

MINUTES

Uintah Conservation District

Regular Meeting, December 8, 2025

Location: Western Park Board Room

302 East 200 South, Vernal, Utah

ATTENDANCE:

Conservation District (CD) Supervisor

District Chair Bryan Bell

Todd Thacker, Vice Chair

Johnathan McKee, Supervisor

Jim Slaugh, Treasurer

Conservation District Staff

Andrea Merrell, Clerk

NRCS:

Jeremy Maycock, DC

Cortney Borer, Sage Grouse Coordinator

Conservation District Supervisors, Absent:

Steve Hanberg, Supervisor

USU Extension:

Cheyenne Reid, County Agent

Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF):

Darrell Gillman, Resource Coordinator

Duane Houston, Planner

Others:

Tony George, Ashley Valley Reservoir Co.

Nathan Hall, DEQ, District Engineer

CD MEETING – CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bryan Bell, called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MEETING MINUTES*

Andrea Merrell passed out copies of the meeting agenda and minutes for the November 10 Uintah Conservation District (UCD) Board Meeting. The Supervisors reviewed and discussed the minutes.

Action Item: Todd Thacker made a motion to approve the November 10 meeting minutes as presented. Jim Slaugh seconded the motion. The voting was unanimous, and the motion passed. Then, Jim made a motion to approve today's meeting agenda, Todd seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous and the motion passed.

UINTAH COUNTY EXTENSION REPORT*

Cheyenne Reid, USU Extension Agent told the Supervisors the construction on her office renovation starts Wednesday. It has been delayed due to permitting issues. Other than that, she is working on events planned for early winter and spring.

Northeastern Utah Beef Expo on January 10 at the Centennial Events Center in Duchesne. Workshops 2 to 4. Vendor show 11 to 2. Crop School February 24 (Vernal). Daggett County Crop School February 23.

Cheyenne is updating contact information. She got a copy of the Green Belt list and is using it as a reference to update her contacts list.

NRCS REPORT*

Jeremy Maycock, District Conservationist gave each attendee a handout summarizing his report. As of this date, USDA is funded through September 2026. The current Farm Bill is also extended to September. Emily Fife, Utah State Conservationist promoted to Regional Conservationist.

His staff will continue to accept applications for projects through January 15, 2026. Currently they have taken 320 applications. Funding is allocated for the following programs: Salinity, Sage Grouse Initiative, High Tunnels, Conservation Stewardship Program, and Regenerative Agriculture. Regenerative Agriculture is new name for Soil Health. Todd asked about practices under regenerative agriculture. Jeremy said they have implemented several projects with cover crops, reduced tillage, residue management, those type of practices all qualify. If you are unsure if a practice qualifies, contact an NRCS staff member for assistance.

Jennifer Snow, Program Assistant, is back working and will travel between offices to take program applications.

Reviewed Snow Water totals as of Dec 7, 2025 for the State.

Cortney Borer, Sage Grouse Biologist. Cortney was also furloughed when federal government shut down. She couldn't hold the workshop on the Sage Grouse Initiative program and virtual fencing that she scheduled for the first part of November. She still wants to hold the workshop.

The workshop would teach the participants about the practice of virtual fencing, present case studies where it is being implemented, and discuss how to successfully implement the practice. They would also be informed of funding available for virtual fencing through NRCS. Cortney would also provide information on the Sage Grouse Initiative program related to qualifying practices and funding available.

Terrell Thayne, GIP Coordinator, would also be part of the workshop to discuss the Grazing Improvement Program (GIP).

Darrell suggested combining Cortney's SGI workshop with the Northeastern Utah Beef Expo (Duchesne County) or the Crop School (Uintah County). Also suggested Cortney set up a booth at the Beef Expo—that way she could introduce the technology at the Beef Expo and advertise for a workshop to be given in February as part of the Crop School. Cortney decided to have the SGI and virtual fencing be part of the Crop School.

