

San Juan Water Commission

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MEMBERS:
City of Aztec
City of Bloomfield
City of Farmington
San Juan County
S.J. County Rural Water Users Association

SAN JUAN WATER COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES MAY 2, 2018

The San Juan Water Commission met in a Regular Meeting pursuant to due notice, Wednesday, May 2, 2018 at 9:00 A.M. in the San Juan Water Commission's conference area in the San Juan Water Commission Office Building, 7450 East Main Street, Farmington, New Mexico.

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Margaret McDaniel called the regular meeting of the San Juan Water Commission (SJWC) to order at 9:00 A.M.

Members Present

City of Aztec	Steve Mueller - Alternate Commissioner
City of Bloomfield	At this date none appointed
City of Farmington	Jay Burnham - Alternate Commissioner
San Juan County	Margaret McDaniel - Alternate Commissioner
S.J. Rural Water Users Assoc.	Jim Dunlap - Commissioner

Members Absent

City of Aztec	Mark Lewis – Commissioner
City of Bloomfield	Commissioner - None Appointed Alternate Commissioner - None Appointed
City of Farmington	Cy Cooper - Commissioner
San Juan County	John T. Beckstead - Commissioner
S.J. Rural Water Users Assoc.	Keith Lee - Alternate Commissioner

Legal Present

Jolene McCaleb
Doug Echols

Staff Present

Aaron Chavez
Shaun Bishop
Jacqueline Allcorn
Jimmy Hodges
Gordon Miller

Visitors:

(4)

In the absence of Chairman J. Beckstead, Commissioner M. McDaniel conducted the meeting and was the voting member for San Juan County. In the absence of Commissioner M. Lewis, Alternate Commissioner S. Mueller was the voting member for the City of Aztec. In the absence of an appointed Commissioner and Alternate Commissioner, there was no voting member for the City of Bloomfield.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Aaron Lee led the Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Pro-Tem M. McDaniel called for approval of the Final Agenda. A. Chavez announced that Agenda Item 8 Notification of San Juan County's Intent to Donate 20.49 Acre-Foot of Water from 6.9 Irrigated Acres to Upper La Plata Water Users Association will be removed from the agenda. Motion was made by J. Dunlap and seconded by J. Burnham to approve the Final Agenda as modified, and upon voice vote the motion carried unanimously (J. Burnham J. Dunlap, M. McDaniel, S. Mueller all voted yes). *With the removal of Item 8, all remaining agenda items moved up sequentially.*

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 4, 2018 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Pro-Tem M. McDaniel called for approval of the April 4, 2018 regular meeting minutes as presented. Motion was made by J. Dunlap and seconded by S. Mueller to approve the April 4, 2018 regular meeting minutes as presented, and upon voice vote the motion carried unanimously (J. Burnham J. Dunlap, M. McDaniel, S. Mueller all voted yes).

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

WATER RESOURCES UPDATE

Gordon Miller, GIS Coordinator presented the Water Resources Update via PowerPoint and printed hardcopy. G. Miller gave an update on the Current Streams Conditions - Current Navajo Reservoir Status and Operation – Current Animas-La Plata Project Status- Winter Environmental Conditions – Current Snowpack Conditions and Runoff Forecast, and Current Climate Conditions and Outlook.

G. Miller said stream flow data for the month of April at the following stream flow gages were as noted: in Colorado, Tall Timber was at 51% of average, Durango 30% of average, Durango Pumping Plant 32 % of average. In New Mexico, Cedar Hill 26% of average and Farmington came in at 6% of average.

G. Miller said the current Navajo Reservoir pool elevation is 6,050 feet and that there was a loss of about 5-feet of storage over the winter. G. Miller said the water content in Navajo Reservoir is currently at 72% of capacity, and under the current Navajo Reservoir Operation Plan, there will be no spring peak release in 2018 and that releases will likely remain between 300 and 700 cfs throughout spring and summer 2018.

G. Miller said the Bureau plans a short release of up to 2,000 cfs on around June 6, 2018 for habitat improvement and channel reconstruction projects. G. Miller said that at the end of the water year elevation in Navajo Reservoir is forecasted to be roughly 6,030 feet.

G. Miller said as of April 29, 2018 Lake Nighthorse contained 111,362 acre-feet and was 97% full.

G. Miller said winter environmental conditions show the soil moisture content as of November 2017 was between 50% to 70% of average and from October 2017 to March 2018, precipitation was about 50 % of average. G. Miller said the Animas Basin snowpack was 20% of median as of April 30, 2018. G. Miller said the Animas Basin runoff forecast shows the peak Animas River forecasted flow at 1,600 cfs at Durango, which is 35% of average. G. Miller said the San Juan Basin snowpack is 16% of median as of April 30, 2018, and the San Juan Basin forecasted runoff shows the peak San Juan River flow at 950 cfs at Pagosa Springs, which is 39% of average.

G. Miller said the sea surface temperature shows La Niña conditions are present, the equatorial sea surface temperatures are near-to-below average across the east-central and eastern Pacific Ocean, and the La Niña conditions are expected to transition to ENSO-neutral during April-May; with ENSO-neutral then likely (greater than 50% change) to continue through the Northern Hemisphere summer. G. Miller said the Precipitation and Temperature Outlook for June, July, and August 2018 show a 60% above average precipitation forecast. G. Miller ended his presentation by saying, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor, the San Juan Basin is currently experiencing extreme to exceptional drought.

