

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF LITTLE THOMPSON WATER DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of Little Thompson Water District (LTWD) met in regular session on Thursday, April 16, 2026. Attendance was as follows:

Board of Directors:

Emily McMurtrey, President
Bill Szmyd, Vice-President – *Presiding Officer*
Larry Brandt, Treasurer
Ryan Heiland
Ed Martens
Garret Maurer
James J. Walker

Staff in Attendance:

Amber Kauffman, District Manager
Angela Diekhoff, Business Manager
Brad E. Eaton, District Engineer
James Sutherland, Water Resources Manager
Kammy K. Tinney, Business Project Manager
Reese Saxton, Operations Manager
Judy O'Malley, Recording Secretary

Other Attendees:

John Burcham, Bob Dehn, and Josh Neville; Residents

CALL TO ORDER

The recitation of the *Pledge of Allegiance* occurred, followed by Vice-President Bill Szmyd calling the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken. Vice-President Szmyd advised that President Emily McMurtrey was expected to arrive late. Ms. McMurtrey arrived at 6:14 p.m. A quorum of the Board was present thereafter with seven of seven members in attendance.

AGENDA REVIEW

There were no changes to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Vice-President Szmyd opened the Public Comments period at 5:02 p.m. for non-agenda comments.

Mr. John Burcham questioned whether LTWD has any plans to reinstate the 2002 program allowing seasonal transfer of Colorado-Big Thompson (C-BT) water in exchange for an exemption from watering restrictions. Vice-President Szmyd advised that due to Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District's (Northern Water) robust management of water and creating new water storage facilities over the years Northern Colorado water providers have sufficient water for the 2026 irrigation season. LTWD will not be issuing watering restrictions at this time. However, it is requested that customers continue smart watering practices and follow LTWD's Water Shortage Contingency Plan WATCH guidelines.

Mr. Bob Dehn brought up several topics for Board consideration:

- **Allotments and leaks.** Mr. Dehn noted that he is involved in the Hearts and Horses nonprofit organization which had a very large leak recently. Mr. Dehn questioned whether the Board would consider a way to deduct the gallons of water lost in the leak from the annual allotment.
- **Larger allotments and a Rate Study.** Referring to the November 20, 2025, Regular Board Meeting, Mr. Dehn questioned the progress of an LTWD Rate Study and the review of water allotments for agricultural-sized residential properties. Mr. Dehn stated that the customers who attended the November meeting respected the LTWD Board for listening to their concerns.

Discussion occurred throughout with Board members asking questions for clarification, and the Board and staff determined to add an agenda item to a future meeting to address the points that were raised.

District Manager Amber Kauffman introduced Water Resources Manager James Sutherland to the Board. Mr. Sutherland gave a brief summary of his background in the water industry.

The Public Comments period for non-agenda items was closed at 5:25 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Director Ed Martens and seconded by Vice-President Szmyd to approve the Consent Agenda, including:

- **Minutes of the March 19, 2026, Regular Board Meeting**
- **Tap List 723**
- **March 2026 Disbursements in the amount of \$1,352,279.54**
 - ❖ **Operating Account: \$935,920.88**
 - **ACH Manual Check Numbers 7104 to 7178 - \$824,135.81**
 - **Manual Check Numbers 12849 to 12890- \$111,785.07**
 - ❖ **Payroll Account: \$416,358.66 (Two bi-weekly payroll periods paid in March)**
 - **Live Checks – 2275 - \$50.00**
 - **ACH Transmittal Vouchers 2791 to 2805 - \$214,001.70**
 - **ACH Direct Deposit Numbers 15490 to 15574 - \$202,306.96**
- **March 2026 Financial Report**

The motion carried unanimously with six of seven board members present.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Hydrologic Conditions, Quota and Water Shortage Action Status:

District Manager Kauffman reviewed the following information with the Board:

There is regional and statewide concern for warm and dry conditions throughout Colorado. Some water providers are notifying their customers that they have water restrictions in place for the 2026 irrigation season due to low storage levels and low snowpack. There is also concern for the Colorado River basin and management of flows in the river.

A slide from a presentation by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) from the Colorado Basin River Forecast Center (CBRFC) showing that temperatures in March were at or above record levels in much of the US and specifically in the upper Colorado River region was reviewed. The Northern Water district boundary has seen 39 percent of average precipitation for the current water year (November 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026). High temperatures and lack of rain have left soil moisture in a critical place for this time of year. Information from the CBRFC summarizes the critical inflows to Lake Powell and potential for reaching dead pool. Northern Water presented a summary of west and east slope snowpack and streamflow predictions at their April 9, 2026, board meeting. The streamflow predictions are informed by Snowtell sites and aerial snow observations. East slope snowpack conditions are not much better than the west slope conditions, but streamflow forecasts are generally better on the east slope as they benefit more from rainfall over the runoff season.

