

MT NEBO WATER AGENCY
BOARD MEETING
Salem City Offices, 30 West 100 South, Salem UT 84653
Monday, February 10, 2025

CONDUCTING

Richard Nielson, Chair

BOARD MEMBERS

Bart Leeftang, Central Utah Water Conservancy Dis.
Neil Brown, Genola City
Braden Sheppard, Goshen Valley Local District
ABSENT-Brett Christensen, Payson City
Paul Taylor, Salem City
ABSENT-Lynn Mecham, Santaquin City
Kevin Oyler, Spanish Fork City
Boyd Warren, Strawberry High Line Canal Co
Sterling Brown, Strawberry Water Users Assoc.
Richard Nielson, Utah County

ALTERNATE BOARD MEMBERS

Gerard Yates, Central Utah Water Conservancy Dis.
ABSENT-Paul Munns – Goshen Valley Local District
David Tuckett, Payson City
ABSENT-Bradey Wilde, Salem City
Art Adcock - Santaquin City
Cory Pierce – Spanish Fork City
Marty Larson, Strawberry High Line Canal Co.
ABSENT-Lynn Swensen, Strawberry Water Users Assoc.
Glen Tanner, Utah County

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Roger Pearson, Central Utah Water Conservancy Dis.
ABSENT-Chris Steele, Genola City
ABSENT-Melanie McVicker, Goshen Valley Local Dis.
Travis Jockumsen, Payson City
ABSENT-Bradey Wilde, Salem City
ABSENT-Norm Beagley, Santaquin City
Sterling Brown, Strawberry Water Users Assoc.
Richard Nielson, Utah County

STAFF

Kim E. Holindrake, Payson City Recorder

OTHERS

Steve Clyde, Clyde Snow (online)
Kathryn Floor, Hansen Allen & Luce
Easton Hopkins, Hansen Allen & Luce
Jon Lundell, Santaquin City
Brian Hutchings, Woodland Hills

1. Call to Order

Chair Richard Nielson called this meeting of the Mt Nebo Water Agency Board to order at 7:31 a.m. The meeting was properly noticed.

2. Swear in New Board Members

- a. Marty Larson – Strawberry High Line Canal Company (alternate)
- b. Cory Pierce – Spanish Fork City (alternate)
- c. Neil Brown – Town of Genola (board)

Kim Holindrake administered the oath of office to Marty Larson, Cory Pierce, and Neil Brown.

3. Public Comment Period

No public comments.

4. Approval of Minutes – November 4, 2024, Meeting

MOTION: Braden Sheppard – To approve the meeting minutes of November 4, 2024. Motion seconded by Kevin Oyler. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Dave Tuckett, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

5. Finance Report

Sterling Brown presented the finance memo. Since the last meeting four invoices were paid to Hansen, Allen & Luce (\$1,547.25, 3,560.35, & \$3,187.65) and Moreton & Company (\$75.00). Revenues included interest of \$13.69 and a Project 7 assessment from Strawberry High Line Canal Company (\$2,142.58). Account balances include the reserve account - \$5,000, administrative account - \$28,876.57, Project #6 account - \$0.00, and Project #7 account - \$28,439.65 for a total of \$62,316.22.

6. Technical Committee Report and/or Action (7:37 p.m.)

- a. Update on Groundwater Management Development (Project #6)

Travis Jockumsen reported this project is completed.

- b. Update on Groundwater Database & Plan Management Program (Project #7)

Travis Jockumsen reported Hansen Allen & Luce (HAL) should have the report completed and will send it to the Technical Committee for review sometime before March 1. The Technical Committee will review the report and get any comments to HAL. The report will be presented to this Board at the next meeting. This plan is a recommendation to entities and a group effort. For example, Payson City doesn't have another source or other options. When options are available, this plan gives direction on storing water when it's been a good water year and using ground water when it hasn't been a good water year. Entities have their own conservation plans.

Discussion that the contemplated Central Utah Water Conservancy District pipeline is a new source to help manage water.

The more entities that contribute data helps with the study and managing ground water levels. There is a state statute that exempts municipalities from being responsible when drilling a new well that may reduce output in other wells. Other wells may need to be drilled deeper, and this plan can help with those predictions. Through time and additional data, predictions can be made on the effects of growth, new wells, etc.

7. Legislative Update (7:43 p.m.)

Steve Clyde reviewed bills regarding water. There have been 25 to 30 pending water bills out of approximately 650 bills currently filed with the Legislature.

He included a water bills handout with the most significant bills having an X in the right column.

