

**PURGATOIRE RIVER WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT
MINUTES, THURSDAY, January 12, 2023**

Board Meeting: Purgatoire River Water Conservancy District monthly meeting was held on Thursday, January 12, 2023, at 7:00 P.M. PRWCD Conference Room, 3590 East main Street, Trinidad, CO.81082

Directors Present:

Tom Verquer, Frank Milinazzo, Joey DeGarbo, David Philpott, Tony Paradisa, Jarrod Tortorelli and Joe Amato & Daryl Aubuchon

Directors Absent:

None

District Staff:

Steve Kastner; General Manager, Connie Mantelli; District Secretary

Guests:

Kim Falen (Corps of Engineers, Jeff Montoya (Water Commissioner), Robert Philpott (John Flood Ditch), Julie Knudsen (PWP), Michael Yoder (Enlarged South Side Ditch), Gil Ramirez (City of Trinidad)

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., by Chairman, David Philpott. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call was taken.

2022 PRWCD Chairman turned over the meeting to Secretary, Connie Mantelli.

Ms. Mantelli stated that the election of officers for the Purgatoire River Water Conservancy District for the 2023 calendar year will be conducted at that time.

Connie asked for nominations for President.

Tom Verquer nominated David Philpott. Joe Amato seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The nomination was voted upon and passed unanimously.

David Philpott resumed the process of officer elections.

Joe Amato nominated Joey DeGarbo for Vice President. Tom Verquer seconded the motion. The nomination was voted upon and unanimously passed.

Frank Milinazzo nominated Tom Verquer for Treasurer. Tony Paradisa seconded the motion which was voted upon and passed. Tom Verquer nominated Connie for Secretary. Tony Paradisa seconded the nomination which was voted upon and passed.

The 2023 PRWCD officer team consists of;
David Philpott, President, Joey DeGarbo, Vice President, Tom Verquer, Treasurer and Connie Mantelli, Secretary.

Enterprise Account

There were 2 transactions made in December. One was for the Board of Directors & Staff Christmas Dinner and the other was for Breakfast provided for the Annual Meeting held in November.

Regular Monthly Board Meeting

Tom Verquer made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 2022 meeting. Jeremy Yoder seconded the motion which was voted upon and passed.

Joe Amato made a motion to approve the Financial Statements and Cash Disbursements for the December 2022 as printed. Frank Milinazzo seconded the motion which was voted upon and passed.

Chairman's Report:

David Philpott congratulated the 2023 Officer Team.

NRCS:

Sammie Molinaro was not present at the meeting. He did, however provide documents on the current SnoTel reports to be distributed to the attendees.

District Manager's Report – January 12, 2023

A. Trinidad Reservoir and PRWCD Operations Report

- The total content of Trinidad Reservoir on December 29th was 20,928 acre-feet. A net increase of 723 acre-feet from the end of the previous month. This net increase is due to Non-Irrigation Season storage and is approximately one half of the storage volume during November.

- The Project Account currently contains 3,148 acre-feet. An increase during December of 423 acre-feet.
- The Model Account currently contains 1,403 acre-feet. An increase during November of 334 acre-feet.
- The Joint Use Pool content on December 29th was 2,941 acre-feet.
- The Permanent Fishery Pool content on December 29th was 13,436 acre-feet.
- Purgatoire River computed inflows into Trinidad Reservoir averaged 18 cubic feet per second for the month of December. The long-term average flows at this gage site for December are 24 cfs. Purgatoire River at Madrid stream gage flows were not used due to ice effects on the gage.
- A stock water release was made from Trinidad Reservoir on December 2nd through the 6th. A total of 241 acre-feet was released. Total stock water diversions were 276 acre-feet. Diversions were made by the Baca, Picketwire, El Moro and John Flood Ditches.

B. Arkansas River Compact Administration Annual Meeting

The ARCA Annual Meeting was held in Lamar, Colorado on December 7 & 8. PRWCD was represented by the General Manager and the Office Manager. The PRWCD provided a presentation to the administration of the water activities and other activities which occurring in the PRWCD during 2022. The PRWCD did request that participation in the Colorado Entities Multi-Purpose storage account be increased to allow for additional entities to participate. Representatives from the Amity Mutual Irrigation Company, Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, Geological Survey, City of Trinidad, State of Kansas, Colorado State & Division Engineer's Office, Colorado Water Conservation Board and other entities were in attendance.

C. General Information

The District received confirmation of initial approval from the Bureau of Reclamation for \$62,400 in grant funds to financially help with the purchase and installation of automatic headgates for the Picketwire Ditch and John Flood Ditch. The next step will be to proceed through the contracting process with the BOR. The Colorado Water Conservation Board has additionally approved \$35,000 for this project and the Purgatoire River-Spanish Peaks Conservation District has also pledged \$5,000 in cash funds.

