy District (Weber River Local WC)
- **Wes Siddoway** (Weber River Local WC)
- **Jeff Young** (Weber River Local WC)
- **Teresa Wilhemsen**, State Engineer
- **Carly Payne**, DWR
- **Shannon Clough**, DWR
- **Rachel Shilton**, DWR
- **Laura Briefer**, SLC Public Utilities (Jordan River Local WC) (Virtual)
- **Todd Adams**, DNR

Meeting started at 1:00 p.m.

**1:00-1:04 p.m. Welcome and introductions (Scott Paxman)**

Chairman Corey Cram was excused, so Vice Chairman Scott Paxman conducted the meeting.

**1:04-1:05 p.m. Approval of Minutes, April 12th meeting**

Warren Peterson moved to approve the minutes, subject to grammatical corrections. Kim Shelley seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Marcelle Shoop abstained because she was not present for the April 12th meeting, but her proxy from that meeting indicated to her that the minutes were consistent with the meeting.

**1:05-1:24 p.m. Revisions to Local Council Organizing Documents Template**

(Peter Gessel) There local watershed councils expressed concerns and feedback about the organizing document template. Mr. Peterson agreed to edit the document.

(Warren Peterson) I spoke with Dan, Andy, Peter, and local council members. The following items were brought up:

- Can we make it more plain language?
- One local council objected to the required number of council members (9-21) and wanted more flexibility. The Statute does not specify a specific number, so our recommended number of members was relegated to a footnote on page 4.

I also reinstated the Statute language that said represented interests should be followed “where feasible”.

(Marcelle Shoop) Why are we giving authority to both the chair and the council to determine the frequency of council meetings?

(Warren Peterson) That was a judgment call on my part in case of an obstinate chair and council members who would like to do it differently.

(Rikki Hrenko-Browning) On page 2, item 3, it talks about publishing the agenda on the Division of Water Resources (DWRe)'s website. I want to make sure that's not in lieu of the Utah Public Notice website.

(Todd Stonely) The statute requires that meetings are posted to the Utah Public Notice website. The DWRe website supplements that.

(Warren Peterson) We should clarify that meetings should be posted in both places. Peter Gessel, please help with the redraft to clarify.

(Marcelle Shoop) It would help to put some suggested language for proxies if a council wants to allow them.

(Rikki Hrenki-Browning) Current language does not allow for proxies.

(Warren Peterson) Since it's not prohibited by the Watershed Councils Act, it makes sense to provide the option for proxies.

Warren Peterson moved to adopt the amended document template with the following changes:

- Clarify that meeting notices will be done on the Utah Public Notice website, DWR website, and to members directly who have requested notification
- Add language for a proxy option

Marcelle Shoop seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### **1:24-1:30 p.m. Follow-up on Conditional Certification of Bear River and Jordan River local watershed councils**

(Todd Stonely) Marty Bushman reviewed the Bear River Watershed Council's organizing documents and found them to be in compliance with the Watershed Councils Act. His only change is to designate an anchor location. The Jordan River Commission is still working to update its bylaws, and they have a few questions on some of their members. Marty has not had a chance to review them yet. They are planning to be ready by the October meeting.

(Christie Hansen) We intend to put the Bear River Water Conservancy District as our anchor location. We took the suggestion of no proxies, but as I listened to the discussion today, I found it was very important to allow proxies to help attendance and ability to have a quorum. If we look at council membership as volunteer time, the chair does everything. Having secretarial backup seems very important, yet the template does not mention having a secretary.

(Warren Peterson) I changed the language from "the chair shall do this" to "the chair shall assure that this is done". In addition, the Bear River is now certified and can make their own amendments to their document.

Nathan Daug's moved to approve full certification of Bear River Watershed Council. Craig Buttars seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### **1:30-1:44 p.m. Certification of the Weber River and Utah Lake watershed councils**

(Todd Stonely) Marty Bushman reviewed the Weber River Watershed Council's organizing documents and had some minor edits.

(Jeff Young) We added language in the template to have a secretary. We have settled on the Weber Basin Water Conservancy District as our anchor location.

(Rikki Hrenko-Browning) Is the Farm Bureau truly representative of industry?

(Jeff Young) They are the ones who have responded to inquiries and been willing to attend.

Nathan Daug's moved to approve the Weber River Watershed Council for certification. Joel Ferry seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

(Joe Crawford) We decided to fill the secretary role in the Utah Lake Watershed Council as well. Everybody is very qualified, I'm excited to work with them.

(Warren Peterson) I want to check enthusiasm levels—are we creating participant fatigue and redundancy?

(Joe Crawford) Eric Ellis brings expertise. He seems very willing and excited. Instead of getting tired, people are getting even more excited to help watershed management even further along.

(Kim Shelley) Participation fatigue is real. Joe is the chair of both the Utah Lake Watershed Council (4-year term) and the Provo River Watershed Council (1 year term). For the Utah Lake council, it looks like the stormwater and recreation roles have yet to be filled.

(Joe Crawford) I reached out to Scott Bird from Stormwater and am waiting to hear back.

(Kim Shelley) The Division of Water Quality may be able to encourage people to put their name in.

