

TRUCKEE MEADOWS WATER AUTHORITY  
MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 16, 2019  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Board of Directors met on Wednesday, January 16, 2019, at Sparks Council Chambers., 745 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Sparks, Nevada. Chair Hartung called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

1. ROLL CALL

**Members Present:** David Bobzien, Jenny Brekhus, Kristopher Dahir, Naomi Duerr, Vaughn Hartung, and Ron Smith.

**Member Absent:** Bob Lucey

A quorum was present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Member Bobzien.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Neoma Jardon, City of Reno Councilwoman and former TMWA Board of Director, expressed gratitude for having served on the TMWA Board of Directors for several years, which she described as the most functional board in the community with great staff making it a great company.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Hartung requested to move agenda items 7 and 8 to the next meeting and, per Member Brekhus' request, agenda item 14 to a future meeting.

**Upon motion by Member Bobzien, second by Member Dahir, which motion duly carried four to two with Members Brekhus and Duerr dissenting, the Board approved the amended agenda.**

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 13, 2018 MEETING

**Upon motion by Member Duerr, second by Member Dahir, which motion duly carried by unanimous consent of the members present, the Board approved the December 13, 2018 minutes.**

6. RECOGNITION OF TMWA BOARD MEMBER NEOMA JARDON FOR HER YEARS OF SERVICE

Chair Hartung presented Ms. Jardon with a gift thanking her for six years of serving on the TMWA Board of Directors.

Ms. Jardon stated it has been a pleasure to serve on the TMWA Board and the progress they have made to move forward in protecting the community and resources with the establishment of the Rate Stabilization Fund. She expressed the desire to return in the future.

Board Members and the General Manager expressed the pleasure of having worked with Ms. Jardon.

7. APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEE TO THE WESTERN REGIONAL WATER COMMISSION (WRWC) PURSUANT TO SEC.25(3)(A) OF THE WRWC ACT FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST OF QUALIFIED PERSONS TO FILL THE REMAINING TERM ENDING MARCH 31, 2019 VACATED BY MEMBER NEOMA JARDON: JENNY BREKHUS AND DAVID BOBZIEN

*Continued to the next meeting.*

8. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL BOARD MEMBER TO THE LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE 2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

*Continued to the next meeting.*

9. PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED BILLS FOR THE 2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION AND DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON TMWA LEGISLATIVE POSITION RECOMMENDATIONS

John Zimmerman, TMWA Water Resources Manager, and Steve Walker, TMWA's Legislative Lobbyist, presented the staff report of proposed bills with staff recommendations for Board approval.

After discussion regarding the proposed bills, Board Members agreed with staff's recommendations.

**Upon motion by Member Duerr, second by Vice Chair Smith, which motion duly carried by unanimous consent of the members present, the Board approved staff's recommendations for positions on proposed bills for the 2019 Legislative Session.**

10. DISCUSSION AND ACTION, AND POSSIBLE DIRECTION TO STAFF REGARDING REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF REVISIONS TO OTHER POST EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS TRUST (OPEB) PLAN

Jessica Atkinson, TMWA Human Resources Manager, presented the proposed changes to the OPEB plan.

**Upon motion by Member Brekhus, second by Member Dahir, which motion duly carried by unanimous consent of the members present, the Board approved the revisions to Other Post Employment Benefits Trust (OPEB) Plan.**

11. DISCUSSION AND ACTION CONFIRMING GENERAL MANAGER'S APPOINTMENT OF FOUR TRUSTEES TO THE §501.C-9 POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL PLAN & TRUST FOR A TWO-YEAR TERM FROM JANUARY 1, 2019 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2020 FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST OF INDIVIDUALS: MICHELE SULLIVAN, JUAN ESPARZA, JAMES WEINGART AND STEVE ENOS

Ms. Atkinson presented the staff report.

**Upon motion by Member Brekhus, second by Member Duerr, which motion duly carried by unanimous consent of the members present, the Board approved to the refer the General Manager's appointment of four trustees (Michele Sullivan, Juan Esparza, James Weingart, Steve Enos) to the §501.C-9 Post-Retirement Medical Plan & Trust for a two-year term from January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2020.**

12. DISCUSSION AND ACTION CONFIRMING GENERAL MANAGER'S APPOINTMENT OF FOUR TRUSTEES TO THE §115 OTHER POST-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS PLAN & TRUST FOR A TWO-YEAR TERM FROM JANUARY 1, 2019 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2020 FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST OF INDIVIDUALS: MICHELE SULLIVAN, SANDRA TOZI, CHARLES ATKINSON AND RANDY VAN HOOZER

Ms. Atkinson presented the staff report.