The District and the City of Trinidad continue discussions on the city's proposed conditional right of exchange from its WWTP upstream to Trinidad Reservoir. A settlement conference was held between the parties on December 19th. Another conference is scheduled for January 24th with a court status conference scheduled for January 25th.

The District will file its water court application for reasonable diligence on the remaining conditional portion of the District's Joint Use Water Storage right in Trinidad Reservoir by the end of this month.

The District, PWP and the NRCS had a meeting on December 13, 2022. The purpose was to discuss with the NRCS the possibility of increasing the number of Snotel Sites in the upper Purgatoire River basin especially in the South Fork basin. NRCS staff in Denver is to review our request.

The Las Animas County Recreation planning committee meeting is January 17th in Trinidad. The District will attend and participate.

The District general manager chaired the January Arkansas Basin Roundtable meeting this week in Pueblo. Current discussions involve \$25 million in the governor's proposed budget for water plan grants and an update presentation on the Arkansas Valley Conduit project.

The Ditch & Reservoir Company Alliance (DARCA) currently has a vacant board of director's seat for the Arkansas Basin. The General Manager was requested to forward this information to any interested the board member.

Bill Tyner and Phil Reynolds retired from the Division Engineer's Office at the end of December. Bill was the Division Engineer and Phil maintained reservoir accounting for Pueblo, John Martin and Trinidad Reservoirs. Rachel Zancanella is the new Division Engineer. Rachel has expressed the desire to tour and learn more about the Purgatoire River and the District.

Secretary's Report:

Connie Mantelli reported that the District was expecting to receive the construction repayment invoice from the Bureau of Reclamation by the end of January.

Ms. Mantelli gave a report on the Las Animas County & City of Trinidad Legislative Roundtable Meeting she attended on January 4, 2022.

Water Commissioner's Report:

Jeff Montoya reported that Rachel Zancanella had been appointed as the Division Engineer, replacing Bill Tyner following his retirement.

Ms. Zancanella is expected to attend the next PRWCD monthly meeting to introduce herself.

Mr. Montoya has been working on the east end of LaVeta for the past few days.

The Town of Aguilar bowed out on their augmentation plan. Jeff helped them to try to succeed on their issues.

Hill Ranch applied for a stream bank mitigation of 8000 feet of streambed. He went on a tour with the contractor and land owner. At this time, it appears there needs to be a new plan in place for this project.

Corp of Engineers:

Kim Falen had nothing to report at this time.

City of Trinidad:

Gil Ramirez addressed the board. He stated that he had been absent from the meetings during the Covid -19 pandemic, but he planned to represent the City of Trinidad in person on a more regular basis.

Gil stated that the current snow pack was currently at 45%.

Monument Lake's capacity is down 11 feet.

Mr. Ramirez stated that he has been working on Phase 7 mitigation grant with Julie Knudson.

North and Monument Lakes are currently at 98% capacity.

The river front park property has been working on avoiding disruption with the Picket Wire/Baca dam while making the Commercial Street Bridge the focus of the project. Frank Milinazzo suggested that the City clean under the Commercial Street Bridge. The 5000 cfs flow capacity needs to be enforced. Gil responded that that he had a very frank conversation with the river project committee on the timeline of the project. He stated that he had an obligation to make sure the water works up stream as it is supposed to. Regardless of the outcome of the River project, Mr. Ramirez has operation and maintenance funding for the river. As for the O&M funding, Gil's place is to spend the money where he sees it is needed most. He would like to use some of the funds for clean-up under the Commercial Street Bridge. Mr. Ramirez also pointed out that any water lease from the City of Trinidad to the District would depend entirely on the availability of any water the city has to spare. Gil stated that he would like to be invited to future River Walk Meetings so that he can get firsthand knowledge of the plans that are being presented. The Pioneer/Sanchez property east of Trinidad will likely be disposed of in 2024.

Purgatoire Watershed Project

Ron Jamison has been on the water gauging plan with the Division of Water Resources trying to get the J-hooks working on the river. Gil Ramirez has committed to helping out with this project. Julie reported that the Baca/Picketwire project is ongoing. Concrete had been poured recently. A GOCO grant in the amount of \$30,000 was funded to the upper watershed. Julie reported that 398 bags of trash was collected along the Purgatoire River Project in 2022. This was in partnership with local volunteers and organizations several time throughout the year. A reminder that the Trinidad Water Festival is to be held May 18, 2023.

Other Business:

Jeremy Yoder thanked the District for getting the automatic headgates installed and the timeliness of the installation.

Daryl Aubuchon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tom Verquer

seconded the motion. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.
The next meeting is scheduled for February 2, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

Connie Mantelli, Secretary