

Board/District Governance Suggestions

1) Improve efficiency and productivity of Board meetings

Board meeting prep

- Continue to use **Board Communication Forms**. Add more detail – e.g., alternatives, pros/cons, other considerations to frame important discussions.
- Offer an option for electronic **packets** for Board members. Ensure electronic packets are available on website prior to the meeting.

Board meeting protocol and ground rules

- Ensure Board member comments are **succinct** and time-limited.
- Empower Chair to keep discussion **focused** and not let members dominate or ‘ramble.’ This can be disruptive and cast Board in a bad light with public.

Board meetings vs. Work Sessions

- More strategic use of **work sessions** versus meetings. **Alternate** months between normal board meetings (per bylaws) and work sessions (no more than 3 topics of importance). At work sessions, encourage candid discussion and questioning of ideas and strategies. At meetings, make decisions.
- More frequent Board meetings has been helpful.

Board meeting agenda structure/format

- Address **action items** at beginning of the meeting (important things first).
- Engineer’s report **earlier** on agenda – and/or use written reports from staff, as opposed to verbal. Information-only agenda items should be treated like consent agenda: **only discuss** if warranted and relevant to current or pending policy decisions. Need strategy for sharing FYI info, so as **not to limit** available information
- **Fewer items** on the agenda with more robust, thorough discussion on contentious issues.
- Create streamlined process to develop Board meeting **agendas** – including, at end of each meeting, have standing item to discuss **next meeting** agenda.
- **Invite** one stakeholder to join us for lunch before each meeting.
- Consider inviting **presentations** by external partners, Board members (for co-learning), and staff on specific topics.
- Utilize a brief “work session” **before each meeting** to offer technical discussions by board members or the public.

Between meetings

- GM to provide regular e-**updates** to the directors on current events and activities.
- Use **committees** as appropriate to research and identify alternatives.

On-boarding of Board members

- **Orientation** to facilities, goals, statements, legal boundaries, etc.

2) Increase sense of inclusiveness/openness at Board meetings

Board meeting structure/format

- **Introduce** audience members at beginning of meetings. Directors should also welcome and introduce themselves to members of the public when they arrive at meetings, during breaks, or at other appropriate opportunities.
- **'Round robin'** format is useful to ensure directors have chance to comment on every discussion.
- Allow and encourage **public comment** at beginning of meeting and during agenda items as appropriate.
- More **voting** with possibility of minority or split votes (vs. voting procedure in which loudest/most passionate voice can sway the group).

Meeting protocol / ground rules

- Encourage open and candid discourse, but ensure that it is **polite**/respectful.
- Encourage well-articulated, well-reasoned arguments – e.g., using BCFs to share perspectives **prior** to meetings.
- Roberts rules?
- Get **agreement** from Board, then fully empower Chair to enforce agreements to keep comments focused and succinct, with no member dominating.
- Have meeting **placards** for each Board member.

Board meeting prep/between meetings

- Solicit and/or allow others to provide information to be included in board **packets**, in the form of letters, updates, or other.
- Fully utilize **website** to display minutes, agendas, packet materials, current events and news, water related data and educational material and videos.
- Ensure **transparency** on water pricing development and policy discussions to alleviate concerns that the district is motivated only for profitability as opposed to responsible public service.
- Board agreement on our mission will help.

3) Increase Board participation in Basin water efforts

Policy and protocol suggestions

- Strongly encourage all directors to regularly participate in **at least one** other external group and provide brief written report on key items (BCFs?).
- Clearly **identify** when speaking as Board member vs. a private individual in external meetings.
- Develop protocol for Directors in representing District positions externally, to ensure we are delivering a **consistent message**.
- When attending other regular meetings, provide brief **updates** on District's plans and policy discussions as appropriate.
- Need careful attention to **conflicts of interest**.

Considerations/priorities

- Actively support **Basin Roundtable** public outreach and education activities, e.g., the one mentioned at the May meeting involving local K-12 schools
- Fully participate in **western CO** Basin Roundtable collaboration.
- To help ‘tell our story,’ develop short **videos** for the District (2-3 minutes). These could include a wide array of topics, even detailing our options for firming Stagecoach.
- We should generally be perceived by district taxpayers, as the statutory water authority with a voter-approved tax base, as taking leadership on water matters.

Logistics

- Provide board members with District **name tags** (and business cards if they would like them for other meetings and water-related activities)

Board meeting structure

- Include agenda item for President’s report and Board member **reports?**
- Set aside time at a few Board meetings during the year (i.e. **quarterly** for 1-2 hours) for presentations on water issues.

