

## Colorado WaterWise Board Meeting

Thursday, May 12, 2022

Zoom

10 a.m. to noon

P: Called-in via phone  
X: Attended in-person

### Board:

P	Alyssa Quinn	Platte Canyon W&S District	alquinn@plattecanyon.org
P	Amy Volckens	Brendle Group	avolckens@brendlegroup.com
P	Brad Brady	Yearout Energy Solutions	brad.brady@yearoutenergy.com
P	Courtney Black	Intera	CBlack@intera.com
	Don Drew	Courageous Marketing	d.drews@courageousmarketing.com
P	Eric Olson	City of Fort Collins	eolson@fcgov.com
	Katie Helm	City of Fountain	khelm@fountaincolorado.org
	Lance Ackerman	Colorado Springs Utilities	lackerman@csu.org
	Laura Wing	City of Thornton	laura.wing@cityofthornton.net
P	Lindsay Rogers	Western Resource Advocates	lindsay.rogers@westernresources.org
P	Lyndsey Lucia	Northern Water Conservancy	llucia@northernwater.org
	Quint Redmond	Agriburbia	qredmond@agriburbia.com
P	Ruth Quade	City of Greeley	ruth.quade@greeleygov.com
P	Thomas Riggle	Centennial W&S District	triggle@highlandsranch.org
P	Tim York	Aurora Water	tyork@auroragov.org
P	Tyler Kesler	Town of Erie	tkesler@erieco.gov
P	Melissa Brasfield	CWW Board Staff	admin@coloradowaterwise.org

### Guests:

Jessica Thrasher, Colorado Stormwater Center

Dylan King – Town of Erie

Abbye Neel – Brendle Group

### **Call to Order**

Brad called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM

### **Board Business and Action Items**

- Introductions
- Approval of April Board Minutes. Ruth motions, Lindsay seconds. April minutes are approved.

### **Rain Garden Grant**

Jessica received grant funding through CWCB and CSU Water Center for the project. The project is identifying barriers to why people aren't installing residential rain gardens. Those barriers include not knowing what to plant, what rain gardens are or how to install them, some need additional help, and there are not great examples within the community. The grant is addressing all those barriers. They are partnering with CSU horticulture department to develop planting layouts – six planting layouts (two full sun, two part sun, two full share) that will be 50 sq. ft. with the ability to expand the layouts if desired. They are also designing planting maintenance guides. The entire project will be bilingual. Once the planting layouts are complete, they will design a certified rain garden installer course for people along the front range. Goal is to have people be able to reach out and get help with the install of rain gardens by certified contractors. They will also have demonstration gardens. They are partnering with five water providers that are installing 19 gardens – Northern will have six, Greeley will have five,

Fort Collins will have four, Centennial W&SD will have two and Mile High Flood District will have two. Each location is identifying sites to install the gardens. They are also looking to get data to see how the planting layouts worked and make adjustments. After this, they are looking at partnering with nurseries to help promote the layouts and have the plants available. There will be a lot of installation photos as well. Mile High Flood District is developing an app to track all the inspections and have before and after photos. There will be monthly inspections to see how each of the plants are growing. They received additional funding for water quantity analysis which will look to see how much water is coming out from downspout before garden installation then how much water is leaving the rain gardens. The hypothesis is that the rain gardens will be increasing the infiltration rate over time. The One Waters Solutions Institute at CSU has a tool called "Classic" which models how much reduction is stormwater you will have with different types of green infrastructure. They will compare the Classic model versus real world test sites. Large goal is to be able to have rain garden layouts spread broadly throughout CO. Also want to make layouts available to builders to see them go in with new builds.

Ruth noted they partnered with their city stormwater group, so she doesn't have to do it all by herself. They are reaching out to various locations around the city. Since they have five locations they are trying to have then spread evenly around the city. And they are reaching out to communications team to be able to have a location on the east side of town that will hopefully be a bilingual site. Thomas noted he did reach out to his stormwater folks about partnering but didn't gain traction. They also have a landscape contractor that will likely be a good partner. Tyler asked if areas with chase drain and swales are a possible location for these rain gardens. Jessica noted they would love to look at that and building that into Phase 2. Tim noted that if you do look at changing this, you may need to reach out and coordinate with public works because of code require drainage to the street. Jessica is hoping to have all the installs complete this summer. Brad noted it could be nice to have a field trip at one of these locations to see an example.

### **BMP Update**

Courtney noted we are in the process of getting the documentation for both the River District and CWCB contracting. We should be able to wrap that up in the next few weeks. We are also working on a contract addendum for the consultant team. That will also happen in the next few weeks. One area we will need to work through is needing to flush out more of what the new hire role will be with the BMP project. There may also be some additional language that goes into the addendum. Tyler, Brad, Katie, Thomas and Courtney had a call about high level invoicing process. Courtney would like to have a follow up call to ensure we are streamlined to make sure we are tracking everything. **Courtney will send out a Doodle poll to get that scheduled.**

### **Committee Update – Education Events**

Lindsay has been working on getting the next webinar together and is scheduled for June 7 at 11:30 a.m. Announcements will be coming soon. The topic is the Intersection between Fire and Waterwise Landscape. We have a variety of speakers on this topic. This event is in partnership with APA Colorado. This event will be bilingual. The next event is in July and we will host a Lunch 'n Learn at Quint's farm. We are also brainstorming an event on HOA challenges and opportunities for landscape conversions. The last event we are currently planning is on federal funding opportunities for cities to do sustainable water projects. This event will be in partnership with WaterNow Alliance.