**Upon motion by Member Dahir, second by Member Duerr, which motion duly carried by unanimous consent of the members present, the Board approved the General Manager's appointment of four trustees (Michele Sullivan, Sandra Tozi, Charles Atkinson, Randy Van Hoozer) to the §115 Other Post-Employment Benefits Plan & Trust for a two-year term from January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2020.**

13. PUBLIC HEARING ON RATE AMENDMENT

A. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment

B. RATE AMENDMENT, SECOND HEARING AND ADOPTION: DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON RESOLUTION NO. 272: A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT AMENDMENTS TO RULE 7 REGARDING MODIFICATION OF THE PURPOSE AND AMOUNT OF THE METER RETROFIT FEE

Mr. Zimmerman discussed the amendments to, and purpose of, Rule 7 Meter Retrofit Fee program which had been presented to the Board on first reading in December.

**Upon motion by Member Duerr, second by Member Brekhus, which motion duly carried by unanimous consent of the members present, the Board adopted Resolution No. 272: A resolution to adopt amendments to Rule 7 regarding modification of the purpose and amount of the Meter Retrofit Fee.**

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

14. PRESENTATION ON STONEGATE DEVELOPMENT AND POTENTIAL WATER SYSTEM FACILITY (WSF) CHARGES APPLICABLE TO STONEGATE ANNEXATION INTO TMWA'S SERVICE AREA

*Continued to a future meeting.*

15. PRESENTATION OF TRUCKEE RIVER FUND ACTIVITIES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2018

John Enloe, TMWA Director of Natural Resources & Planning, presented the staff report. TMWA funded 13 projects, approximately \$700k, proposed by the Truckee River Fund. Included in the report was a request by Member Brekhus of a summary of programs/projects that have been funded over the years. The projects are focused on education and improving water quality of the water supply that serves TMWA customers.

16. REPORT AND DISCUSSION REGARDING OMBUDSMAN ACTIVITIES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2018 AND REQUEST FOR BOARD DIRECTION AND POSSIBLE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE GENERAL MANAGER TO RENEW THE OMBUDSMAN CONTRACT WITH TAMI FRUHWIRTH FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2019

Marci Westlake, TMWA Customer Service Manager, presented the staff report.

**Upon motion by Member Brekhus, seconded by Member Dahir, which motion duly carried by unanimous consent of the members present, the Board approved authorization for the General Manager to renew the Ombudsman Contract with Tami Fruhwirth for Calendar Year 2019.**

17. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Foree stated that snowpack was just below normal for this time of year and will most likely be ahead of normal after the next storm and provided an update on the activities around the West Reno Water Company water system acquisition: The Third Amendment was signed in December, which extended the closing date to February 27, 2019; and staff is still waiting on comments from other parties on the closing documents.

Member Brekhus thanked staff on the work continuing to be done to close the acquisition of the West Reno Water Company water system in Verdi; discussed management of staging areas; and ask for an update on California Avenue water main break to which Mr. Foree replied it was an old cast iron pipe that failed.

18. PUBLIC COMMENT

Eaton Dunkelberger, Sierra Nevada Journeys CEO, thanked the Board for their continued support and provided updated information on their programs (see attached).

19. BOARD COMMENTS AND REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Chair Hartung announced this meeting will be Vice Chair Smith's last meeting and wished him well.

20. ADJOURNMENT

With no further discussion, Chair Hartung adjourned the meeting at 11:38 a.m.

Approved by the TMWA Board of Directors in session on February 20, 2019.

Sonia Folsom, Recording Secretary



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## The Truckee River Fund and Sierra Nevada Journeys

*Fostering more than 8,500 engaged, informed, and connected river stewards*

The Truckee River Fund has enabled 8,500 students and over 320 local teachers to learn about, experience and build a connection with the Truckee River through Sierra Nevada Journeys' (SNJ) Watershed Education Initiative (WEI).



These students and teachers participated in a comprehensive Truckee River education program that included a trip to the river or one of its tributaries, several hands-on classroom lessons devoted to the science and conservation issues around the Truckee, as well as rigorous pre/post evaluation to ascertain the efficacy of the program.



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## Program Overview

Through in-class lessons and field trips, the Watershed Education Initiative empowers students to discover their local watershed, many for the first time. Students are given the opportunity to see the Truckee River in a new way – as scientists and caretakers. Sierra Nevada Journeys' credentialed educators introduce students to the concept of a watershed system, including where their drinking water comes from, and covers important natural resource topics like invasive species, erosion, riparian ecosystems, and environmental changes such as drought, urbanization, and wildfire.



**"Don't litter. Tell people where that stuff goes. If you put it on the ground, tell them what you're putting on the ground is in the water you drink," – Fifth Grade Student, 2015**

The Watershed Education Initiative has seen the following results:

- 90% of students demonstrate improved mastery of watershed concepts from pre to post
- 40% average gain score from pre to post, meaning students with 30% comprehension of watershed concepts emerge with 70% comprehension of watershed concepts.
- 95% of teachers report SNJ programs help improve student understanding of State Science Standards and help students build critical thinking skills about the environment.
- External evaluation by the University of Nevada's Center for Program Evaluation showed that in 2016, 5% more students at schools that participate in SNJ programming score at the proficient level on the State Science assessment than students at comparison schools.