ZONE UDAF REPORT*

Darrell Gillman informed the Supervisors he has advertised a part-time position. He will be accepting applications until Friday December 12. Applications are being accepted for The Water Optimization Program funding from Jan 1 to Feb 28. Grazing Improvement Program is currently accepting applications for project funding until the end of December.

ASHLEY VALLEY RESERVOIR OAKS PARK PIPELINE RESTORATION*

Supervisor Jim Slauch and Tony George, Ashley Valley Reservoir Company Vice President and ditch rider, led the discussion on the Ashley Valley Reservoir Oaks Park Pipeline Restoration project. Jim passed out a handout documenting water losses from Oaks Park Reservoir during 2025 irrigation season. They are asking for support of a project to replace worn, leaking 42" pipeline beginning at the Oaks Park Reservoir dam and running for 2700 feet, and another 4600-foot span running through the Grasshopper Flats area. They have conducted several on-ground surveys including use of dye in the water to determine where leaks are and where the lost water is going. Andrew Dutson, Division of Water Rights has helped with these surveys.

They have support for this project from the other irrigation companies in Ashley Valley, as well as Vernal City, and several other entities. They are looking for support as he applies for funding through NRCS and other sources. Project cost estimate is \$2 million.

Todd made motion to support project with maximum of \$5000 to the Oaks Park Pipeline Restoration Project as needed. Seconded by Johnathan. Voting was unanimous, motion passed.

PLANNING FOR UPCOMING EVENTS*

Darrell reviewed the following meetings with the Supervisors:

A. Water Conference. Uintah Basin Water Summit, January 8 at Uintah Conference Center, Vernal. Agenda forthcoming. William Merkley, Uintah Water Conservancy District. \$25 per ticket. Registration is open.

B. Soil Health In The West Conference & Workshop, February 10 to 12, 2026, St. George, Utah. Darrell passed out flyers.

C. Local Workgroup Meeting, January Board Meeting 12, 1:00 pm, Western Park Board Room. It will be the same day as the Uintah Conservation District Board Meeting.

D. Zone 6 Meeting, March 25, Vernal, USU Bingham Research Center, 10 am to 2 pm. With lunch.

FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Statement. Andrea gave each Supervisor a copy of the MACU Statement for November, a Balance Sheet and a Profit & Loss Statement—both dated 12/6/2025. During November interest earned on the savings account is \$0.16, the ending balance is \$3710.20.

Checking account is as follows: Check #277 was issued Nov 10 to Andrea Merrell, \$242.10 to reimburse for purchase of the electric pruning saw kit to donate to UACD Scholarship auction during annual meeting. Check #278 was issued Nov 10 to Myron Corporation, \$399.93 for purchase of 2026 Calendar/Recordkeeping books. There are still two

outstanding checks from the first quarter SERA payments, check #271 to Bryan and check #273 to Jim.

\$2057.38 was deposited to checking account on 11/5/2025. \$1675.00 of these funds are from the first payment request from UDAF grant and \$382.38 for reimbursement to the District for first quarter SERA payments. The ending balance for the checking account is \$26,868.15

B. Bills for Payment. There are no invoices to submit for payment.

Action Item: Johnathan made a motion to accept the financial report as presented. Todd seconded the motion. Voting unanimously passed the motion.

SERA

Andrea checked with Supervisors for attendance at November 18 Utah Diversion and Telemetry meeting. Jim Slaugh attended. She also checked to see if there were any other meetings Supervisors attended on behalf of the District.

Todd made a motion to approve payment of registration fees and SERA expenses for any Supervisors attending Uintah Basin Water Summit or Soil Health in the West Conference in St. George. Jim seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous and the motion passed.

ARDL PROPOSAL

There were no ARDL proposals for today's meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS AND UPCOMING EVENT

There is no additional business for today's meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:45 pm by Todd and seconded by Jim. Voting was unanimous and the motion passed.