- HB 243 – Agricultural Water Optimization Amendment: This bill uses the AG Optimization Program. It allows the use of appropriated funds to support research approved by committee; alters rule making authority to include surface drip irrigation; measurement, telemetry or reporting, and establishing methods to measure saved water and effectiveness of funding programs.
- HB 285 – Water Infrastructure Modifications: Discusses annual funding of the Board of Water Resources, DDW and DWQ boards for system improvements and loan, grant programs.
- HB 295 - Municipal Service Fees Political Subdivision Lien: Modifies provision relating to fees charged to delinquent accounts, imposing liens, and interest collection.
- HB 304 - Livestock Watering Modification: This bill contradicts HB 47 dealing with stock watering rights on public lands. It seems to directly override the State Engineer's efforts to address former livestock certificates.
- HB 328 – Water Usage Amendment: Modifies both city and county land use authorization to prohibit over-head spray irrigation in new development except public parks and sport fields.
- SB 80 - Drinking Water Amendments: Modifies the state to use the Safe Drinking Water Act to allow the DEQ to adopt a fee schedule on public water systems to assist in regulation compliance. It exempts wholesale water districts like CUWCD.
- SB 92 - Golf Course Amendments: Requires state-owned golf courses to work with the USU Institute of Land and Water to study golf course irrigation to conserve water. It does not address private country clubs.
- SB 131 – Water Commitment Amendments: Allows agencies adopting conservation plans to include to dedicate to sovereign lands, particularly the Great Salt Lake.
- HB 274 – Water Amendments: This is a complicated and comprehensive 40-page bill, which has a substitute that no one has seen, read, or studied. It primarily addresses culinary water pricing structures; how water can be charged. It mandates the use of tiered rate water structures and can impose a conservation fee into the rate structure. It forces conservation onto people. It also addresses the rates for secondary water use. It is based on a very, very well done study that is 100 pages for the Division of Water Resources, which is an excellent study on how the water rates throughout the western states are being applied. Districts like CUWCD are entities exempted as a wholesaler of water.

Boyd Warren stated 4 to 5 years ago, the issue of available water and existing water rights going to the Great Salt Lake was discussed. Senator Snyder is involved in several things such as protecting the

Bear River drainage basin where the Great Salt Lake is located. As a farmer and member of the High Line Canal Board, there are a lot of things that can be done to make residential water more efficient. Ads are on TV and other places showing the importance of being efficient in farming. The underlying issues is seeing more and more legislation on what can be grown in agriculture. It is said that alfalfa is not efficient, and there must be something else to make milk and meat. He doesn't see a real solution. Think about why they are pushing it. Pretty soon, the Legislature will mandate what can be raised because of efficiency of water. He sees that and is for it. Something that will work hasn't really been addressed. He questions government overage on water rights. He questions what happened in January when Strawberry Water was released to Great Salt Lake and if a precedent was set, and if it will be continual. He knows the CUP worries about having enough water to fill its contracts. The water received this year is down. He wonders if there is someone in the Legislature looking at the whole picture. There are a lot of issues including water rights and water contracts.

Steve Clyde noted it was voluntary from the CUWCD and was surplus water. It's a federal project under federal control. This water is not naturally tributary to the Great Salt Lake drainage and all that creates tension.

Bart Leeftang clarified the water moved from Strawberry to the Great Basin and served a couple of functions. It was water that was going to be moved anyway; just the timing was changed. CUWCD was on the cusp of issuing an award for the design of the water treatment plant in Salem. CUWCD needed to understand how the system would perform in winter conditions, especially at the Diamond Fork vortex shafts that are open to the air. The system performed well. There is absolutely pressure coming from the Legislature to get water to the Great Salt Lake; however, water was not sent to the Great Salt Lake. The water that was moved was going to be moved anyway to make space for incoming spring runoff to Strawberry. CUWCD has contracts, federal authority, and limitation on how the water is used and moved. At end of the day, the Great Salt Lake benefits tremendously from import water. CUWCD has concerns with setting precedent on moving water to the Great Salt Lake, but CUWCD has no authority to send water to the Great Salt Lake. This doesn't mean the issue will go away. As clarification on HB 243, a news article on KSL yesterday indicated the AG Optimization Program may be a greater benefit to farmers than the system and talked about the Colorado River. The AG Optimization Program was created to help the Great Salt Lake. However, it has been found that improvements made for improved efficiency in irrigation application increased the consumptive use as opposed to creating a benefit to free up water to get to the Great Salt Lake. Some of the modifications in HB 243 are to hone in and better understand if the switch from flood to sprinkler allows water to make it to another location and it was found it does not. It increases consumptive use that reduces the amount of water that gets to the Great Salt Lake.