During the field-day lesson, classrooms visit three main field sites: Truckee River at the McCarran Ranch Preserve, Galena Creek Regional Park, and Oxbow Nature Study Area. These locations are convenient and close to home for local students, increasing their sense of ownership, awareness and comfort with accessible natural areas in the watershed.

**"I love being outside because I learn so much more than staying on my phone all day."  
– Hayley, Fourth Grade Student, 2018**

Our watershed programming in the Truckee River Watershed would not be possible without support from the Truckee River Fund, and we are thankful for the partnership.



## Continuous Improvement

Because of the generous and continued funding Sierra Nevada Journeys has received from the Truckee River Fund, we have constantly evolved the Watershed Education Initiative since the conception.



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**"We participated in this same program two years ago. While I felt the previous learning (two years ago) was good, the changes made to the lessons only deepened and improved them. The pacing was right and the activities engaged thinking and debriefing. Our sessions went quickly (three weeks) and I will be using some of the extension activities to follow up student learning," - Classroom Teacher, Spring 2016**

Program improvements to date through the Truckee River Funds contributions:

- An invasive species case study on the Truckee River.
- The development of partnerships with local land agencies for the Truckee River field lesson, including with the Nature Conservancy and The Nevada Department of Wildlife.
- Hiring an evaluation consultant from the Nevada Department of Education to inform the improvement of student pre/post assessments used in the WEI.
- An online citizen science project for community members to report activity in the watershed.
- An internship program with the University of Nevada, Reno's College of Education whereby student teachers were trained on Truckee River based science education.

### Awareness

In 2015 (TRF #158), students were given a stark visual of the watershed because of extremely low water condition in the Truckee. This allowed educators to facilitate deeper student questioning around habitat change, drought, species interactions, the causes and effects of weathering and erosion, and invasive species. With the noticeably low river as a focal point of discussion, we were able to prompt students to think deeply about how an impacted Truckee River might affect the lives of the organisms, including humans, living in and around the watershed.



*This pictures show student in Fall 2015, learning at the Truckee River*

These discussions and the critical thinking that comes from it are not just beneficial to students, but our teachers, parent chaperones, and volunteers who walk away with a heightened sense of how to be better ambassadors of the river. To date, thanks to the funding from the Truckee River Fund, more than 944 parent chaperones and community volunteers have logged 5,700 hours of service and gained a better understanding of the role they play in their watershed.

**Being able to be outdoors was amazing for my students. Many of them had never seen fish in the "wild" before," - Fifth Grade Teacher, Spring 2014**





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### Team and Partners

Sierra Nevada Journeys also employs the future teachers of our community. We have been successfully engaging more undergraduate and graduate students in our field internship program to support programming on the Truckee River. Our field interns come to Sierra Nevada Journeys as the precursor to their teaching careers and we give them an avenue to experience different classrooms while modeling behaviors from our credentialed and experienced full-time educators.



**“Very informative, helpful and beneficial towards my future as an educator. I will make relations to real life and outdoor activities so that my students can be exposed to things they haven’t seen before,” – Classroom Teacher, Fall 2013**

Sierra Nevada Journeys continues to build upon the strong partnerships within the Watershed Education Initiative. This year we renewed our MOU with The Nature Conservancy to offer programming at the Truckee River at McCarran Ranch. We are also working with the One Truckee River initiative as a partner in education. We continue to have support from the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection which funds watershed education programming in Northern Nevada.

**We offer our McCarran Ranch Preserve as the on-site location for student field-study experiences through Sierra Nevada Journeys’ WEI program so that children have the opportunity to enjoy a direct experience with the Truckee River... To reconnect the community with the river and share the importance of conservation for our well-being TNC launched an education and outreach program. SNJ has been the main outreach arm for this education effort...We are excited to support and partner with SNJ to provide this innovative and immersive education experience for local school children,” - Mickey Hazelwood, Truckee River Project Director, The Nature Conservancy**



### Sustainability

Nevada public schools face funding challenges and our local teachers being spread thin. With help from the Truckee River Fund, we have been able to sustain and expand the Watershed Education Initiative and reach more underserved students.

As of September 2017, The Truckee River Fund had given more than \$12 million in funding to support local water initiatives. Sierra Nevada Journeys has received 2.7% of that funding and we are immensely grateful for the generous support. Beyond directly funding 8,500 students, Sierra Nevada Journeys has been able to leverage funding from the Truckee River Fund to provide more than 33,215 students with environmental education since 2011, when we received our first donation.