4) Encourage *more collaborative approach* in Board meetings and external engagement by District

Board meetings

- Active use of Board **subcommittees**
- More invitations for outside **presentations** (already started)

External protocol

- When attending outside meetings, prioritize **listening**, not lecturing or trying to convince. Demonstrate we can offer balance perspectives on most issues.

Activities

- Co-host annual ‘**Yampa water world**’ conference engaging all water related groups and encouraging coordination/collaboration among the groups.
- Actively **support** the activities of the BRT and integrated water management plan efforts.
- Host annual picnic/bbq with **CPW** at Stagecoach, to showcase our park and rec opportunities at the reservoir, and to strengthen relationship with CPW.
- Coordinate/provide leadership to multi-group effort (with BRT, YIWMP) to upgrade **Ag infrastructure**, given pending ‘over appropriation’ designation.
- Revisit and possibly expand mini-grant program; review and update our criteria.

5) Clarify roles and responsibilities for Board/District operations

Process to better define and execute roles

- Need to work as a Board to understand different styles of governance and **best practices** for how board and staff can work together productively, without micromanaging – on annual basis (e.g., strategic planning and budget development) and on-going basis (e.g., developing Board meeting agendas).
- May be useful to define needed and/or wanted tasks and necessary skills/qualifications; then needed roles to perform tasks (staff, directors, contractors, volunteers). Encourage active participation of Board members in tasks (hands-on, or subcommittees).
- May need **bylaws** revisions as appropriate.
- Assignments to work with staff on particular issues should be **specified by Board** (unless specified by bylaws).

GM responsibilities should reflect District strategic planning

- GM responsibilities should reflect annual District goals and budget.
- Goals should be strategic, specific and **measurable** and become the basis for work plans and Board agendas.

6) Standardize process for updating annual goals and budget

Suggestions for setting annual goals and action planning

- Utilize five-year **budget projections** to develop specific District goals. Work with County Assessor's office to predict revenues and review expense projections (including impacts from decommissioning of power plants, reduced coal production, Gallagher).
- **Standardize** process for reviewing budget projections in late summer in anticipation of Board Retreat -- our opportunity to review and prioritize our strategic plan so budgeting reflects current goals for the District
- Consider whether Executive Committee or a new **Finance Committee** should oversee this responsibility.

7) Enhance clear, direct communications between Board and GM

- Board members to provide **policy direction** to staff in Board meetings, not one-on-one. (Okay to discuss issues or share opinions.)
- **Annual review** process should focus on discussing progress toward goals, reflecting strengths/areas for improvement, and goal setting for next year. Reviews should be clear, deliberative, and transparent (and not anonymous).

- **Specific** issues or concerns should be addressed as they arise in a direct and non-personalized manner. Initial communication should happen one-on-one, with a procedure for conflict resolution as needed.

7) Conflict resolution procedure (within Board or Board-GM)

Rationale

- Areas of conflict that impact the Board should be brought to the attention of the Board in a timely and appropriate manner. Personal issues among Board and staff impact efficiency and productivity of both. Need **protocol** to address these situations.
- In general, want to encourage **clear, open, respectful** communication.

Policy suggestions

- Create new Board **Committee** (personnel committee, like contractual negotiation, State Park lease renegotiation, Stagecoach firming, etc) to address conflicts.
- Research **best practices**

UPPER YAMPA WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT MISSION, POLICIES & GOALS

Mission

To lead water resource management within the District's boundaries by responsibly conserving, protecting, developing, providing and enhancing the water resources of the Yampa River Basin. The District will initiate and participate in projects that embody and promote the protection of water rights, provide broad benefits to District constituents and develop projects that provide responsible conservation, responsible growth, beneficial water storage and usage, and public awareness within the Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District.

The Board of Directors believes the Districts' mission is reflected in the following **values/policy** statements, as informed by recent guidance from survey and stakeholder assessment reports.

Values/Policy Statements

The Board regards irrigation, municipal and industrial uses, ecological needs, recreational opportunities, and aesthetic values to be important matters for the District and the public it serves and advocates achieving a balance among competing uses of water within the District to minimize conflict among them.

The Board supports the concept that the Yampa River Basin and its healthy functioning upland, riparian, river, stream, and wetland ecosystems are and will be the lifeblood of the county's agricultural, environmental, and recreational culture, and, thus, its economic future.

The Board supports ranching and irrigated agriculture in the District for its economic, socio-cultural values, and environmental contributions to the community.

The Board supports providing adequate water supplies of high quality for municipal and domestic purposes.

The Board recognizes that industrial uses, such as energy development and production, require water and support the economic welfare of the Yampa River Basin.

The Board supports economically viable, water-based outdoor recreational activities, e.g., aesthetic enjoyment by residents and visitors, winter sports, water sports, fishing, and hunting.

The Board supports its role in partnerships protecting the healthy functioning of river, stream, riparian, and upland ecosystems and hydrology.