(Todd Stonely) Marty Bushman has reviewed the document and found only one minor edit.

Craig Buttars moved to approve the Utah Lake Watershed Council for certification. Rikki Hrenko-Browning seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Sterling Brown (the Utah Lake representative to the Utah Watersheds Council) joined the table and introduced himself.

#### **1:44-2:08 p.m. Public Comments:**

(Candice Hasenyager) Thank you everyone for being willing to participate. This is very new and yours to create. I want to solicit feedback on how this is going, what would you like changed, and what items you would like to see on the agenda. I'm happy to take feedback now or later.

(Scott Paxman) Chairman Cram and I feel that our first responsibility is to get these local councils organized, but we would also love presentations and a tour to get out in the field.

(Dan Adams) Can we have the two council chairs without a Utah Watersheds Council representative present participate in this conversation?

Eric McCulley and Jeff Young joined the table.

(Warren Peterson) This group is intended to be a clearinghouse for water issues for the state to advise the legislature and governor's office. We've been in the formation process, but we're maturing and getting to that point. Some suggested items for future agendas:

- Four out of the five councils that are involved in the Great Salt Lake watershed council are organized, so we could be proceeding with getting the GSL watershed council organized. Can we have a status report for our next meeting, if not a full-on presentation?
- Request the presence of Brian Steed. How does he envision interaction with this council, GSL local watershed council, and his role as GSL commissioner?
- What is being done by the GSL trust and how can we help?
- Report on water legislation we might be anticipating this year. It would be helpful for this group to understand what is upcoming, as well as provide feedback to the legislature for the upcoming session.

(Sterling Brown) Another future agenda item could be a presentation that attempts to visually outline other water entities such as the Water Development Commission, Utah Water Users Association, watershed councils, etc. What are they, what are their areas of expertise and responsibilities, and how do they fit together? How can we minimize the overlap?

(Kim Shelley) The Natural Resource, Ag, and Environment Committee picked this up because there were over 75 boards and committees in the water space. There may be a possible report out at the next committee meeting.

(Craig Buttars) For the last couple of years, we've compiled a document comparing water organizations that I'd be happy to send out to the council.

(Warren Peterson) When this council was put together, it anticipated exactly what we are discussing - to help organizations share resources and reduce overlap.

(Sterling Brown) It may be beneficial for this council to brainstorm a multi-year plan for accomplishments, tours, etc.

(Rikki Hrenko-Browning) Which other councils are being created next, and how are we prioritizing those?

(Dan Adams) Uintah Basin is likely next to be organized, then Sevier River. Virgin river primed to get going. A lot of focus in recent months has been to get the five watershed councils within the Great Salt Lake boundary going. West Desert will likely be ready for certification at the October meeting. We get a lot of comments asking "What is the real value of participating in this?" We communicate that this group gives a diverse group of interests throughout the state an opportunity to go to the legislature and the governor. January is approaching quickly, so I recommend you organize your thoughts and intentions in regards to presenting to the legislature.

(Warren Peterson) The Colorado River Authority has advisory councils as part of its structure. There is opportunity for synergy and overlap with those councils and the councils being organized under this act. If this council works correctly, we may put a lot of water lobbyists out of work. Is water any less vital than transportation or education? This council has the opportunity to become very important to the state.

(Todd Adams) The Natural Resources, Ag, and Environment Committee is looking at the overlap of water-related organizations. There is also an audit going on that's looking at all these overlaps, so let's wait and see what they come up with. I'd hate for Water Resources or the councils to get into it too quickly while other people are already looking into it.

(Candice Hasenyager) Reach out to the Division of Water Resources with any agenda items you'd like to see in the future.

(Marcelle Shoop) On behalf of the Great Salt Lake Watershed Advancement Trust, I want to mention that the legislation provides that 25% of our funding is dedicated to protecting and restoring wetlands and habitats that benefit the hydrology of the GSL. Next week we are opening up the funding application process for projects that meet the criteria. It will be posted on [GSLwater.org](http://GSLwater.org)

## **2:08-2:14 p.m. Administrative Updates**

(Todd Stonely) We will consider having some presentations for next time, anticipating that future local council certifications go through as quickly as they did today. Some administrative updates:

- The Division provides administrative support to the watershed councils. Our website has a page for each watershed council where we list their meetings and keep info updated regularly.
- If you travel to a meeting and incur costs, you may be eligible for travel reimbursement for your expenses. Please reach out to DWRe for the forms to fill out.
- We've been working on potential logos for this council that we will share via email at some point for your input.

- To follow-up on Candice's comment: As an agency we prepare the State Water Plan, and we see these councils as an opportunity to engage with individual basins and gather information that we can include in the Plan.

**2:12-2:15 p.m. Wrap up & Confirm Upcoming Council Meeting**

October 12, 2023 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

(Marcelle Shoop) Can you send out this invitation right away so it gets in our calendars?

(Todd Stonely) Yes, I'll add that to our to-do list and send an invite right away.

**2:15 p.m. Adjourn**

[Undetermined Council Member] moved to adjourn. Warren Peterson seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.