Steve Clyde clarified that the pause on major water bills was to see if it's actually working now that water banking, split season leases, and shepherding and moving water were done. Optimization is making AG more efficient, but it does consume more water and provides less return flow water, which has its own adverse consequences. There will be ongoing studies and refining. These are big issues. The biggest problem is not receiving snow and the evaporation of the Great Salt Lake. It is a 30-year process to get optimum water levels back to the Great Salt Lake.

Bart Leeftang noted that the Great Salt Lake Commissioners office, working with the Division of Water Resources, is moving towards a recommendation that all sectors reduce consumptive use by 10% by 2030. This Agency may want to consider bringing Tim Davis or Brian Steed here to clarify expectations.

Braden Sheppard questioned bills HB 318, Residential Turf Amendments and HB 330, Water Efficiency Requirements and if they would pass.

Steve Clyde stated it's hard to say. HB 318 is an innocuous thing in residential development and how much turf can be put in and where. There is a fair chance it may be put in both county and municipal land use statutes to encourage conservation. He isn't sure where HB 328, Water Usage Amendment, is going, which prohibits any overhead spray and even sales. AG, sports fields, and active playgrounds would only be allowed to use overhead sprinklers.

8. Nebo Regional Update (8:12 p.m.)

Roger Pearson presented the Nebo Regional Update.

- The Juab County and Southern Utah County Water Supply and Infrastructure Plan Formulation Study (PFP) is complete and is now into implementation. Part of the project is to take finished water down to Juab County. He identified Central Utah Water project facilities/lines. May 2026 is the completion of the 60-inch line through Utah County. The High Line Canal enclosure and a treatment plant in Salem are part of the Nebo Regional Water Project.
- CUWCD has contracts to deliver 162,900 acre feet per year from Strawberry Reservoir with about 52% coming to Utah County.
- Strawberry High Line Canal Enclosure:
 - Provide public safety, improved water conservation, and efficient water management.
 - Capture saved water under CUPCA Section 207 for use by the Secretary and District.
 - Incorporate return flows to Utah Lake and Bonneville Unit water supply.
- Population Projections – South Utah County:
 - Santaquin City is already at the 19,162 population for 2030.
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TABLE 1	POPULATION				
	2030	2040	2050	2060	2065
Save to R: Drive Lake Shore	8,576	8,576	45,000	58,196	74,925
Elk Ridge	4,314	5,167	5,780	6,505	6,804
Genola	1,486	1,578	2,696	3,107	3,598
Goshen	1,185	1,671	2,095	2,542	2,749
Mapleton	16,480	19,726	21,724	24,375	25,366
Payson	30,341	42,728	64,887	79,944	90,210
Salem	21,426	36,057	48,708	62,222	68,451
Santaquin	19,162	29,982	41,507	52,179	57,728
Spanish Fork	58,643	79,575	93,509	111,291	118,288
Springville	48,562	58,174	61,969	69,134	71,138
Woodland Hills	1,824	2,018	2,200	2,373	2,457
Total	211,999	285,252	390,075	471,868	521,714

- Nebo Regional Water Project (NWP):
 - Existing facilities include Spanish Fork River Flow Control Structure, Spanish Fork Canyon Pipeline, Power Canal, Strawberry High Line Canal, and Spanish Fork Santaquin Pipeline.
 - Proposal to combine the raw water into the new High Line Canal enclosure and converting the ULS into a finished water aqueduct. Turnouts were in proximity to High Line Canal and will continue to be constructed. These may be repurposed as drinking water turnouts. P Mountain will continue to have infrastructure around, but the line is pressurized and will go over the top of P Mountain. Finished water tanks and a pump station are proposed east of Genola. The line to Santaquin will remain raw water. The Division of Drinking Water does not have a concern

using a raw water pipe for drinking water as long as it has been sufficiently cleaned and treated.

- Mountainland Association of Governments and UDOT are excited for the opportunity of putting a trail on top of the enclosed High Line Canal pipeline. Utah County received \$17 million, and the completion date is 2028.

What does this mean for water supply:

- Springs - Protect and maintain existing springs as a primary source of culinary water.
- Groundwater – Assuming further groundwater development (additional wells) by municipalities not to exceed aquifer safe yield.
- Surface Sources – Use of water from open canals and streams for secondary systems.
- ULS - Full contract amount of ULS water will be delivered. Secondary use or deliverable to SUVRWTP for treatment and delivery as supplemental culinary supply.
- Reuse – Projects that have already been approved by the State Engineer will proceed to be implemented.
- Strawberry Valley Project (SVP) – Agriculture remains an important part of the community and existing SVP customers may continue to farm as long as they would like. Existing SVP water users may decide to convert SVP shares from agricultural to M&I purposes as part of developing their land. Secondary use or deliverable to SUVRWTP for treatment and delivery as supplemental culinary supply.
- Culinary vs Secondary Demands – Culinary demands will exceed the volume available from springs and groundwater, requiring treatment of surface water. SUVRWTP would be able to treat water from Strawberry Reservoir storage (SVP or ULS supplies), allowing for deliveries to south Utah County. Strawberry High Line Canal enclosure would facilitate continued deliveries of high-pressure, high-quality SVP or ULS water to customers for secondary use.

