WYOMING WATER DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

JOINT MEETING: WWDC/SWC
Water Development Office
6920 Yellowtail Road | Cheyenne, WY
Thursday May 9, 2024

1. Chairman Liisa Anselmi-Dalton called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

2. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

3. **Recognition of Members Present to Establish a Quorum –** Secretary Bob Choma

Commission Attendance:
Liisa Anselmi-Dalton, Chairman
Leonard "Lee" Craig, Vice-Chairman
Robert "Bob" Choma, Secretary
Clinton Glick -Excused
Todd Hoese
Ron Kailey, Jr
Mark Kot
John Lawson
Dennis Pince
Larry Suchor

Select Water Attendance:
Sen. Larry Hicks, Acting Chairman
Rep. Jon Conrad - Excused
Rep. Barry Crago - Virtual
Sen. Affie Ellis - Excused
Sen. Mike Gierau - Virtual
Sen. John Kolb
Rep. J.T. Larson - Excused
Sen. Dan Laursen
Rep. Chip Neiman
Sen. Cheri Steinmetz
Rep. Albert Sommers -Virtual
Rep. Mike Yin - Virtual

Advisor Attendance:
Patrick Kent, Attorney General's Office
Greg Kerr, UW Office of Water Programs -Virtual

4. **Approval of Minutes**
   - March 20, 2024: Meeting
     A motion was made by Commissioner Larry Suchor to approve the minutes for the March 20th meeting. Commissioner Todd Hoese seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

5. **Planning Closeout Memos**
   Clarks Fork/Upper Shoshone Watershed Study
   Project Manager Mabel Jones reviewed the Clarks Fork/Upper Shoshone Watershed, Level I Study closeout memo.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ron Kailey to move acceptance of the Clarks Fork/Upper Shoshone Watershed, Level I Study project as being complete and further, the WWDC made the following finding relative to this project.

1. That the Commission recommend:
    - Proceeding to the next Level of project development upon the submittal of an appropriate funding application by the sponsor.

Vice Chairman Lee Craig seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

Skyline Ranch Improvement & Service District Groundwater Exploration Grant
Project Manager George Moser reviewed the closeout memo for the Skyline Ranch Improvement & Service District Groundwater Exploration Grant.

A motion was made by Commissioner John Lawson to move acceptance of the Skyline Ranch Groundwater Exploration Grant project as being complete. Vice-Chairman Lee Craig seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

6. Planning Project Amendments

Critical Aging Irrigation Infrastructure Assessment, Level I Study, Amendment One (time only)
Director Mead briefly reviewed the Critical Aging Irrigation Infrastructure Assessment, Level I Study, Amendment One. The purpose of the Amendment was to extend the current contract expiration date from June 30, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

Operations Hydrological Assessment, Medicine Bow & Sierra Madre Mountain Ranges, Level II Study, Amendment One (time only)
Director Mead reviewed the Operations Hydrological Assessment, Medicine Bow & Sierra Madre Mountain Ranges, Level II Study, Amendment One. The purpose of the Amendment was to extend the current contract expiration date from June 30, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

Vice Chairman Lee Craig moved to approve both the Critical Aging Irrigation Infrastructure Assessment, Level I Study Amendment One and the Operations Hydrological Assessment, Medicine Bow & Sierra Madre Mountain Ranges, Level II Study, Amendment One amendments. Commissioner Bob Choma seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

7. Groundwater Exploration Grant Withdrawal

Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities
Project Manager George Moser briefly described the situation with the Cheyenne Board of Public utilities (BOPU) Groundwater Exploration Grant. After BOPU performed additional analysis on this project, they concluded that it was not financially prudent to use Groundwater Exploration Grant funds to construct additional wells at this time. A brief discussion ensued.

Commissioner Ron Kailey moved that the Commission accept BOPU's request to relinquish the Groundwater Exploration Grant Funds, terminate the contract and return the funds to the Groundwater Exploration Grant program account. Commissioner Dennis Pince seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

8. New Level I and Level II Project Applications

Director Mead explained that project applications were received by March 1, 2024 and have since been reviewed by each Project Manager to include in-person site visits to understand the wants and needs of each of the Sponsors.

Level I Reconnaissance Projects – New Development

- *Hartville Water Master Plan*

  Director Mead gave a brief introduction on the Town of Hartville's water system and application. The WWDO's recommendation was "Do Not Fund" for several reasons with the most prominent of them being that the previous water master plan for the town recommended improvements that have not been implemented yet. The Mayor, Lani Perkins was present at the meeting to answer questions. A brief discussion ensued.

  Vice Chairman Lee Craig moved to accept the Water Development Office's (Office's) recommendation of "Do Not Fund". Commissioner Bob Choma seconded the motion; motion carried with Commissioner Kailey in opposition to the motion.

- *Hulett Water Master Plan*

  Director Mead provided an overview of the Town of Hulett's application, recommending to fund this project. Melissa Bears and Ben Pravecek participated in the meeting remotely to advocate for this project.

  Commissioner Todd Hoese moved to preliminarily approve the Hulett Water Master Plan and to allow the Water Development Office to proceed with consultant selection. Commissioner Larry Suchor seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

Level II Feasibility Projects – New Development (H)

- *Osage Water System Improvements*

Director Mead explained the Osage Water District application and the Office's "Do Not Fund" recommendation. Janice Heard and Joe Wood Jr. were present at the meeting to answer any questions.

