

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
OF THE JORDAN VALLEY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT**

Held on July 6, 2020

A meeting of the Board Conservation Committee of the Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District (JVWCD or District) was held on Monday, July 6, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. electronically, via Webex, hosted at the District office located at 8215 South 1300 West, West Jordan, Utah.

**Trustees Present:**

Lyle C. Summers, Conservation Committee Chair  
Corey L. Rushton  
Reed Gibby  
Greg R. Christensen  
Barbara Townsend  
Sherrie L. Ohrn  
Dawn R. Ramsey  
John H. Taylor  
Karen Lang

**Trustees Not Present:**

**Others Present**

**Staff Present:**

Bart Forsyth, General Manager/CEO  
Dave Martin, CFO/Treasurer  
Alan Packard, Assistant General Manager  
Shazelle Terry, Assistant General Manager  
Matt Olsen, Assistant General Manager  
Martin Feil, Database Administrator  
Jason Brown, Information Systems Department Manager  
Reid Lewis, General Counsel  
Kurt Ashworth, Human Resources Manager  
Shane Swenson, Engineering Department Manager  
Brian McCleary, Controller  
Brian Callister, Maintenance Department Manager  
Gordon Batt, Operations Department Manager  
Todd Schultz, Analytics & Outreach Manager  
Linda Townes, Public Information Manager  
Beverly Parry, Executive Assistant  
Jessica Morgan, Administrative Assistant  
Courtney Brown, Conservation Programs Manager  
Shaun Moser, Conservation Garden Park Manager  
Clifton Smith, Business Data Analyst  
Amanda Strack, Conservation Coordinator  
Megan Hatch, Marketing Communications Coordinator

The meeting was brought to order at 2:58 p.m. by Mr. Lyle Summers

## **Approval of the Minutes of June 8, 2020**

Mr. Summers asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2020, Conservation Committee meeting. Ms. Townsend moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Lang seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as follows:

Mr. Lyle Summers – aye  
Mr. Reid Gibby – aye  
Mr. Corey Rushton – aye  
Ms. Dawn Ramsey – aye  
Ms. Karen Lang – aye

Ms. Sherrie Ohrn – aye  
Mr. Greg Christensen – aye  
Mr. John Taylor – not present  
Ms. Barbara Townsend – aye

## **Public Comments**

No public comments.

## **Discuss water conservation education efforts and plans**

Mr. Matt Olsen explained that during the budget planning process, the Board of Trustees suggested water conservation curriculum be included in the conservation and education budget. In consideration of the suggested budget adjustment, staff has evaluated current education efforts and refined future education recommendations.

JVWCD's existing field trip program for the Conservation Garden Park (Garden) is designed to educate elementary school students about water conservation by touring the Garden and using learning activity books. The program brings an average of 5,000 students to the Garden each year and the tours are provided by staff and paid volunteers. The primary cost of the program consists of school bus reimbursements. Due to the pandemic, this program has been canceled for the season.

Mr. Summers asked if specific schools show more interest in the program than others, returning year after year.

Mr. Olsen responded that over the last three to four years, there has been an increase in the number of schools participating in the program and many of those schools return each year.

Mr. Olsen then introduced a new education initiative for elementary schools within the District's service area. To teach water conservation curriculum in Utah public schools, the content must conform to the Utah Science with Engineering Education Standards (SEEd). These Utah core standards are being revised for the 2020-2021 school year and it has been determined that the 5<sup>th</sup> grade science standards are a good fit for water conservation education. This curriculum would need to be developed and once finalized, can be shared with teachers in school districts within the District's service area including the Jordan School District, Granite School District, and Canyons School District.

To help in this effort, staff recommends partnering with Central Utah Water Conservancy District (CUWCD), as they have previously developed water curriculum and have an active teacher training program. They recently hired a curriculum development expert with extensive knowledge in Utah SEEd standards and have been actively engaged in curriculum creation and designing teacher trainings. The proposed partnership could aid JVWCD in developing a water conservation module that can be taught in schools and can also be incorporated into CUWCD's

overall water curriculum training program. JVVCD staff would provide design services to assist CUWCD in updating curriculum materials. The design work is anticipated to be around \$5,000. JVVCD staff will also be involved in the process of creating the curriculum and will help in promoting teacher trainings within JVVCD's service area.

As a result of the pandemic, CUWCD has cancelled all in-person teacher trainings until May 2021 and are updating existing curriculum to include different teaching options, such as virtual and socially distanced instruction. The estimated timeline for water conservation curriculum would include curriculum development throughout the fall of this year (2020), testing of the curriculum during spring 2021, and the use of curriculum in teacher trainings in summer 2021. If this timeline is realized, with the recognition that the pandemic may require further adjustments, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers could begin teaching the water conservation curriculum as soon as fall of 2021.

Mr. Summers suggested that promotional efforts for teacher trainings be focused on schools that participate in the Garden field trip program.

Ms. Lang asked if the field trip program is available to homeschool groups and charter schools.

Mr. Courtney Brown, who is familiar with the reimbursement program, confirmed that private schools and charter schools can and do participate in the program.

Mr. Rushton suggested staff consider adding virtual options for this program to the Garden website to accommodate participation during the current pandemic. He also suggested staff investigate providing a passport or merit style activity for kids attending the Garden.

Mr. Olsen provided information on the Zoo, Arts, and Parks (ZAP) program that the Garden participates in, which includes a passport concept. Staff will investigate options for incorporating more virtual learning content on the Garden website.

Ms. Ramsey provided appreciation and positive feedback on the Garden field trip program.