It is anticipated that this project will be an important piece to water needs in this area. CUWCD wants to ensure the project is useable, meets the needs of entities, and is complementary to existing supplies.

The ULS water delivery is anticipated to begin the summer of 2026. Following a one-year testing period, those contracted with SUMWA for ULS water will receive block notices (2027 or 2028). At that time, those entities will need to take the ULS water or defer it.

Timeline:

- Financial Model (mid 2028)
- NEPA Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) published April or May and go for public comments.
- South Utah Valley Regional Water Treatment Plant (SUVRWT)) preliminary design to 2027, final design to mid-2028, and construction to mid-2032.
- Strawberry High Line Canal Enclosure/ULS Conversion preliminary design 2027, final design 2028, and construction 2032.
- Off-Site Finished Water Facilities preliminary design 2027, final design 2028, and construction 2032.
- Deliveries from these three facilities in 2032.

Bart Leeftang noted that this is somewhat idealized, and CUWCD is working through the financial model now. Depending on how things evolve, there may be limitations that bear on the schedule. It is

hard to know what will come out of the EIS process, which may impact the schedule. Variations on the plan may need to be implemented.

Sterling Brown stated that several board members have asked him about the Strawberry Valley Project (SVP) water. The SVP water can only be used for agriculture by federal contract and only on certain parcels of land. It creates a problem when half a million people are brought to this valley. Strawberry Water Users Association is in exploratory discussions with the Bureau of Reclamation, CUPCA, and CUWCD on how to move this SVP water from strictly agriculture and strictly pertinent to certain lands to M&I water and transfer it throughout the historic SVP to help meet the population needs. It's not a fun topic to have particularly with farmers and ranchers in the valley. He is optimistic. The AG community/leadership is understanding and supportive to get this done.

Bart Leeftang answered questions regarding water reuse and recharge in that contracts will need to be reviewed in terms of how water is used to exhaustion or envisioned in those contracts. CUWCD is legally bound by the contracts. If asking if the state can subvert the contracts, that is a legal question. Any CUPCA or ULS return flows are tributary to Utah Lake and any future use of those would require an additional water service agreement with the Federal Government.

Roger Pearson stated CUWCD's commitment is to the contracts and will push to make those deliveries.

9. Other Business (8:55 p.m.)
 - a. Information/Discussion Items for Future Meetings

Speaker - Tim Davis or Brian Steed, Great Salt Lake Commissioners Office.

Legislative updates.

Nebo Regional Update, Roger Pearson, again in November

Division of Water Rights Adjudication on south Utah County – Gary Brimley in May

- b. Other

Update on Ongoing State Municipal and Industrial Water Conservation Opportunities Study

Easton Hopkins updated the board noting the study is with the Division of Water Resources on water conservation in the future. The water commissioner asked what it would take to save 10%, which is just a number to meet the goal in 2030. The key findings on the municipal side are reducing outdoor water usage with turf replacement, secondary water metering, and smarter development in the future. The second part includes outreach to municipalities and a new contract with the commissioner's office to look at what it would take to move that 10%.

Bart Leeftang noted it's not just a reduction in 10% but also getting that water to the Great Salt Lake. It equates to about 35,000 acre feet for municipal and industrial water throughout the Great Salt Lake Basin.

10. Election of Officers (9:02)

a. Vice Chair

Richard Nielson explained with the change with Marty Larson at the last meeting, a new vice chair is needed to serve until June for regular appointments.

MOTION: Paul Taylor – To appoint Kevin Oyler as Vice Chair. Motion seconded by Dave Tuckett. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Dave Tuckett, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

11. Next Meeting – May 12, 2025

12. Adjourn

MOTION: Bart Leeftang – To adjourn. Motion seconded by Paul Taylor. Those voting yes: Bart Leeftang, Neil Brown, Braden Sheppard, Dave Tuckett, Paul Taylor, Art Adcock, Kevin Oyler, Boyd Warren, Sterling Brown, Richard Nielson. The motion carried.

This meeting adjourned at 9:04 a.m.