CACHE WATER DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES
July 1, 2024

The Cache Water District Board of Trustees convened for a regular meeting on July 1, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in the Cache County Historic Courthouse Council Chambers, 199 North Main Street, Logan, Utah.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD IN ATTENDANCE:
Mark Anderson – Logan #3 Council District
Jared Clawson – At-Large Position
Jonathan Hardman – South Council District
Kirt Lindley – At-Large Position
Beth Neilson – Southeast Council District
Jeff Ostermiller - Logan #1 Council District
Max Pierce – North Council District
Bret Randall – Northeast Council District
Brett Roper – At Large Position
Jeannie Simmonds – Logan #2 Council District
Regan Wheeler – Agricultural Representative

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Eric Franson, Chad Brown, Chris Slater, Jason Hardman, Jacob Ames.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pierce called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ACTION: Mr. Clawson moved to approve tonight's agenda and the June 3, 2024 meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Lindley seconded the motion. Motion approved (9-0).

Yea: Clawson, Hardman, Lindley, Ostermiller, Pierce, Randall, Roper, Simmonds, Wheeler

Absent: Anderson, Neilson

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

5:35 p.m. Mark Anderson arrived

5:38 p.m. Beth Neilson arrived

FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Simmonds reviewed the financial statements. The audit is still ongoing.

CALENDAR EVENTS

- July 11 – Utah Watershed Council @ 1:00 p.m.
- July 15 – APO @ 5:30 p.m. – topic TBD
- Water Supply Northern Cache County – meeting with Clarkston City tomorrow at 7:00 p.m. (Continuing to meet with northern county cities). Currently, CWD is the facilitator of negotiations and discussions for long-term planning between towns.

MANAGER’S REPORT

Logan River Watershed PL-566

Continued meetings to narrow down alternatives; the draft is proposed to be submitted to NRCS in November. Mr. Randall asked if the Board should support one of the alternatives. Mr. Daugs said members can provide input at any time. The alternative with the highest cost benefit is generally the preferred alternative; however, other issues (e.g., environmental, political, social) are considered. The scenarios are: 1. No Action; 2. First Dam; 3. Crockett Diversion (https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/natural-resource-concerns/watersheds/logan-river-watershed-project). Mr. Roper would like a presentation to the Board on the alternatives. Mr. Ostermiller agreed and would like to be better informed. Mr. Daugs will ask JUB to come to next month’s meeting to provide an informative presentation and allow for further discussions. Eric Franson (Franson Civil Engineers) said ~800 comments were received and considered in the initial scoping. People may not feel like they have a say, but they do. Ms. Neilson would like to include the backstory of the project and an outline of what issues may have changed and why. Ms. Simmonds agreed and wants to remain open and transparent. Mr. Franson said the report summarizes all the comments and responses.

Wellsville-Mendon PL-566

The proposed draft is going to NRCS for review in August.

Watershed Council Changes

Mr. Daugs reported that a new chair and vice-chair will be elected because the current chairperson has resigned.

Review Education & Outreach Job Description

The position will start as remote, but as office space becomes available, it will change to an in-office position or a hybrid of both. A decision needs to be made on whether to move forward. Mr. Roper thinks the person hired should live in the valley. Mr. Daugs said a ranking formula can be developed.

> **ACTION: Mr. Randall moved to approve the Education & Outreach Coordinator job description and posting. Mr. Ostermiller seconded the motion. Motion approved (9-0).**
>
> **Yea:** Anderson, Clawson, Hardman, Lindley, Neilson, Pierce, Randall, Simmonds, Wheeler
>
> **Abstain:** Ostermiller, Roper

Resolution 24-01 – Approval of 2024 Tax Rate

Mr. Daugs explained that the 2024 tax rate needs to be approved – the same rate of 0.000019 of a mill (resulting in an income of $313,391.00). When it first started, it was at a rate of 0.000025. Mr. Randall pointed out that because of growth, the mill levy automatically drops. He asked how much money it would be if the rate were raised back to the original 0.000025 rate; Mr. Daugs said it would be ~$100,000; he also confirmed that the rate could go as high as 0.0001. Ms. Simmonds explained that if everything in the budget (as approved) was spent, it would be $348,000 (excluding the PL-556 grants that are reimbursed). The proposed new position needs to be considered when discussing tax rates.

