

Inter Basin Compact Committee Basin Roundtables
Rio Grande Basin Roundtable

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday December 10, 2019 at 1:00pm
Upstairs room, Calvillo's

Chairman Nathan Coombs brought the meeting to order at 1:04 pm

Those Present/Signed In: Bethany Howell, Hannah Thill, Emma Reesor, Connor Born, Stan Moyer, Ann Bunting, Peter Clark, Virginia Christiansen, Cary Aloia, Helen Smith, Ron Brink, Nancy Escalante, Cindy Medina, Donald Valdez, Chuck Finnegan, Daniel Boyes, David Marguez, Brenda Felmlee, Wayne Schwab, Travis Smith, Dale Pizel, Larry Sveum, Bob Rice, Daryl Kohut, Ed Nielsen, Erin Minks, Emily Chavez, Nathan Coombs, Ronda Lobato, Cleave Simpson, Jim Ehrlich, Kristi Borchers, Darin Schepp, Judy Lopez, Heather Dutton.

Agenda and Minutes

Chairman clarified that the minutes were not printed, and suggested the Roundtable approve the November minutes at the January meeting. Ann Bunting made a motion to wait till January to approve the November minutes. Virginia seconded. All approved and the motion passed.

Public Comment

Wayne Schwab recognized and Congratulated Emma Reesor as this year's Rio Grande Basin Hero. Bethany Howell reminded the meeting that today is Colorado Gives Day and encouraged everyone to support local non-profits.

Judy Lopez, Colorado Open Lands: WSRF preview proposal

The project seeks to fund two conservation easements. The total ask is \$275,000, and COL is requesting \$30,000 out of the basin account and the remainder of the state account. The total project cost is \$2,573,000. All money has been raised except for the requested \$275,000. Matching funds are federal, state, and foundation funds. Each easement will have flexible language for landowners with interest in working with local water managers to address future needs.. A full budget and narrative will be sent to the Roundtable members via email. Heather asked if the full proposal would be presented at the January Roundtable meeting, allowing it to be presented to the CWCB in March. Judy confirmed this timeline.

Chairman Coombs confirmed it was ok to deliver further information by email. The Roundtable agreed. Judy said she would be happy to field questions via email.

Bethany Howell, RGWCEI: WSRF funding request, Rio Grande Basin Roundtable Community Education Staff Liaison.

The purpose of this proposal is to ensure that the basin is well represented as the role of PEPO continues to expand. The grant will be through RGWCEI and allow Bethany to spend more time on PEPO communications while maintaining RGWCEI's current educational efforts. Bethany noted that there is a lack of knowledge on water issues both locally and statewide, as well as a lack of communication vehicles for delivering the needed information and preventing misinformation. The need for the Rio Grande Basin to communicate our water situation is critical

and the Roundtable is in a good position to facilitate this education due to its diverse stakeholder representation. Requested funds would establish a liaison for the Roundtable, who's full time job would be to address the identified issues. This role will give the Roundtable a more established presence to facilitate the conveyance of accurate information and allow us to tell our own story in a way that is easily accessible to both locals and those outside the valley.

Strategies for implementing these solutions would include events, print materials and news articles, and multimedia productions, especially podcasts. Bethany further noted that the matching funds necessary are already available. A copy of the budget was not made available a week before the meeting, as is customary. Nathan said that he takes full responsibility for not sending the material out. Judy clarified the budget was reviewed by the RT Education committee a week before the meeting. Chairman Coombs suggested that the Roundtable wait a week before approving the budget to allow everyone to review the proposal and budget. The vote can occur in January without delaying the project.

Travis expressed his appreciation for the proposal. Telling our story over and over again is how we get our message across. Judy talked about the support of CWCB of increasing educational outreach in the water world. Cindy suggested that Bethany add more line item specificity in the budget. The vote will occur in January without the full proposal presentation.

Virginia Christiansen, Terrace Reservoir Project: WSRF Funding Preview.

The proposed project sponsored by Terrace Irrigation Company includes the installation of two head gate structures with automatic gates, as well as repair of and auto-control features added to at least 5 of the larger diversions on the Alamosa River. Of the total project cost of \$160,000, Terrace Irrigation Company is requesting \$25,000 from the WSRF and \$80,000 from a Colorado Water Plan grant. Additional match includes \$30,000 from the Terrace Irrigation Company and \$25,000 from Alamosa/La Jara River Water Conservancy District.

While environmental restoration was included in the beneficial outcomes of the project. Kevin Terry asked for further explanation environmental benefits – correct water delivery via automated recorders and the resulting improved efficiency was provided as the explanation. Kevin supports the project, but has difficulty seeing environmental benefits as part of the project. Chairman Coombs said that the project goals can be altered before submitting. The suggestion was made restoration components can be added. Heather mentioned that with CWCB, it might be a better use of time to wrap the two separate funding requests into a single request.

There was a brief prayer before the meal on behalf of several important members of the Rio Grande Basin water community lost this year - Joe Busto, Nancy Butler, and Bob Felmlee.

The meeting was adjourned shortly before 2pm.

The next
Executive Committee meeting will be January 14th, at 1:00pm

Next Roundtable Meeting: January 14, 2020 at 2:00pm
San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District
623 Fourth Street, Alamosa, CO 81101