

**Southwestern Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Special Meeting via Zoom
January 25, 2024**

Present: Dagan Chadd (joined during 3.0) Kenny Heldman Gerald Koppenhafer
JR Ford Rusty Hinger Jenny Russell
David Guilliams (joined during 3.0) Amy Huff Charlie Smith

Absent:

Staff: Steve Wolff, General Manager

Consultants: Beth Van Vurst, General Counsel, Van Vurst Law
Garin Vorthmann, Colorado Legislative Strategies (CLS)

Guests: Ed Millard
Ken Curtis, Dolores Water Conservancy District
Chris Treese, Water Education Colorado

1.0 Call to Order – Roll Call and Verification of Quorum

President Jenny Russell called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m. Roll was taken and a quorum was established.

2.0 Review and Approve Agenda

There was unanimous consent to approve the agenda.

3.0 Public Questions and Comment

There were no comments from the public.

4.0 Legislative Update

Garin Vorthmann gave an update on how the legislative session was kicking off. There has been a slow start to the session. Steve Wolff presented a list of Bills from that CLS had provided and asked Garin to go through them.

- HB24-1029 - Prohibit Foreign Ownership of Agriculture and Natural Resources Steve and Garin agreed that this bill was most likely to die on its merit and the board probably did not need to take a position on it.
- HB24-1073 Independent Ethics Commission's Jurisdiction – Steve said that this bill does not apply to SWCD, so it will be taken off this list.
- SB24-005 Prohibit Landscaping Practices for Water Conservation - Steve, Garin, and Beth spoke about the scope and timeframe of this bill, mentioning it is probably the right thing to do and sends a good message. However, it does take local control away from communities. Charlie Smith asked for clarification on what functional turf meant, for example, if adding a picnic table made a space functional. He also asked if it may be a first step in industrial/hotel/other properties, in limiting non-functional turf. Steve clarified that the goal initially would be to remove nonfunctional turf in those areas owned by the state.