Based on all the information provided and input from allottees, Northern Water staff recommended an 80 percent quota to their board for consideration. While there was some discussion amongst Northern Water's directors, they all agreed with staff's recommendation. Ms. Kauffman reviewed LTWD's water supplies, storage, projected demands, and carryover needs for the 2026 – 2027 water year.

Based on the water supplies for this year, staff recommend staying within the green (“Watch”) level. While this may feel uncomfortable given the conditions in the state, there are many other agencies, specifically in the northern Colorado region, that are not implementing watering restrictions. Through the Colorado Drought Coordination Group, coordinated messaging is being developed, which may address some of the concerns that customers are expressing; however, the timing appears to be a couple of weeks away on the final version.

Vice-President Szmyd called for a break at 5:55 p.m. The meeting resumed at 6:06 p.m.

Strategic Plan Review:

District Manager Kauffman presented the following information to the Board:

The May work session will be a review of the strategic topics and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis from 2018 and updated in 2022. The May work session will present the opportunity to discuss issues in a more open dialogue and then rank the issues by level of importance to assist staff in prioritization of district wide goals.

The categories that will be evaluated include:

- Raw Water Supply Planning;
- Treatment and Transmission;
- Relationships with Others;
- Business Management; and
- Operations and Technology.

Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) Policy:

Business Project Manager Kammy Tinney provided the following information to the Board:

The last update to the District’s CORA policy was in March 2024, which updated the previous policy adopted in 2016, adding language allowing for periodic updates to the fee allowed per statute. Since adoption of the updated policy in 2024, LTWD’s new legal counsel has reviewed the current policy and recommends updating the current CORA policy to their firms’ form which is more robust and provides additional clarification around CORA.

Following discussion, **it was moved by President McMurtrey and seconded by Director Ryan Heiland to adopt Resolution 2026-07 Designating the Official Custodian of Records and Adopting a Policy on Responding to Open Records Requests as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

Public Hearing: Action Item – Motion to Approve: 2026 Updated Rates and Fees:

The Public Hearing was properly publicized. No written objections were received. Vice-President Szmyd opened the Public Hearing at 6:19 p.m. There were no public comments, and the Public Hearing was closed. Business Manager Angela Diekhoff presented the proposed rates and fees during Agenda Item 6.4 noting that in November 2025, the Board approved rates and fees for the 2026 budget year. LTWD must now update the Tap Fees and Water Rate Schedule to incorporate multi-family dwellings and revise Miscellaneous Fees to reflect current rental charges. Multi-family rates are included in the Rate Study currently under way with Wildan Financial Services.

Following discussion, **it was moved by Director Martens and seconded by Director Larry Brandt to approve Section 1501.1 Schedule A – Tap Fees, Section 1502.1 Schedule B – Water Rate Schedule, and Section 1502.2 Schedule C – Miscellaneous Fees. The motion carried unanimously.**

Carter Lake Filter Plant (CLFP):

District Manager Kauffman and Director Heiland provided a summary of the meeting:

- **Pretreatment.** Comments were received from Larimer County regarding the site plan. Comments were being reviewed but seemed minimal. Ms. Kauffman noted that earlier in the day, Larimer County had advised her the last plant expansion had not been permitted. A test blast was performed April 7 at 1:00 p.m. in the Dissolved Air Flotation (DAF) building area. The blast went well. Next steps are to review the seismic data that was provided and develop a plan for future blasting. A meeting with Northern Water is scheduled for April 23 to discuss a new connection to the St Vrain Supply Canal.
- **South Plant Filters 17 and 18.** The recoating project is going smoothly and is expected to be completed by the end of April. The underdrain deliveries have been delayed due to material delays and may not arrive until peak season.
- **General.**
 - ❖ Plant flows are up significantly over last year for the month of March.
 - ❖ There is a leak in the neutralization piping under the north plant. The likely solution is to line the pipe that is already there; however, there may also be trouble with the French drain around the building, so more investigation is necessary.
 - ❖ The annual consumer confidence report (CCR) was sent to LTWD and CWCWD as required by the State.
 - ❖ NoCo Engineering is starting a study to estimate the uranium impact on sludge handling at the two CLFP plants. This study will help to determine if any additional costs are to be expected for disposal of solids from the treatment process.
 - ❖ It was announced that an employee of the plant had left.

