

**MINUTES  
of the  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
The Oread Lawrence Hotel  
Lawrence, Kansas  
October 23, 2024**

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**MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT**

<b>ALASKA</b>	Christina Carpenter
<b>ARIZONA</b>	--
<b>CALIFORNIA</b>	Jeanine Jones
<b>COLORADO</b>	<i>Lauren Ris</i> (virtual)
<b>IDAHO</b>	Mat Weaver
<b>KANSAS</b>	Earl Lewis
<b>MONTANA</b>	Anna Pakenham Stevenson
<b>NEBRASKA</b>	Jesse Bradley
<b>NEVADA</b>	Cathy Erskine
<b>NEW MEXICO</b>	<i>Tanya Trujillo</i> (virtual)
<b>NORTH DAKOTA</b>	<i>Andrea Travnicek</i> (virtual)
<b>OKLAHOMA</b>	Julie Cunningham
<b>OREGON</b>	--
<b>SOUTH DAKOTA</b>	Nakaila Steen
<b>TEXAS</b>	Jon Niermann
<b>UTAH</b>	Todd Stonely
<b>WASHINGTON</b>	Ria Berns
<b>WYOMING</b>	<i>Jeff Cowley</i> (virtual)

## **STAFF**

Tony Willardson, Executive Director

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Jon Niermann chaired the Executive Committee and called the meeting to order. He welcomed those attending in person and virtually.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the the meeting held July 25, 2024, in West Fargo, North Dakota were posted just before the meeting on the WSWC website and so members were asked to review the minutes and contact staff with any changes.

## **REPORT ON BUDGET AND FINANCES**

Tony Willardson provided a summary of the WSWC budget for FY2024/2025. An Excel spreadsheet with the final approved budget was included in the briefing materials under Tab D, along with a summary of a review of the FY2022/2023 budget by the Council's auditor.

The Committee approved the current WSWC budget during a call on September 16<sup>th</sup>, and the minutes of that call and an earlier Committee call on August 21<sup>st</sup> were included under Tab I, together with a progress report on the Council's Western States Water Data Access and Analysis Tool (WestDAAT). Also, on that call, the Committee approved spending up to \$200,000 from WSWC reserves to help meet the required match for a new WaterSMART applied science grant of \$400,000 to build a tool to facilitate voluntary temporary compensated water conservation programs, a Western States Water Conservation Application Tool (WestCAT), and accessing data from WestDAAT and OpenET. This topic was discussed extensively at the last WSWC meetings in North Dakota, both as part of the Executive Committee and the Full Council meetings, as well as during the interim calls. On the September 16<sup>th</sup> call, Committee provided the following directives related to the grant and matching expenditures. On September 20, the federal Notice of Award was signed.

1. Use only USBR WaterSMART funds to build WestCAT.
  2. Focus WSWC reserve fund expenditures on required WestDAAT 2.0 updates.
  3. Create an Executive Committee Subcommittee to oversee WestCAT development.
  4. Re-establish WSWC's WIMS Subcommittee to provide technical support (including state IT staff).
  5. Establish parameters for WestCAT use and once completed require users to register their use.
  6. Preclude use without authorization from the State or States involved.
  7. Include disclaimers regarding source data - both state water rights data, OpenET data, and other "provided" data.
  8. Evaluate other tools for calculating conserved consumptive use (CCU) and saved water.
  9. Expand education and outreach efforts to enhance transparency and minimize misunderstandings.
- Regarding the budget, Tony reported that as of the end of September all but one state had paid their

dues. Also, some contract funds had been received – primarily for work completed in the last quarter of the last fiscal year – under three separate agreements. This included a minor amount (\$827) under a prior WaterSMART applied science grant for WestDAAT development that was closed the end of June. A related agreement with BHP through Duke provided \$20,347 exhausting the committed funding under that agreement for Year 3. Additional revenue under a separate agreement with the Lincoln Institute’s Center for Geospatial Solutions (Lincoln-CGS) totaled \$14,272.43 – again for work in the last fiscal year related to accessing state site-specific time series data. Of note, a small additional amount (\$4,300) was received from the Water Foundation, which in partnership with the Thornburg Foundation is funding work in the State of New Mexico on water infrastructure prioritization, undertaken with WSWC staff help and a consulting firm, SWCA. The funding for this project was received in the last fiscal year, but much of the expenses incurred in this fiscal year.

After covering the Council’s dues and contract income/receipts, Tony briefly reported that WSWC expenses to date were in line with projections and the WSWC’s finances are sound.

Next, he turned to a summary of the Auditor’s Review for our fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. The actual report states that the “...review includes primarily applying analytical procedures to management’s financial data and making inquiries of management. A review is substantially less in scope than an audit, the objective of which is the expression of an opinion regarding the financial statements as a whole. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.”

The auditor's report concluded, “Based on our review, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.”

The report highlights included:

“The Council’s net position increased by \$280,698 during 2023 resulting in a net position of \$954,613 at June 30, 2023.... Assets exceeded liabilities by \$954,613 at the close of the most recent fiscal year.”

“Revenues totaled \$1,238,571 for the year ended June 30, 2023. Member state assessments comprise much of the Council’s revenues for the years ended June 30, 2023 and 2022. The Council also received more contract revenue in 2023 compared to 2022.”

“Total revenues increased by 17.4% compared to the prior year, due to contract revenue.”

“Contracts revenue was \$318,968 more than budgeted amounts. Such contracts are included in the budget at their full amounts, but contract revenue is only recognized when all contract requirements have been met. Therefore, actual contract revenue is normally less than the amounts budgeted. This year, additional contracts were awarded that were not originally planned when preparing the budget.”

“Total expenses decreased from the prior year by \$52,390 bringing current year expenses to \$957,873. The decrease in professional fees was somewhat offset by an increase in meetings and travel.... The increase in meetings and travel is a direct result of the increase in contract revenue.”

### **SUNSETTING POSITIONS**

Jon Niermann noted the positions presently sunsetting are being reviewed by the working committees at this meeting. Of note, one of the sunsetting positions was previously replaced and therefore will not be addressed at this meeting.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT/WSWC ACTIVITIES and EVENTS**

Tony highlighted some recent WSWC activities and events since the last meeting, noted in the briefing books under Tab E. Of note, WSWC staff continue to coordinate regularly with Western Governors' Association staff on issues of common interest.

WSWC staff interacted with federal partner agencies and congressional offices on abandoned mine clean up, water supply as a primary mission of the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), the development of the Landsat next mission, a national water data framework, WaterSMART programs, stream restoration, and the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS).

Of note, the Western States Federal Agency Support Team (WestFAST) has begun a search for a new federal liaison to coordinate with the WSWC, and hopes to have a candidate before the end of the year.

### **FUTURE WSWC MEETINGS**

Jon noted the next WSWC meetings will be held in the spring of 2025 in Nebraska. The summer 2025 meetings will be held in Utah and will include a celebration of the WSWC's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The fall meetings will be held in California.

### **COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

Tony referred members to Tab B, where a number of individuals are included in WSWC activities and mailings by virtual of their position, while awaiting formal appointment by their governors. Often these are people filling the positions vacated by an appointed WSWC member. We would appreciate members assistance in securing appointment letters from their governors.

### **SUNSETTING POSITIONS for SPRING 2025 MEETINGS**

The positions sunsetting at the next meeting were noted for future review.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

As there were no other matters, the meeting was adjourned.