The Board supports wise land use policies by local governments to protect the water resources of the basin.

The Board is committed to strategically supporting science-based programs related to monitoring, protection and restoration, as appropriate, in order to maintain high water quality standards as a necessary part of a healthy economy and environment within the District.

The Board accepts the preponderance of scientific evidence indicating that warmer temperatures are already having effects in the District on quantity and timing of precipitation, evaporative losses, forest and rangeland health and timing of spring peak runoff, and other effects that will increase in the future; it is therefore necessary to adapt the Board's planning assumptions to such changed conditions.

The Board believes the District must participate in local and statewide processes to address co-occurring challenges such as climate, environmental, social, political, administrative and economic changes, with projects and programs to address those challenges; and in those statewide processes, the District must be a strong and consistent voice guarding against inequitable and unmitigated damage to Yampa Basin interests.

The Board recognizes the need for collaborative efforts with partners to monitor, and, if warranted, to support or oppose legislation that has a nexus with water law or policy.

The Board opposes any new transfers of water from the Yampa River and its tributaries to other basins because such transfers would interfere with existing beneficial uses of water, damage economic stability, and reduce environmental quality within the District.

The Board values education and outreach not just for the presentation of information to the public, but as two-way interaction with our community about the District's programs and priorities.

District Goals

The goals below capture the Board's vision of what the District should pursue to advance the values/policies described above. [Note to Committee: the 'actions/tasks,' which we'll flesh out next, will describe how the District will accomplish these goals.]

Goal 1 Protect Yampa water resources, and local uses of those resources, from new or expanded transmountain diversions, or other plans or projects that would impinge on those water resources and uses.

Goal 2 Prudently operate and maintain the District's existing reservoirs.

Commented [R1]: We didn't discuss this specifically, but this is emphasized in the 2016 and 2018 Retreat notes.

Commented [R2]: Should this somehow be combined with #8 below?

- Goal 3 Promote and pursue water management that sustains the environmental and recreational uses of the Yampa River while protecting historic agricultural, municipal and industrial uses.
- Goal 4 Represent Yampa basin water interests at the statewide [and regional?] level, including on relevant policy and legislative matters.
- Goal 5 Anticipate and plan for future long-term water needs in the Yampa basin, including exploration of viable storage options, in order to ensure water availability for a strong economy as well as addressing water quality concerns.
- Goal 6 Study, address and promote water quality concerns in a manner that is consistent with the District's overall responsibilities, including protecting and encouraging the beneficial use of water within the District.
- Goal 7 Educate, communicate with, and seek input from our constituents, including Board and staff members, regarding the goals and activities of the District and their relationship to broader water issues in the Yampa Basin.
- Goal 8 Manage the District's water rights portfolio and water resources wisely in anticipation of extended drought and changing climate conditions.
- Goal 9 Develop short- and long-term financial plans, with projections for future revenues and expenses, to support these goals. These projections will aid the Board of Directors during annual budget discussions concerning the implementation of our strategic priorities identified for that year. By anticipating potential revenue shortfalls and operating budget increases, the Board will be better able to set appropriate pricing for water.

Commented [R3]: Combined 2 goals from Survey p6 involving both rec/enviro and existing uses. Also, since this is the Goal related to managing the District's water resources, does it make sense to combine this with Goal 8, and/or to note either of the 2 additional qualifiers we discussed: 1) 'consistent with Master Plan', and 2) 'in light of changing climate?'

Commented [R4]: Tweaked to include relevant policy and legislative matters from Survey input, p.6

Commented [R5]: See language from Survey p.6 (goes beyond 'building reservoirs'). Pursuing Stagecoach FIRMing would presumably fall under this broader goal?

Commented [R6]: Combo of UG Goal #6 and water quality goal on Survey, p.6

Commented [R7]: From UY Goal #7, but tweaked with Committee comments

Commented [R8]: Kevin's suggestion for tweaking UG Goal #8, combined with Retreat 2016 notes (see pp.2-3) See question in Goal 2 about whether these should be combined (they are both about managing the District's water resources).

Commented [R9]: Combined UG Goal 9 with discussion comments. May be too much for one Goal.

Things that are missing from list above – should they be added?

- Manage District's land for benefit of the public
- Supporting agriculture in the District (action plans could include providing grants, and keeping ag water costs low, both of which are on Survey, see p.6) – we didn't discuss but seems like a omission.
- Something related to UG Goal #8 about collaborative relationships and partnerships – see also Retreat 2016 notes, p.2.
- What about UG Goals #1, 2, 3?
- What about pursuing contract pricing that meets multiple needs... See Retreat 2016 notes, p.2. Not sure where this would be included in the current Goals above.