

**MINUTES
of the
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
of the
WESTERN STATES WATER COUNCIL
Hilton Garden Inn
Casper, Wyoming
June 25, 2013**

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MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

ALASKA	--
ARIZONA	--
CALIFORNIA	Jeanine Jones
COLORADO	John Stulp
IDAHO	Jerry Rigby
KANSAS	Tracy Streeter
MONTANA	--
NEBRASKA	Brian Dunnigan
NEVADA	--
NEW MEXICO	Scott Verhines
NORTH DAKOTA	--
OKLAHOMA	J.D. Strong
OREGON	Phil Ward
SOUTH DAKOTA	Kent Woodmansey
TEXAS	Carlos Rubinstein
UTAH	Dennis Strong Norm Johnson

WASHINGTON

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WYOMING

Pat Tyrrell

WGA STAFF

Not in attendance

STAFF

Tony Willardson
Nathan Bracken
Sara Larsen
Cheryl Redding

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

WSWC Chairman Phil Ward welcomed the Executive Committee members and Committee Chairs. He asked Kent Woodmansey of South Dakota to introduce himself. Kent is the Program Manager for the Feedlot Permit Program with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Phil then asked John Stulp, Colorado Governor Hickenlooper's Special Advisor for Water to introduce himself, following which introductions were made around the room.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held April 4, 2013 in Denver, Colorado were moved for approval by J.D. Strong. The motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved as presented.

REPORT ON BUDGET AND FINANCES

Jerry Rigby asked the Committee to turn to Tab D in the briefing materials. As far as the proposed budget is concerned, there are few changes from the document included in the Denver, Colorado meeting book.

Jerry highlighted that the Council's income comes from member state assessments. By the end of the year, we may have full payment from all states.

With respect to next year's assessments, we are projecting and the proposed budget for 2014 anticipates all states will pay full membership dues for a total of \$510,000.

The WGA contracts have been completed for the water transfers study and solar water use, so there will be less income from WGA in next year's budget. This was anticipated. Thanks to Jeanine Jones and the California Department of Water Resources for their assistance and financial support with regard to

the drought workshops. These workshops are put in the budget under projected income, and then we expense them to the same degree. In the end, we may come out with some surplus. However, for the purposes of the budget, it is an income in and an expense out.

Please recall that as far as the audit is concerned, it will be performed this year and every other year. Hopefully everyone is still comfortable with that decision.

With respect to the expenses, there are no significant changes. Contract services will continue to be budgeted for \$10,000, although the actual totals were less than that this past year. Right now we're paying Susan Cottingham, who is helping us with the Indian Water Rights Settlement Symposium. Her expenses are subtracted from the symposium revenues, and we have also budgeted an amount so that we can retain outside help, if needed.

There were some adjustments to the payroll benefits and salaries, and that is generally speaking due to Sara's employment. Sara is now qualified to receive benefits under the pension plan.

Pursuant to our policy, we keep a portion of our budget in reserves in an investment pool with the State of Utah. The number is not hard and fast, but right now we have approximately 60% of the budget in reserve. Projections show this figure will continue to increase. We also have an obligation for compensated absences, and this line item is fully funded.

The budget surplus this year was \$43,545. These are pro forma numbers until we get our May and June expenses and adjustments to the budget will be made.

Nevada will be a full dues paying member of the Council again. Roland lamented that his flight was canceled and he was unable to attend. He was looking forward to voting for the first time in three years. Associate member states do not have a vote.

Jerry moved acceptance of the fiscal year 2013-2014 budget. There was a second to the motion to adopt the budget as proposed. There was no discussion, and the budget was adopted.

PROPOSED AND SUNSETTING POSITIONS

A couple of the proposed and sunsetting positions were dealt with during the Water Resources Committee meeting this morning. The Water Quality Committee will handle those assigned to them.

The Executive Committee will recommend allowing to sunset the position on a shared water vision, Position #323, which has subsequently been replaced. There was no objection to allowing the position to sunset without any action.

WGA/WSWC ACTIVITIES

Tony Willardson noted that the new Western Governors' Association (WGA) Executive Director Jim Ogsbury had complimented the Council on its work. Tom Iseman has left as the Water Program

manager. WGA has changed their structure, and now has a new Policy Director, Holly Propst. All policy now goes through Holly. WGA is making different assignments to their staff, and it is unclear if they will have someone specifically assigned to water as they did in the past. At this point, Carlee Brown is handling water issues for WGA. WGA has been asking the Council for advice on legislation and issues that they have taken a position on. Jointly, the WSWC and WGA wrote a letter in support of facilitating hydropower development. We have already sent a joint letter on NIDIS, which will be followed up by a separate letter of support from the Council. The two organizations continue to work closely together on legislation.

The relationship is changing some. In some areas, we may have an even closer relationship, and in others, it may not be the same as it was.

Tony suggested the Council consider: (1) How do we communicate with WGA? and (2) How can we best support WGA in its advocacy role on the Hill? As you may know, when the WGA takes a position, then that is also the Council's position. There are areas where the WGA may choose not to deal with an issue in as much detail as the WSWC may choose to do. There are areas where they may not choose to emphasize issues that we see as important.

Also, WGA requires bipartisan sponsorship of all of their resolutions. The WSWC needs to look at how to provide advice on the governors' resolutions. Tony asked if Council members are sharing WSWC information and positions with their WGA Staff Council representatives. He stressed that Council members may need to inquire as to whether their respective governors will be handling water issues.