Commissioner Todd Hoese moved to accept the Office's recommendation of "Do Not Fund". Commissioner Larry Suchor seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

- *Saratoga Water Storage Tank Study – Withdrawn*

Director Mead provided an overview of the Town of Saratoga's application and the withdrawal of the application by the sponsor.

Level I Reconnaissance Projects – Rehabilitation

- *Heart Mountain ID Master Plan*

Director Mead introduced this project and explained the "Do Not Fund" recommendation. Tyler Weckler with Heart Mountain Irrigation District was present at

the meeting to provide an overview and answer questions. An extended discussion ensued.

Vice Chairman Lee Craig moved to accept the Office's recommendation of "Do Not Fund". Commissioner Bob Choma seconded the motion; motion carried with Commissioners Pince and Kailey in opposition to the motion.

- *Pioneer Canal Lake Hattie ID Master Plan*

Director Mead provided a brief description of the Pioneer Canal Lake Hattie Irrigation District application. It has been 35 years since the last master plan and therefore the recommendation from the Office is to fund this project to get an updated comprehensive master plan. Jay Talbott was present at the meeting to answer any questions.

Commissioner Mark Kot moved to preliminarily approve the Pioneer Canal Lake Hattie ID Master Plan project and to allow the Office to proceed with consultant selection. Commissioner John Lawson seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

- *Smith's Fork ID Master Plan*

Director Mead introduced this project and explained that the last study was 35 years ago. The irrigation district would like to update their system and to see prioritized options to keep the system operational. Demont Grandy and Sam Bennion were present at the meeting to answer any questions. A brief discussion ensued.

Commissioner Bob Choma moved to preliminarily approve the Smith's Fork ID Master Plan project and to allow the Office to proceed with consultant selection. Commissioner Ron Kailey seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

- *Wheatland ID Master Plan*

Director Mead provided a brief description of the Wheatland Irrigation District application and the recommendation to fund the project. Nathan Graves with the Wheatland Irrigation District was present at the meeting to provide an overview and answer any questions. A brief discussion ensued.

Commissioner Mark Kot moved to preliminarily approve the Wheatland ID Master Plan project and to allow the Office to proceed with consultant selection. Commissioner John Lawson seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

Level II Projects – Dams and Reservoirs

- *Middle Popo Agie River Storage Feasibility*

Director Mead introduced this project application and explained the low flows and water shortages that the Middle Popo Agie River has been experiencing. The Office recommended to fund this project. An extended discussion ensued.

Commissioner Dennis Pince moved to preliminarily approve the Middle Popo Agie River Storage Feasibility project and to allow the Office to proceed with consultant selection. Commissioner Ron Kailey seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

9. UW Water Research Program

- *Consideration of 2025 RFP for the UW Water Research Program*

Greg Kerr, Director of the Office of Water Programs provided information regarding topics for the UW Water Research Program 2025 Request for Proposals. An extended discussion ensued regarding the proposal descriptions and how the RFP could be more stakeholder focused.

Both the Select Water Committee (SWC) and the Commission decided to wait for modifications on the RFP before moving to implement it for Fiscal Year 2025.

Commissioner Mark Kot moved to approve the UW Water Research Program 2025 RFP, with the condition that Director Kerr updates the RFP to include further information provided by the Select Water Committee by June 15th, 2024. Commissioner Larry Suchor seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously. The Select Water Committee made a motion and a second to adopt the Commission's motion; motion carried unanimously.

10. Future Meetings Schedule

The Joint WWDC/SWC Summer Workshop, Tour and Meeting will be August 6-8 in the Evanston, Wyoming area.

11. Other Items Requiring Commission Action (if needed)

- *Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):*

Vice-Chairman Lee Craig moved to authorize the Director of the Water Development Office to enter into and sign agreements, contracts, amendments, etc. with NRCS, water rights holders, consultants, and others for the purpose of administering the RCPP program and implementing funded projects on behalf of the Water Development Commission. Commissioner Bob Choma seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

- *ARPA Funding:*

Commissioner Mark Kot moved to approve any and all WWDC project agreements providing for the recapture of Water Development Funds with current, unobligated ARPA funds subject to approval of the amended agreements by the Attorney General's office. Commissioner Larry Suchor seconded, motion carried unanimously.

The SWC made a motion and a second the adopt the Commissioner's motion; motion carried unanimously.

- *Redundancy Language in the Construction Bill:*

Commissioner Mark Kot moved to delay accepting project applications, funding, and implementation of any protentional redundancy of water delivery system projects until the legislature has amended section F of Wyoming Stature 99-3-2903 to make these potential projects better comport with the statutory conditions for Level III New Construction projects and operating procedures of the Water Development Programs. Vice-Chairman Lee Craig seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

The SWC made a motion and a second the adopt the Commissioner's motion; motion carried unanimously.

12. Discussion

There were no other items requiring discussion.

13. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting of the Wyoming Water Development Commission was made by Vice Chairman Lee Craig. Commissioner Ron Kailey seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Choma, Secretary