STAFF REPORTS

District Manager's Report: District Manager Kauffman presented the following information to the Board:

- **Hicks Legacy Water Treatment Authority.** The eight participating agencies met on April 2 to continue discussions around the water treatment authority formation. The group feels that a good version will be ready to send to the attorneys in May.
- **Building Remodel.** Ms. Kauffman advised that Larimer County discovered the shop area of the district building was built in two sections and one section was never permitted prior to LTWD purchasing the property. Staff from the Larimer County Building division will work with LTWD on what needs to be done to bring the shop up to code.

Business Manager's Report: Business Manager Diekhoff presented the following information to the Board:

- **Customer Service Calls.** Customer Service has seen a large increase in phone calls in the last few weeks, with conversations leading to water shortages, drought restrictions, and allotments. Many customers are questioning why LTWD is not implementing water restrictions.
- **Eye-On-Water (EOW).** Sign-ups continue to increase. Ms. Diekhoff is gathering information on EOW system capabilities to answer questions raised at the March Board Meeting.

District Engineer's Report: District Engineer Brad E. Eaton presented the following information to the Board:

- **Commitment to Serve Requests:** LTWD received three new tap, and four new Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Commitment to Serve Requests in March, bringing the 2026 year-to-date total to 477 new taps and seven ADUs.
- **Capital Projects:** Staff provided comments to the consultant for the Water System Master Plan.

- **Development Projects:** Several large development projects are starting the commitment process.
- **Other Engineering Activities:** The Engineering department is actively pursuing candidates for an Engineering Business Support, Level II position as well as candidates for Civil Engineer Levels I-V positions. The Aurora Dairy waterline upgrade project is in the final stages of design and easement acquisition.

Water Resources Manager's Report: Water Resources Manager Sutherland presented the following information to the Board:

- **Water Use.** The March water use was above the ten-year average, and the trend is expected to continue.
- **Local Weather and Precipitation.** The snowpack and rainfall have been very low. Discussion occurred regarding communication with Business Manager Diekhoff to keep her aware of trends in water usage for revenue expectations.

Operations Manager's Report and Water Quality Update: Operations Manager Reese Saxton presented the following information to the Board:

- **Locates and Leaks.** Locates and leaks have decreased since the previous month, and the Backhoe Crew were able to catch up on their routine tasks.
- **Project Updates and Notes.** Operations crews are busy with system flushing to ensure high water quality after the winter months. The Backhoe Crew has come across three properties in downtown Mead where the meter setter has been made entirely of black "sprinkler pipe." The Communication Health of all district meter endpoints in the system is the highest number Mr. Saxton has seen since joining the District. He can attribute a lot of this to the Meter Department by performing numerous endpoint changeouts every week.

There was discussion regarding the need to find updated technology that will allow all LTWD customers to benefit from EOW readings.

Business Project Manager's Report: Business Project Manager Tinney presented the following information to the Board:

- **Office Remodel, Site Improvement and Accessory Structure Project.** Relocation of Construction began on the office remodel March 2 and is currently on schedule. Demolition is complete; plumbing, electrical, concrete, and framing are well underway. Coordination with the Project Manager, supported by the management team, is ongoing daily and will continue throughout the project. Business Manager Diekhoff and Ms. Tinney met onsite with Workspace Innovations on April 2 to finalize the furniture package, including workstation and chair selection, and finishes.

Town of Berthoud (Berthoud) planning staff has offered a solution to its requirement for construction of a regional trail as part of annexation into Berthoud. A draft annexation agreement is under review by the LTWD's legal counsel. Staff continues to work through site plan concerns including permitting of existing structures and hydrant access for fire suppression needs to the pipe shed.

- **2026 Legislative Session.** The 2026 Legislative Session has been mostly quiet on items that may impact LTWD. There are fewer than 30 days left in the session, and this is the time last minute bills try to get pushed through. District Manager Kauffman advised Ms. Tinney about a bill introduced in March that would require water right owners to revegetate or convert to dryland farming any land formerly used for agriculture. Discussion followed regarding how water right owners who do not have the land rights will be held to this requirement.

- **Special District Association (SDA) Conference.** Lodging reservations for the 2026 conference opened early this year. An agenda will not be available until sometime in July or August. Ms. Tinney noted that Recording Secretary Judy O'Malley sent an email requesting members to advise if they will be attending, and if they wish to attend in-person or virtually.

DIRECTOR REPORTS

- Director Martens questioned Water Resources Manager Sutherland's football loyalties.
- Director Heiland advised that he will not be attending the October Board meeting as his family is expecting their second child.
- Director Garret Maurer noted that the Town of Firestone (Firestone) posted their watering restrictions on Facebook limiting customers to four days per week. Mr. Garret also noted a message for Barefoot Lakes residents advising their water provider is LTWD. A link to the LTWD website was provided.

It was moved by Director Martens seconded by President McMurtrey to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Kauffman
Secretary