

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE UTE WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

Pursuant to notice properly given in accordance with the By-Laws of Ute Water Conservancy District ("District") and Colorado statutes, the Legislative Committee of the District met at 12:00 p.m. on December 16, 2022, at the offices of the District for a meeting with legislators and other water entities.

Members of the Legislative Committee in attendance were Pat Brennan, Robert Foster, Ben Miller, and Bob Wilson. Ute Water board members, Greg Green and Carl Conner were also in attendance. District staff members in attendance included Larry Clever, Nikki Dalpiaz, Andrea Lopez, Scott Olsen, Dave Payne, and Greg Williams. Ute Water's General Counselors, Sara Dunn and Chris Geiger with Balcomb & Green, and Kathleen Curry, the District's lobbyist, were also in attendance.

Members of other water entities were also in attendance. Clifton Water District staff members in attendance included Ty Jones, Jake Lenihan, and Guy Walker. Clifton Water District board members, Melvin Diffendaffer, Dan Mcelley, and Michael Slauson were in attendance. Tina Bergonzini with Grand Valley Water Users Association also attended the meeting. General Counsel, Kirsten Kurath with Williams, Turner, and Holmes, P.C. was also in attendance.

Representative Marc Catlin (Colorado Representative, District 58), Representative Janice Rich (Current Colorado Representative, District 55), Representative Matt Soper (Colorado Representative, District 54), and Representative Rick Taggart (Incoming Colorado Representative, District 55) were also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. The meeting began with introductions.

Kathleen Curry briefed those in attendance on what to expect from the meeting and asked each of the legislators to describe the districts they represent. Each legislator was then given the opportunity to provide some insight on the upcoming year.

### Representative Catlin

Representative Catlin expressed that everyone is concerned about water and the issues on the Colorado River regarding Lake Powell and Lake Mead. Representative Catlin is considering introducing a bill focused on suicide prevention for college students that would provide resources on the back of college ID badges.

Representative Catlin then talked about the bill that he is considering introducing regarding food banks pre-purchasing commodities. The bill would allow food banks to contract with food growers and producers and those supplying the commodities would be pre-paid, securing the sale for the producer and securing the food for the food banks.

Ute Water Board President, Greg Green, asked Representative Catlin how involved the Bureau of Reclamation should be on the Colorado River Issues. Representative Catlin stated that he believed the states that utilize the Colorado River will come together, particularly the upper basin states, and that the pressure should be focused on the lower basin states.

Clifton Water Board Member, Dan McElley, asked if it is time to revisit adding new reservoirs. Representative Catlin stated that there was an attempt to run legislation regarding financing for more storage projects. Representative Catlin believes that conservation may not be the only option, and storage may be a part of the solution to securing more water.

Ute Water Assistant Manager, Dave Payne, expressed his concern about inactivity breeding inactivity, specifically when it comes to depleting lower reservoir levels and Colorado River issues. Mr. Payne asked if waiting on the lower basin to act will put the upper basin states at a disadvantage. Representative Catlin stated that it may be a community decision on how the upper basin states react. Representative Catlin stated that participating in conservation programs, such as the System Conservation Pilot Program, may help protect our community's and customers' water resources. Representative Catlin recognized that the upper basin states are also experiencing a dwindling water supply, much like the lower basin states.

### Representative Rich

Representative Rich stated that the House is much different than the Senate as she prepares to transition positions. Representative Rich complimented Kathleen Curry's ability to communicate with legislators regarding the agencies she represents.

Representative Rich is considering running a bill that is focused on removing the county treasurer as the ex-officio treasurer of ditch companies, which according to Representative Rich, has not happened in years.

Representative Rich also explained a tax-lien sale bill that she is considering running. In the past, employees of a county would not be allowed to participate in a tax-lien sale. According to Representative Rich, tax-lien sales are handled through a third-party company to ensure the confidentiality of inside information, but because of public perception, county employees are not able to participate in tax-lien sales.

Representative Rich discussed an education bill that she carried last year that made it out of committee, but the leadership did not take it to the floor. The bill gives eligible education professionals a \$500 tax credit for money they spend out of pocket for classroom needs. Representative Rich plans on sponsoring this bill in the Senate and Representative Soper will sponsor the bill in the House.

Representative Rich is also considering running a bill that requires CPR to be taught in schools. According to Representative Rich, \$10 of the fees that are paid to school districts is already allocated for CPR training but using it for training is not required.

Representative Rich was on the Transportation Legislative Review Committee, and one of the committee bills that is being considered involves streamlining the process of registering fleets for fleet vehicles.

Lastly, Representative Rich explained that she had signed up to sponsor a bill regarding the expansion of the Move Over and Slow Down law as a State Representative but is unsure if she will be able to be the prime sponsor of the bill with her transition to a Senator.

Representative Rich will serve on the Education, Health & Human Services, Local Government, and Housing committees.

### Representative Taggart

Representative Taggart is considering running a bill focused on Tax Increment Financing (TIF). TIF is intended for downtown development authorities to fund projects. According to Representative Taggart, extending the TIF authorization past 2023 would help fund major infrastructure projects.

Representative Taggart is also considering running a bill regarding application processes for charter schools.

Lastly, Representative Taggart is considering introducing a bill that would recognize universities that have a large population of students that are first-generation students.

Representative Taggart will serve on the Business, Finance, Transportation, and Local Government committees. Representative Taggart will also serve on the Sales Tax Simplification committee.

#### Representative Soper

Representative Soper is considering running a bill regarding Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL). According to Representative Soper, the bill would work to establish standards for the process of properly identifying the point source. Representative Soper offered to send Kathleen a copy of the early draft of the bill for those interested in providing feedback.

Representative Soper informed the group that he is also considering introducing a bill regarding the statute of limitations for wage claims. The presumed statute of limitations was two years, as under federal law, but upon review is six years in the State of Colorado. Representative Soper stated that he hoped this bill would set a unified statute of limitations for wage claims at two years.

Representative Soper is also considering introducing a bill regarding charter schools' ability to tailor the curriculum to the students and their needs for the time they spend online versus in the classroom.

Representative Soper is also considering introducing a bill regarding car thefts. According to Representative Soper, Colorado is the number one state for car thefts, and the considered bill would make car theft a felony with a high cash bond.

The committee then discussed the process for providing feedback and amendments to bills. The legislators reminded the group that testifying, either remotely or in person, is impactful.

No other business came before the Legislative Committee and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:37 p.m.