### **Discuss findings on 8-inch retail meters as requested during the May Public Hearing**

Mr. Olsen shared that prior to the May 2020 Public Hearing, a retail customer named Charles Kulp requested a report showing the distribution of retail accounts in the various rate tiers based on monthly water use in 2019. Mr. Kulp observed that the distribution of accounts appears to be effective for all meter sizes except for the accounts using 8-inch meters. He suggested that the tier thresholds (the total volume of water granted for each rate tier) for these accounts be reevaluated, as the current design does not provide a sufficient price signal to encourage efficient use of water.

Mr. Olsen then provided an overview of the methodology used to determine the tier thresholds. The thresholds are based on an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU), which references the impact a single dwelling unit has on public infrastructure, which for JVVCD is equal to one 3/4-inch meter. The recently completed 2019 Impact Fee Study identifies ERU multipliers for the larger meter sizes, which approximates how many additional ERUs can be serviced by the larger meter.

Mr. Christensen asked if the ERU multipliers increase the number of gallons allowed in each tier threshold.

Mr. Olsen confirmed that the gallons within each tier threshold do increase as a result of having a larger meter size.

Mr. Olsen continued with staff's recommendation that the District's current tier threshold methodology is appropriate, and no changes are proposed. However, with the advent of the JVVCD's Water Efficiency Standards, it is recommended that staff assess adding a fourth tier and evaluate the tier thresholds as part of the next water rate study.

Staff did further investigation of the 8-inch accounts as a result of Mr. Kulp's request and found that they may have been miscategorized. For larger meter sizes, the District's historical practice allowed both the fire protection and culinary water systems to share one connection. This practice has made it difficult to determine if the 8-inch connection was needed for the culinary services or only fire protection. To resolve this issue for future connections, the practice was changed in 2015 and now requires the developer to keep the two systems separate. Before the new tiered retail rate structure was implemented, every available record was evaluated and scanned to ensure each account was categorized based on the culinary services specified. Many of these accounts with one meter for both services were identified and reclassified. However, upon further investigation into the existing 8-inch accounts, it was discovered that these accounts needed to also be reclassified. The result would be lower tier thresholds for these connections that are more appropriate for the culinary services needed.

Mr. Olsen then recommended the following additional actions: 1) change the tier threshold for these 8-inch accounts to more closely match the culinary services specified in the documentation, 2) reach out to the impacted customers directly to provide clarification on the reclassification and offer water conservation incentives where applicable, and 3) send written response to Mr. Kulp, in the form of letter or email, with information of the District's findings and actions.

Mr. Christensen noted that the 12,000-gallon threshold appears to be high for tier one and asked if staff has discussed potential new thresholds. He also asked if 8-inch meters, installed for fire line purposes, will be replaced if determined unnecessary.

Mr. Olsen stated it is likely that the tier one threshold could decrease, and the adoption of the Water Efficiency Standards in the retail area may further affect adjustments to the rate structure. He also clarified that as a result of the recent upgrade to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) in the retail area, the 8-inch meter flow reads are more accurate than older technologies.

Mr. Olsen asked for additional clarification from Mr. Gordon Batt, who is familiar with the District's meter and construction practices. Mr. Batt confirmed that flow readings for 8-inch meters are sufficiently accurate and further clarified that it would be problematic to remove the 8-inch meters because they still supply the fire flow requirement. If removed, a new system and meter would be needed to meet this requirement and may be cost-prohibitive.

Mr. Rushton supported the recommendations and the use of a consistent methodology to determine the tiered rate thresholds. He also reminded the Committee that the rate structure was designed to promote water conservation along with many other important factors. He then suggested that those factors be reintroduced to the Board in the future and be considered with any proposed changes to the rate structure.

## **Reporting Items**

The reporting items were reviewed by Mr. Courtney Brown, Conservation Programs Manager as follows:

a. Localscapes® Status Report – Many of the Localscapes partners are also participants in the Utah Water Savers programs which has increased program participation.

b. 2020 Garden Education Programs Report – Due to the pandemic, many of the Garden education classes have been cancelled, however key classes including the Localscapes classes and park strip classes, have been transitioned to an online format and have had good attendance and participation.

c. 2020 Landscape Leadership Grant Update – Active and completed project were displayed and reviewed.

d. 2020 Utah Water Savers Program Update – Staff has noted that the pandemic has had a positive impact on water conservation programs, resulting in increased participation and project completion. Consultations for programs have been adjusted to allow for social distancing and increased remote communications with participants.

e. 2020 Homebuilder Rewards Update – The Homebuilders Rewards Program provides incentives to developers that have installed Localscapes in new home builds. Thus far in 2020, developers that have submitted properties include, Garbett Homes, Alpine Homes, and Ivory Homes.

f. Member Agency Grant Program Update – Member Agency Grant Program projects were displayed and reviewed.

g. Public Outreach Update – Outreach efforts have been adjusted and are primarily taking place virtually. Additionally, there is a Localscapes Facebook group that has been very popular and received positive feedback.

h. Fundraising Progress Report

i. Foundation Activities Report – The Zoo, Arts, and Parks (ZAP) fund and the Utah Division of Arts and Museums fund has been consistent and have been provided plants, irrigation, mulch, and signage for the Garden.

j. Water Deliveries Update

## **Adjourn**

Mr. Summers asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Townsend moved to adjourn. Ms. Ohrn seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

	8/14/2020
Lyle C. Summers, Conservation Committee Chair	Date
	08/20/2020
Matthew D. Olsen, Assistant General Manager	Date