

**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, February 19, 2026. Attendance was as follows:

Board of Directors:

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

Staff in Attendance:

Amber Kauffman, District Manager
Angela Diekhoff, Business Manager
Brad Eaton, District Engineer
Reese Saxton, Operations Manager
Kammy K. Tinney, Business Project Manager
Holly Suess, Customer Service Supervisor
Judy O'Malley, Recording Secretary

Other Attendees:

Greg and Brittany Perrotto, Chris and Christy Downey; Residents

CALL TO ORDER

The recitation of the *Pledge of Allegiance* occurred, followed by President Emily McMurtrey calling the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken.

A quorum of the Board was present with seven of seven members in attendance.

AGENDA REVIEW

District Manager Amber Kauffman recommended an executive session per Colorado Revised Statutes 24-6-402 part 4 subpart e for determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for negotiations; and instructing negotiators for item 6.4, Chimney Hollow Uranium Mitigation.

It was moved by Director Bill Szmyd and seconded by Director Larry Brandt to approve the agenda as presented, including discussion in Executive Session at the end of the Regular Meeting as requested. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

President McMurtrey opened the Public Comments period at 5:03 p.m. There were no Public Comments on non-agenda items, and the Public Comments period was closed.

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by President McMurtrey and seconded by Director Szmyd to approve the Consent Agenda, including:

- **Minutes of the January 15, 2026, Regular Board Meeting**
- **Minutes of the February 2, 2026, Board Work Session**

- **Tap List 721**
- **January 2026 Disbursements in the amount of \$2,884,262.94**
 - ❖ **Operating Account: \$2,490,731.54**
 - **ACH Manual Check Numbers 6958 to 7028 - \$1,271,153.71**
 - **Manual Check Numbers 12763 to 12795- \$1,219,577.83**
 - ❖ **Payroll Account: \$393,531.40 (Two bi-weekly payroll periods paid in January)**
 - **ACH Transmittal Vouchers 2761 to 2773 - \$199,001.03**
 - **ACH Direct Deposit Numbers 15334 to 15407 - \$194,530.37**
- **January 2026 Financial Report**
- **Ratification of Approval of Corrected Schedule E – Non-Potable Systems**

The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Hydrologic Conditions:

District Manager Kauffman presented the following information on hydrologic conditions to keep the Board informed ahead of the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District's (Northern Water) decision on the supplemental quota expected in early April. This information is used with LTWD's Water Shortage Contingency Plan to determine whether to move to a different action level from the current level of Green. If conditions arise that give LTWD concern for having adequate water supply to meet water demands, LTWD may move into action levels that incorporate actions to reduce water use through restrictions and increased rates on top tiers.

Ms. Kauffman reviewed information that was pulled from a presentation by Northern Water Staff to the Northern Water Board on February 12, 2026. Normal precipitation for January 2026, and water-year-to-date for the 2025-2026 water year (October 1, 2025, to February 10, 2026), was down significantly leaving the snowpack total in the Upper Colorado River Basin at 52 percent of average and the South Platte River Basin at 56 percent of average. This information was intended to give context to the early caution for monitoring water supplies.

Discussion was held throughout regarding the following:

- LTWD may need to use current water storage reserves to serve customers in 2026 if the snowpack does not improve. If there are two consecutive drought years LTWD will need to enact conservation measures if there are three consecutive drought years LTWD will need to enact the strictest level of the Water Shortage Contingency Plan as there will be no way to replenish the reserves.
- LTWD needs to begin preliminary messaging to customers, consistent with other area water providers, encouraging voluntary conservation efforts if the situation does not improve. Local and national media are already reporting on the unusually warm and dry conditions in the West.
- Water Resources Specialist Joe Pitti is serving on the Colorado Drought Task Force.
- Weather conditions have been so dry wildfires are expected to have an impact on the area. The fires in Granby five years ago affected local water supplies.

Perrotto Variance Request:

District Engineer Brad Eaton presented the following information regarding the request to the Board: Greg and Marcia Perrotto are the owners of the 4.73-acre property located at 3303 Harmony Court in Berthoud, with a 5/8-inch Standard Residential Tap serving the property. The Perrottos wish to build a 1,400-square foot (sq-ft) accessory dwelling unit (ADU). In 2021, the Board approved a variance to the District's square footage guideline subject to the Perrottos executing a new Domestic Water Agreement

(DWA) stating that, "in the event their water usage increases over 0.70 ac-ft, they will be required to dedicate additional water to the District." The Perrottos executed the new DWA and staff issued a commitment letter allowing the addition of the ADU. After many obstacles, the Perrottos are ready to build the ADU. Staff issued a new commitment letter allowing the addition of the ADU, while outlining the current required ADU fees. The Perrottos have since responded with a request for LTWD to waive the fee in consideration of the historic underuse of their standard tap's annual allotment, their participation in a neighborhood non-potable irrigation system, as well as their review of water usage by family members that will be residing in the main house while Mr. and Mrs. Perrotto will move into the ADU. The two households combined annually use approximately 60 percent of the 228,000 acre-feet (AF) allotment of a Standard Residential Tap.

