



COLORADO SPRINGS UTILITIES BOARD
MS Teams and Blue River Board Room
Plaza of the Rockies
121 S. Tejon Street
South Tower, 5th Floor

Minutes
Wednesday, May 20, 2026
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Blue River Board Room

1. Call to Order

Chair Dave Donelson called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

Ms. Anna Bingman, Utilities Board Administrator, called roll.

Present – Chair Dave Donelson, Board Member Ken Casey, Board Member Lynette Crow-Iverson, Board Member Kimberly Gold, Board Member Nancy Henjum, Board Member David Leinweber, Board Member Brian Risley, Board Member Roland Rainey and Vice Chair Brandy Williams.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Tristan Gearhart, Chief Planning and Finance Officer, offered the invocation, and Chair Donelson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Executive Session

Ms. Renee Congdon, Utilities Division Chief for the Office of the City Attorney, read the meeting into Closed Executive Session.

The Utilities Board unanimously approved the motion to go into Closed Executive Session.

The Utilities Board took a five-minute break at 1:07 p.m. to prepare the room.

The Regular Utilities Board Meeting came back into regular session at 2:18 p.m.

4. Consent Agenda

- **Approval of the April 22, 2026, Utilities Board Meeting Minutes**
- **Approval of the Excellence in Governance Policy Manual Revisions: I-8 and I-13**

Board Member Gold made a motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Board Member Rainey seconded the motion. The motion to approve the Consent Agenda passed unanimously.

5. Recognition

- **2026 J.D. Power Water Utility Award - 1 in the West Mid-Sized Segment**

Ms. Leslie Smith, Supervisor of Customer Insights and Programs, informed the Board that Colorado Springs Utilities achieved the highest ranking in 2026 for the J.D. Power Water Utility Customer Satisfaction Survey for the West Mid-Sized Segment.

Ms. Smith was joined by Mr. Milo Twyford, the Customer Success Director for J.D. Power, who presented the award. Mr. Twyford explained the significance of the award, stating that Utilities is delivering reliability, communicating clearly, providing responsive service, and consistent operational excellence. The three pillars in which this award measures success are customer service, people, and ease of doing business.

Mr. Twyford stated that high trust, low customer effort and reliable service reflect strong leadership, dedicated employees, and a culture focused deeply on service to the community. Mr. Twyford congratulated staff present in the room and presented the award to Ms. Smith. Ms. Smith thanked her team for their efforts in customer engagement, as well as all other staff involved in the success of this award.

Vice Chair Williams commented that Colorado Springs Utilities has always been a supportive organization, but the staff truly help to create an environment that is enjoyable to work in and friendly to the customer.

- **Wildfire Awareness Month**

Ms. Some Mese, Chief Operations Officer, recognized May as Wildfire Awareness Month and extended her deep appreciation for the Catamount Wildland Fire Team. She noted that the Wildland Fire Team are unique and are responsible for protecting watersheds and electric infrastructure from fire.

Ms. Mese thanked the team for their leadership in ensuring the community is more prepared, resilient, and informed. Mr. Travas Deal, Chief Executive Officer, echoed Ms. Mese's comments and noted the partnership between this team and the Colorado Springs Fire Department, and how both organizations work hand in hand. Mr. Deal also informed the Board that this team is made up of individuals who work elsewhere in the organization but choose to take on this additional commitment, including maintaining certifications and training, on top of their day-to-day duties.

Vice Chair Williams reiterated the comments of Mr. Deal and Ms. Mese and thanked the team. She reflected on the Waldo Canyon Fire and how this team was one of the first responders on-site, protecting much of the Cedar Heights Subdivision.

Chair Donelson echoed the supportive comments, as well, and thanked the team.

6. Customer Comments

Ms. Beth Garner, a Colorado Springs Utilities Customer, has stayed engaged throughout the discussion about rooftop solar and net metering. She commented that though rooftop solar is not meant to be a major contributor to the grid, it still is one among many. She

commented that smaller systems still relieve pressure from Colorado Springs Utilities' grid and stated that rooftop solar users deserve a fair rate solution.

Mr. Rick Lynch, a Colorado Springs Utilities customer, informed the Board that the Pikes Peak Community Foundation recently conducted a survey with the community that placed the outdoor natural environment as a top priority. While he is not a solar user, Mr. Lynch said he understood the importance of environmental stewardship and urged Colorado Springs Utilities to look into ways to help solar customers finance batteries to have more efficient systems.

7. Compliance Reports:

- **I-2 Financial Conditions and Activities (to include Contracts over \$500,000) G-7 (Quarterly October through December)**
- **E-2 CEO/Board Partnership Responsibilities – Electric Cost Adjustment/Gas Cost Adjustment**

There were no presentations on these items.

- **E-2 CEO/Board Partnership Responsibilities – Water Outlook**

Mr. Justin Zeisler, Supervisor of Water Resource Planning, presented the Board with the Water Outlook for April 2026.