Dennis Strong made a comment that it is important to be engaged with the Governor's staff, as issues can then be pushed up through the system, as opposed to waiting for an item to come down from the Governor's office.

The next WGA Chair will be Colorado Governor Hickenlooper, and he will choose a theme for the next year. Governor Hickenlooper is very engaged in water. He was the former mayor of Denver. He has a lot of respect from folks that have not traditionally been in agreement. He issued an Executive Order for his staff to prepare a draft State Water Plan by Dec 2014. He's engaged in a comprehensive way in water.

Governors ask us to do things, and we respond. There is a cost involved in that, but we view ourselves as accountable to the Governors and respond to their requests.

Phil wonders if losing the dedicated staff position on water that has been in the WGA organization will impact our practical working relationship. Tony suggested he can explore this and work with John Stulp as Governor Hickenlooper begins his term as WGA Chair.

WSWC STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS DISCUSSION

Phil Ward remarked that a survey is being pared down and prepared for Council members' response. It is intended to help staff know if they are responding to members' needs and desires. Tony added that the idea is to make sure we are putting emphasis on those Council activities that members view as a priority. The organization allows us to speak with a unified voice on a number of issues. Some issues

are more important to particular states, such as Landsat in Idaho, and Good Sam in Colorado. We have been able to bring our collective weight to bear in moving issues forward, but we want to make sure we keep an appropriate balance. The reason we all pay the same amount in dues is so that there is no preference or undue influence given to larger population states, etc. We really just want to know if the staff is meeting your needs.

Dues have heretofore been almost exclusively our source of revenue. We have had some contract work with WGA and agreements with the State of California. As we diversify our revenues, hopefully we do so without skewing our agenda. That is always a concern.

We are negotiating on the length of the survey. If the survey can be structured with the correct questions, a “point and click format” would be the preferred method.

Carlos Rubinstein commented that given the diversity of the states that comprise the WSWC as well as the diversity of issues, the organization is remarkable in the products it generates and camaraderie.

SANDIA DATA REVIEW

Phil Ward complimented Sara Larsen for her work with Sandia National Lab and their efforts. He noted that there was really nothing to add following the presentation given by Sara during the Water Resources Committee meeting earlier.

WATER DATA EXCHANGE (WaDE) REPORT

Phil Ward commented that the WaDE effort was likewise treated during the Water Resources Committee meeting. Again, Phil stated that if the WaDE project is done right, ultimately it can fulfill a lot of the data requests received by the states. If a standardized format can be built for this information it will avoid the issues and concerns that were experienced with the Sandia data.

Sara commented that theoretically the states will have an incentive through some funding to convert the data to a certain scale and standards.

FY 2013-2014 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE / WESTFAST DRAFT WORK PLANS

At the previous Council meeting held in Denver, Colorado, Jennifer Gimbel suggested that perhaps a legislative and advocacy subcommittee be created. Tony mentioned that perhaps the WSWC Chair would like to consider such a subcommittee as part of the Executive Committee.

Phil Ward remarked that the Executive Committee has been utilized to fill this role. He asked those at the table if they felt there was a need for a smaller body, or if they were comfortable with the Executive Committee guiding these activities. We primarily work through our member states on advocacy issues. We don't have anyone in Washington, D.C. like WGA does to handle education efforts.

WESTFAST PRINCIPALS MEETING / WASHINGTON, D.C. MEETING

Tony noted that the Council is looking into holding a joint meeting again with the Interstate Council on Water Policy (ICWP) in the Spring of 2014 in Washington, D.C. As part of that meeting, we would consider meeting separately with the WestFAST principals group. WestFAST is struggling to find a focus right now, and part of that is due to the different levels of representation among the agencies. The WSWC has a very good working relationship with some of the agencies, and lesser connections with others. Some of the WestFAST appointees are further down the chain of command within their agencies. For some agencies, it is a challenge to secure their involvement.

Additionally, the Council needs to determine if there is a desire to meet in connection with the Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA) during the Spring 2014 meetings, as well. Thus, we may be coordinating three different organizations for the Washington, D.C. meetings.

FY2015 FEDERAL BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Tony remarked that this item is related to the USGS and the Council's recommendations relative to the FY2015 budget. The Council can make recommendations on the federal budget. For the most part, we have helped federal staff to understand our priorities, as opposed to specifying a dollar amount that needs to be budgeted, particularly given the challenges with the federal deficit.

FUTURE WSWC/WGA MEETINGS

For the last two years, the Council meetings have been held just prior to the WGA Annual Meeting. Both times that has created a bit of a problem since we cannot get WGA staff to attend our meetings, as they are preparing for their own meetings. If we want to continue to meet before WGA, we have our April meetings, or we could meet in late May. Chairman Ward commented that it does not appear that the Council meeting just prior to WGA has borne much fruit. Jerry Rigby raised the question of whether the Council would be better served by having WGA staff attend the WSWC meetings. If we wish to maintain a close working relationship, it seems it may be better if they can attend our meetings.

FALL 2013 MEETING SUNSETTING POSITIONS

The positions noted on the agenda are included for the purpose of making sure you are aware they will sunset at the Fall 2013 meetings, if there is no motion to continue the positions or absent any revisions.

OTHER MATTERS

There being no other matters, the meeting was adjourned.