ACTION: Mr. Anderson moved to approve Resolution 24-01 for the 2024 Tax Rate of 0.000019. Mr. Hardman seconded the motion. Motion approved (11-0).

Yea: Anderson, Clawson, Hardman, Lindley, Ostermiller, Neilson, Pierce, Randall, Roper, Simmonds, Wheeler

DISCUSSION ON POSSIBLE TAX INCREASE FOR 2025

Mr. Roper started the discussion by noting that increased taxes are especially difficult for people living on a fixed income. Purchasing water would be a good use, but raising taxes to hire a person to “talk about water” may not be. With all the other tax increases, this seems to be piling on. Ms. Neilson said this would be a minimal amount (less than $3.00 per household). Mr. Roper said it is also the perception that this is another increase despite the amount.

Mr. Randall favors at least taking it back to the original 0.000025. Mr. Hardman agreed that this would be better than a higher increase down the road. Ms. Neilson said this topic was discussed at the workshop meeting in May. She hopes that someday, the District will have the funds and opportunity to purchase water. Mr. Roper agreed that purchasing water would be a good reason to raise rates rather than to just fund another position. Mr. Daugs noted that the current budget has been trimmed in some areas to help fund the proposed coordinator position (previously approved). Ms. Simmonds said this year’s income will be $306,000, and next year’s will be $313,000, and the current budget is $348,000 (if it is all used).

Mr. Randall said, from his experience, it is easier once the public understands why an increase is being proposed. Mr. Wheeler agreed that a new employee would be much harder to justify than water rights. Mr. Ostermiller said the complexity of water issues has expanded, and legislative issues have increased, so the idea of another employee makes sense; Ms. Neilson agreed and said that the current staff cannot help people access funding opportunities without more resources. Mr. Daugs said this comes back to the discussion at the workshop meeting on whether it makes more sense to try and buy water rights or have an employee who can provide education about what the District is doing. Mr. Ostermiller said the first choice would be purchasing water rights, which would create more complexity and require additional personnel. Mr. Roper noted that most people do not know what the CWD has done. Chairman Pierce said the presentation about education at the last meeting and helping with public education is essential. Ms. Neilson said CWD has to help with the planning and management of water (whether purchased or not), and part of that is providing education on conservation.

Ms. Simmonds said that regardless of the decision, it needs to reflect the CWD mission statement. Chairman Pierce said it is possible that Cache Valley stands to lose as much, or more, water through non-use and the adjudication process than to people purchasing water. Ms. Simmonds agreed but noted that the proposed new employee will not be involved in identifying adjudicated properties. Ms. Neilson said the mission statement addresses education – which is the primary objective of hiring another employee.

Mr. Daugs said the mill rate can be determined based on what is needed. Mr. Clawson thinks an increase to ~$500,000-$600,000 would help hire a new employee and put funds away for future water rights. Ms. Simmonds agreed that the mill levy could be determined based on the money needed. Mr. Roper would like to see a commitment that most of the funding will go toward purchasing water rights. Mr. Daugs said that can be defined and outlined in the budget.

Mr. Lindley asked what CWD will do with water once it is purchased – there could be problems with selling water that cannot be used outside the system it is in. Mr. Ostermiller said this is a legitimate concern that must be addressed.

ACTION: Ms. Simmonds moved to approve the request for a mill levy rate for a $600,000 annual budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Clawson. Motion approved. (10-0).

Yea: Anderson, Clawson, Hardman, Lindley, Neilson, Ostermiller, Pierce, Randall, Simmonds, Wheeler

Abstain: Roper

Mr. Daugs said the rate would be determined, and a draft would be created at the July APO meeting. The issue will be on next month's (August 5) meeting agenda.

OTHER

Mr. Randall suggested that the District develop a press release outlining how they are working on water preservation.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.