Board Member Leinweber asked what the status is of South Catamount Reservoir being filled, and asked Mr. Zeisler to explain why the Reservoir cannot be filled all at once. Mr. Zeisler responded that the State Dam Safety Requirements have organizations come up with a plan on how to refill and have to stop the refill at certain elevations to ensure that objectives are being met.

The challenge with this year, with lower yields from snowpack and runoff, is to hold certain levels within the required timeframe to meet safety records and standards. While there is water in storage to refill, Colorado Springs Utilities is holding back from using that due to the low inflows and Colorado River Rights being out of priority.

Next, Board Member Leinweber asked for the status of the maintenance on the dam at Mason Reservoir. Mr. Zeisler answered that Mason Reservoir is scheduled for activities this summer to repair the outlet pipe and achieve measures of dam safety. Once these repairs are complete, there is an amount that can be backfilled, however Mason Reservoir is challenging, as it is not as connected to other resources and relies on water flow coming off Pikes Peak.

Board Member Henjum commented that the presentation said there is three years of reliably met demand, but the projected storage at the end of the year drops. She asked Mr. Zeisler to explain this and elaborate on why we are not having further water restrictions. Mr.

Zeisler said this is due in part to our very robust water rights portfolio and reliable infrastructure, as well as the culture of conservation that Colorado Springs Utilities has instilled with customers.

8. Items Called Off Consent Agenda

No items were called off consent.

9. A Resolution for the Acquisition of Property from the heirs of Teresa Pallas and Eugene D. Oddone and Josephine Ida Brenners Necessary for the Kelker to South Plant Transmission Line

Ms. Jessica Davis, Manager of Facility and Land Resource Services, presented the Board with an acquisition of property related to the Kelker to South Plan Transmission Line project. This presentation included the vicinity map, property information, and background on the parcel.

Board Member Henjum asked if there is an agreement with the City on this parcel, as the Pikes Peak Greenway Trail runs through this property. Ms. Davis responded that there is currently an agreement in place with the City for the trail outside of the former Drake Power Plant property, and this trail would be added to that agreement.

Board Member Henjum made the motion to move to recommend approval of a resolution authorizing the acquisition of certain real property with a purchase price in excess of \$100,000, in accordance with the City Real Estate Manual sections 4.1 and 9.6 to the June 9, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting. Board Member Rainey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The Board agreed to put this item on the Consent Agenda.

10. Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding Twin Lakes and Turquoise Lake Aquatic Nuisance Species Mitigation

Ms. Lisa Walters, Water Resource Planner III, presented the Board with the Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding Twin Lakes and Turquoise Lakes Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Mitigation. This presentation included the background, Intergovernmental Agreement Provisions, and next steps.

Board Member Gold made the motion to move to recommend approval of a resolution approving an intergovernmental agreement regarding the aquatic nuisance species mitigation in Twin Lakes and Turquoise Lake in accordance with C.R.S. section 29-1-103 to the May 26, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting. Board Member Leinweber seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The Board agreed to put this item on the Consent Agenda.

11. Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Southeastern Water Conservancy District (SECWCD)

Board Member Casey recused himself before this item was presented, as he is employed by the Department of the Interior, which is the parent agency of the Bureau of Reclamation,

and this item considers a contract with the Bureau of Reclamation. Board Member Casey stated that while he does not have a direct conflict with the matter at hand, he would like to recuse himself to avoid any appearance of impropriety. Board Member Casey then exited the room.

Ms. Jenny Bishop, Water Resource Planner IV, provided a presentation on an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District (SECWCD) for Regional Service Agreements. This presentation included a map of SECWCD, Reclamation Contract Number 11XX6C0005, Intergovernmental Agreements Provisions, and next steps.

Board Member Rainey made the motion to move to recommend a resolution approving an intergovernmental agreement regarding the applicability of certain provisions of a contract between Colorado Springs Utilities' and the United States Bureau of Reclamation to water service areas outside SECWCD's boundaries in accordance with C.R.S. section 29-1-203 to the May 26, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting. Board Member Crow-Iverson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 8 to 0. Due to Board Member Casey's recusal, this item could not go on the Consent Agenda and will be presented as Utilities Business.

Following the approval of the item, Board Member Casey rejoined the meeting.

12. Resolution Approving a Special Contract with Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Station for Water Augmentation Service

Ms. Bishop presented the next item, which was a special contract for water augmentation service with Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Station (CMSFS). This presentation included a map of Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Station, agreement terms and conditions, financials, and next steps.

Board Member Henjum asked how the water is delivered. Ms. Bishop answered that CMSFS accrues groundwater in their well from Fountain Creek, which includes fully consumptive water that Utilities has ownership of.

Board Member Henjum made the motion to move to recommend approval of a resolution approving a special contract for water augmentation service with Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Station in accordance with City Code sections 12.4.304 and the Excellence in Governance Policy Manual Policy I-7 to the May 26, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting. Board Member Gold seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The Board agreed to put this item on the Consent Agenda.

13. Resolution Authorizing the Abandonment of the Sugarloaf Conditional Water Rights

Ms. Bishop, joined by Mr. Nathan Endersbee, Senior Attorney for the Utilities Division of the Office of the City Attorney, moved on to the next presentation, which was a resolution authorizing the abandonment of the Sugarloaf Conditional Water Rights. This presentation

included the history of the water rights, Sugarloaf Water Rights, physical and legal constraints, the conclusion, and next steps.