ANIMAS-LA PLATA PROJECT UPDATE

Russ Howard, General Manager of the ALPOM&R Association updated the Commission on the status of the Animas-La Plata Project. R. Howard said Lake Nighthorse is two and a half feet below full capacity due to normal evaporation and seepage. R. Howard said pumping has started, and the plan is to pump around 5,000 acre-feet from the Animas River. R. Howard said the Project worked with WAPA to get power to pump water to start filling the Ridges Basin Inlet Conduit, noting, WAPA was challenged to provide power due to hydro generation in the West being extremely low. R. Howard said the plan is to pump for a sixty-one-day period at 56 cfs, which is the minimum period that WAPA allows for power in conjunction with the demand charge. R. Howard said, if you use a unit for only thirty-one days, you will still be charged for sixty-one days, which can become very expensive. R. Howard said that this year the Project will be monitoring the runoff in the river and will adjust the pumping schedule to be more in-line with "chasing the river", which means when there is an abundance of water/runoff in the river, the Project will pump at a higher rate to capture excess water above the required bypass amount.

A brief discussion was held on the concerns of New Mexico water users regarding the Animas-La Plata Project pumping and its effect on the Animas River's bypass flows. Questions about transporting the water once it has been shepherded to the New Mexico state line were also discussed. R. Howard said the Project is very sensitive to the bypass flow requirement for New Mexico water users, noting, 225 cfs is the required bypass amount and the Project adds a buffer of an additional 14 cfs for a minimum of 239 cfs before a pump is turned on. R. Howard said there is enough water in Lake Nighthorse to supply the New Mexico A-LP member entities with municipal and industrial water, noting, besides the La Plata West Authority in Colorado, New Mexico is the only other entity that has the infrastructure available to put Lake Nighthorse water to use. R. Howard added that it is important to have projected water uses provided to him, so that projections based on anticipated runoffs, how much water is in the reservoir, and which entity is requesting reservoir water can be calculated. R. Howard said this will give them a better feel of how much water is available should an entity need water. A. Chavez noted that the San Juan Water Commission is the point of contact regarding Project water because SJWC has a repayment contract with the Bureau of Reclamation and is a member under the A-LP Intergovernmental Agreement.

A. Chavez said staff is aware of the concerns of citizens regarding the drought and the Animas River bypass flows to New Mexico. A. Chavez said the leadership of San Juan County have come together to discuss the New Mexico's drought situation. Chairman Pro-Tem M. McDaniel noted that there will be the "Responding to Drought and Water Shortage Workshop" on May 15, 2018 at McGee Park 8:30 am to 3:30 pm and encouraged all interested parties to attend. A. Chavez added that it is a goal of the San Juan Water Commission to educate the leadership and citizens of San Juan County to dispel panic and misinformation regarding the Animas La Plata Project and its pumping practices and to provide grounded information regarding San Juan County's and New Mexico's current drought situation.

R. Howard said the City of Durango opened Lake Nighthorse on April 1, 2018 and is presently open on the weekends at this time. R. Howard said being closed currently Monday thru Friday will allow for time to chip seal the boat ramp road and Tribute Garden, overlay the boat ramp parking lot, and install a courtesy dock. R. Howard said there are a lot of people using the lake and added that the City of Durango is doing a good job at "adaptive management of Lake Nighthorse." Chairman Pro-Tem M. McDaniel thanked R. Howard for his update on the Animas-La Plata Project.

CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by J. Burnham and seconded by S. Mueller to go into a Closed Executive Session pursuant to Sections 10-15-1(H) (7), and (8) NMSA 1978, under the attorney-client privilege to discuss matters pertaining to threatened or pending litigation in which the public body is or may become a participant and the acquisition or disposal of water rights, a.) *Colorado Water Court Case No. 17CW3002*, b.) *San Juan River Adjudication*, and upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously (J. Burnham - yes, J. Dunlap - yes, M. McDaniel - yes, S. Mueller - yes).

Chairman Pro-Tem M. McDaniel closed the meeting at 10:05 A.M.

Motion was made by J. Burnham, seconded by J. Dunlap to reopen the meeting, and upon voice vote the motion carried unanimously (J. Burnham, J. Dunlap, M. McDaniel, S. Mueller all voted yes).

Chairman Pro-Tem M. McDaniel reopened the meeting at 11:25 A.M.

J. Burnham stated that no discussion, other than that [discussion] pertaining to threatened or pending litigation in which the public body is or may be a participant and the acquisition or disposal of water rights and a.) *Colorado Water Court Case No, 17CW3002*, b.) *San Juan River Adjudication* took place during the Closed Executive Session.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS, ALTERNATES, AND STAFF

A. Chavez announced that the Dedication of Lake Nighthorse would be held Monday, May 14, 2018 at 11:00 AM at the Lake Nighthorse Boat Ramp.

A. Chavez announced that SJWC staff will conduct an Orientation Workshop during the Commission's regular monthly meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 6, 2018 at 9:00 AM at the Commission Conference room at 7450 E. Main, Farmington, NM. A. Chavez encouraged the Commission representatives to invite their Council and Commission members.

J. Dunlap asked if staff was planning on setting up a tour of the Animas-La Plata Project. A. Chavez said the topic of setting up a tour will be discussed during the June 6, 2018 Orientation Workshop .

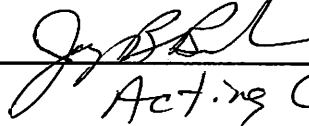
ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pro-Tem M. McDaniel called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by J. Dunlap, seconded by J. Burnham to adjourn, and upon voice vote the motion was carried unanimously (J. Burnham, J. Dunlap, M. McDaniel, S. Mueller all voted yes).

There being no further business, Chairman Pro-Tem M. McDaniel adjourned the meeting at 11:30 A.M.

APPROVED THIS 6TH DAY OF JUNE, 2018

SAN JUAN WATER COMMISSION:



Acting Chair