### **New Hire Update**

Melissa provided a recap of the interviews and decision from the interview committee. Brad and Melissa have a call scheduled with the candidate to extend the official offer. Melissa noted she is not able to begin until June 20 but had offered to work a bit unpaid until then. We don't want to overextend her unpaid time but plan to invite her to the June board meeting as well as some preliminary planning calls for the BMP project and other projects to sort out her scope and responsibilities. The board did not have any questions.

### **Symposium – Sponsorship**

Thomas noted that we are in a deficit with the budget this year and we could work to cover that shortfall through Symposium sponsorship. We are also in a location that is conducive to having more sponsors in person. Thomas would like to propose every board member secure at least one sponsor, if not more, for the Symposium. This would be in addition to your own organization if they typically sponsor. Melissa added we have adjusted our sponsorship levels for the 2022 event. **She will send out that levels as well as language for outreach.** Lyndsey noted that everyone sign their board member contribution to continue to grow the organization. Melissa noted we have a tracking document with past sponsors. We also use this to

coordinate outreach so people don't reach out to the same organization. **She will send that information.** Amy noted that we should leverage some of the strategic partnerships. Melissa said we are working with Water '22 on the partnering for promotion and co-hosting a happy hour following the event.

### **Legislative Update – What has passed?**

Lindsay provided an update on the Turf Replacement bill which has passed the House and Senate and is just awaiting the Governor's signature. It ended up with \$2M in funding that can be spent in the first three years of the program. This will include hiring a new CWCB staff person to run the program. The next step is to design the program. They would also like to see the funds available by next summer. Thomas asked about if they have an idea of when the funding will start and when the bill will be signed. He asked because there might be an opportunity to sign the bill at the Symposium. Lindsay doesn't want to hold up the program starting but we could look at doing a ceremonial signing. **Lindsay said she can raise that with contacts at WRA to see if it's possible.**

Thomas noted there were a bunch of bills that passed, including:

- Wildfire mitigation and watershed restoration bills that passed.
- The extended producer responsibility bill passed.
- Microgrid resilient grant programs bill passed.
- Alternative transportation tax credit for employers bill passed.
- Build trails under powerlines bill passed.
- Waste diversion and circular economy development center passed.
- Air toxics bill passed.
- Reduce single use plastics bill did not pass.
- CWCB got funded.
- Water quality regulations must have a seat at a table with discussions are had.
- PFAS bill that will ban across the state passed.
- Fracking materials use bill passed.
- Clean water in schools provides funding for filters in schools passed.
- Anti-Water Speculation bill passed.

There was a big hesitation to bring big controversial bills because of the election this year.

Tyler asked what of that would impact CWW directly. Thomas didn't think much would impact CWW directly.

### **Storage Unit Update**

Alyssa noted she and Ruth toured storage units after the last board meeting. They decided on a location near C-470 and Platte Canyon Road. They gave us a deal for \$63/month. It is an indoor unit and it is all set up. Alyssa has already dropped off all her materials. **If you have items you want to store, reach out to Alyssa and you can work on dropping it off. Or if you need items for an event, reach out.** Brad asked about a lock. Alyssa said it is a combo lock and she can provide that information when needed.

### **Round Robin**

- Melissa noted she will be sending out the 2021 Annual Report for review early next week.
- Ruth asked about next month's board meeting. Reminder for everyone to register, there are two options to register in-person or virtual.
- Alyssa noted Jessica has been working to translate the remaining LLYLI materials to Spanish. All the new materials are uploaded to Dropbox as they are completed.
- Eric noted they are doing a lot of hiring and interviewing. Irrigation check-up interns are still in hiring mode.
- Tim noted they are also hiring summer staff and finding it challenging as well. Working on Landscape competition programs and has seen record requests for landscape conversion programs. They are also going to be making updates to the 2023 program.
- Thomas noted they are also hiring for summer staff. They went into drought watch recently which is asking for voluntary water limitations. They may go into restrictions this year for the first time which would also increase rates.

- Brad is working on two new projects with AMI water meter replacements. One with Eagle River W&SD and another with City of Fort Morgan. Eagle is also putting in a solar array on their wastewater plant to cut energy use about 70%.
- Ruth noted they are seeing more commercial property apply for their rebates. Their limit is \$150,000 total and they are almost hitting that limit. Native Plant Coalition group may be coming to CWW asking us for money.
- Erie's turf replacement program is taking off.
- Courtney is working with Dominion W&SD to develop rules and regulations on drought and water shortages. Their big retail customer is Sterling Ranch which already has extremely high water conservation from the beginning. Making it interesting to reach out and message drought and conservation messaging. They are developing a water shortage drought plan. Amy noted the work with Dominion sounds similar to Denver Water with efficiency benchmarks for different end users.
- Amy is working on Indoor water audits program for Adams County as part of their sustainability plan. The Growing Water Smart Metrics Pilot program renewed for another round of communities through next year. Water Regionalism open house for Larimer County.
- Alyssa discussed updates for Water '22 programing for the year.
- Lindsay noted a multi-year funding and financing white paper for non-essential turf programs. Lindsay provided a link to that white paper: <https://westernresourceadvocates.org/publications/financing-the-future-how-to-pay-for-turf-replacement-in-colorado/>

### **Wrap Up and Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:51 a.m.  
Submitted by: Melissa Brasfield