Board Member Henjum asked for an explanation of what “perfected” means in the context of water rights. Mr. Endersbee responded that it means the water from a conditional water right has been placed to beneficial use. It is interchangeable with the word “absolute” within the same context.

Board Member Rainey made the motion to move to recommend approval of a resolution authorizing the abandonment of certain water rights known as the Sugarloaf Conditional Water Rights to the May 26, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting. Board Member Gold seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The Board agreed to put this item on the Consent Agenda.

14. CEO Employment Agreement Amendment Proposal

Ms. Renee Adams, Chief Human Resources Officer, and Ms. Tracy Lessig, Deputy City Attorney for the Office of the City Attorney, presented the Board with the employment contract amendment for the Chief Executive Officer. This presentation explained the amendments to the Employee Agreement relating to pay and benefits, legal terms, section 4.1 Non-competition, section 4.3 Confidential Information, and section 4.4 Non-disparagement.

Board Member Leinweber commented that the position of Utilities CEO is often lumped into other government positions, when the utility business is often non-government and instead corporate. He stated this is why it is important to remain competitive when it comes to hiring and retaining leadership and noted that the salary increase would be bringing this position to the median range in comparison to other utility companies that are public power and have fewer services. Board Member Leinweber stated that Colorado Springs Utilities is both unique in that it is a four-service utility and a municipal utility, with a very large budget to maintain. The changes to the contract will continue to keep Colorado Springs Utilities under steady leadership and give them the ability to attract strong leadership in coming years.

Board Member Henjum stated that she agreed with Board Member Leinweber’s statements and added that she understands the gravity of the changes to this contract, especially as most of the community is seeing rising costs. She acknowledged that this was not an easy vote to make but noted that the strong leadership at Colorado Springs Utilities is why awards like the J.D. Power award is one of Springs Utilities’ many accolades and strengths of the community. Board Member Henjum added that the previous CEO did not take a pay increase for a number of years, which created compression that put the organization at risk for future leadership.

Chair Donelson read a statement he wrote. He noted some of Mr. Deal’s accomplishments as CEO, including the effort to keep the Ray Nixon Power Plant in operation and the

recently-approved large load tariff for electric service which protects our customers from increased costs with high users of electricity. Chair Donelson commented that Mr. Deal is well-respected at the local, state, and federal levels, which benefits the community as different initiatives are introduced.

Chair Donelson made the motion to approve a contract amendment for the Chief Executive Officer, pursuant to City Code 12.1.104 and UBA-1 of the Excellence in Governance Policy Manual. Board Member Crow-Iverson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

15. Board Member Updates

Mr. Wayne Williams, Chief of Staff for the City of Colorado Springs, stated he was grateful for the partnership and collaboration with Colorado Springs Utilities under Mr. Deal's leadership.

Board Member Henjum informed the Board that Colorado Springs Utilities staff attended the most recent Fountain Creek Watershed District Board meeting to discuss recent activity and continue to build a relationship. Board Member Henjum stated that there was a great conversation following the presentation staff provided. Next, Board Member Henjum informed the Board that later that evening, there would be a Ride of Silence in honor of those who lost their lives while cycling. The ride will depart from the steps of City Hall at 7:00 p.m.

Vice Chair Williams reminded the Board that Territory Days in Old Colorado City is scheduled for Memorial Day weekend and encouraged those who were interested in attending.

16. Summary of Board Actions

Ms. Bingman provided a summary of Board Actions:

- Approved the April 22, 2026, Utilities Board meeting minutes.
- Approved the Excellence in Governance Policy Manual Revisions: I-8 and I-13.
- Recommended approval of a resolution authorizing the acquisition of certain real property with a purchase price in excess of \$100,000, in accordance with the City Real Estate Manual sections 4.1 and 9.6 to the June 9, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting on Consent.
- Recommended approval of a resolution approving an intergovernmental agreement regarding the aquatic nuisance species mitigation in Twin Lakes and Turquoise Lake in accordance with C.R.S. section 29-1-103 to the May 26, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting on Consent.
- Recommended a resolution approving an intergovernmental agreement regarding the applicability of certain provisions of a contract between Colorado Springs Utilities' and the United States Bureau of Reclamation to water service areas outside SECWCD's boundaries in accordance with C.R.S. section 29-1-203 to the May 26, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting as Utilities Business.

- Recommended approval of a resolution approving a special contract for water augmentation service with Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Station in accordance with City Code sections 12.4.304 and the Excellence in Governance Policy Manual Policy I-7 to the May 26, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting on Consent.
- Recommended approval of a resolution authorizing the abandonment of certain water rights known as the Sugarloaf Conditional Water Rights to the May 26, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting on Consent.
- Approved a contract amendment for the Chief Executive Officer, pursuant to City Code 12.1.104 and UBA-1 of the Excellence in Governance Policy Manual.

17. Adjournment

Chair Donelson adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.