Staff supports the variance request with conditions as outlined in the Commitment Letter. Following discussion, **it was moved by Director Ed Martens and seconded by Director Jim Walker to approve the Variance as presented, including a waiver of the Water Resource Fee. The motion carried with six ayes and one nay.**

Downey Variance Request:

District Manager Kauffman presented the following information regarding the request to the Board: Mr. Chris Downey contacted LTWD's office in the summer of 2025 and Customer Service Supervisor Holly Suess discussed allotments, historic water use, upsizing of Mr. Downey's tap, conservation options, and resources to better help Mr. Downey track overall water use, reduce water use, and utilize proper irrigation timing based on sprinkler head type. Mr. Downey asked many informed questions to better understand how the District determines allotments and what other LTWD customers were using. Mr. Downey requested information via a Colorado Open Records Act Request (CORA) for data related to residential, non-residential, and wholesale water deliveries, water supplies, and the 10-year average District water use. Mr. Downey also sent a letter to the LTWD Board of Directors addressing his historic water use and request to be excluded from surcharges by allowing an increase to his allotment with no additional cost to him. Upon request, Mr. Downey also filled out a variance request form to have the Board consider his request.

Mr. Downey's property has a 10-year average of 369,416 gallons per year. He has a 5/8-inch standard tap with an allotment of 228,000 gallons. Staff reviewed the other, similar sized parcels around Mr. Downey and none use more than their allotment. Mr. Downey's tap was purchased in 1992 by the home builder. The price of the tap at that time included a plant investment fee, installation charges, and the cost for water rights. The District has always had a requirement for water dedication for each lot that asked for service. This water dedication at the time did not depend on the size of the lot. Everyone dedicated the same amount of water for the same 5/8-inch residential tap through water dedication or paying cash-in-lieu (CIL). Mr. Downey was not a part of that process and was likely not aware of it as he is the second homeowner. Mr. Downey purchased the property in 2011. No annual water use prior to 2016 is currently available to LTWD through our software program.

Mr. Downey's variance request suggests that the allotment is not workable even with conservation on his 12-acre parcel. The District has been communicating with its customers since at least 2019 about allotments through newsletters and postcards. When he purchased the property, he signed a DWA where he agreed to "pay the District such sum as may be prescribed from time to time by the

Board of Directors as the water rate or charge for such water service.” It also says the “User agrees to be subject to and abide by such other rules and regulations of the District regarding the use of water as may be established from time to time by the Board of Directors.” The impetus of the “estate tap” was brought by more urban types of development with larger lots and landscaping requirements that many rural lots do not have. Additionally, the estate taps that are purchased now do require customers to dedicate more water to the tap either through CIL or dedication of water rights. It does not mean that a larger lot will always use more water; many customers with large acreages use less water than urban development type lots on a conservation tap. Continuing to allow Mr. Downey to use more than his allotment of 228,000 gallons per year allows him to use someone else’s allotment and puts LTWD at risk for water surety. Granting this customer the variance requested at this time may create precedent that the District does not have the means to continue to cover for all customers in perpetuity.

It was moved by Director Szmyd and seconded by Director Ryan Heiland to approve a one-year hiatus to the Overuse Surcharge Fees as long as the Downeys show they are attempting to reduce their water usage. The motion failed with five nays and two ayes.

Further discussions followed regarding:

- Allowing the variance or possibly offering a rebate if additional reductions in water use are achieved.
- The cost to purchase additional allotment.
- Rules and regulations in place to manage water use by consistent over users.
- Mr. and Mrs. Downey’s attempts to reduce their water use.
- Director Heiland, an expert on the subject, questioned the Downeys to try to determine additional ways to assist them in reducing water use specific to outside irrigation.
- The heavy workload that would be placed on Customer Service Staff to manage this variance and any additional customers requesting the same accommodation. LTWD has approximately 1,500 over users out of approximately 11,000 customers.
- The Board’s desire to hold tapholders accountable for overusing water above the respective allotment.

It was moved by Director Szmyd and seconded by President McMurtrey to deny the Variance request. The motion carried with six ayes and one nay.

President McMurtrey called for a break at 6:37 p.m. The meeting resumed at 6:45 p.m.

[Chimney Hollow Uranium Mitigation:](#)

District Manager Kauffman presented the following information to the Board:

During construction of Chimney Hollow Reservoir, the stormwater discharge permit for the facility to the downstream waterway was amended to include testing for uranium. During one large storm event the water quality testing had a positive test result for uranium. Northern Water and their consultants determined that the uranium was a naturally occurring variety found in the granite that was quarried on site to construct the dam.

Additional information and mitigation were to be discussed in executive session per Colorado Revised Statutes 24-6-402 part 4 subpart e for Determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for negotiations; and instructing negotiators.

Carter Lake Filter Plant (CLFP):

District Manager Kauffman provided a summary of the meeting:

- **Pretreatment.** The site plan for the pretreatment plant was submitted to Larimer County and is expected to take six to eight weeks for review. The Bureau of Reclamation is expected to take approximately two months to review the relocation of electric service.
- **South Plant Filters 17 and 18.** The rehabilitation work has begun.
- **5 Million Gallon (M-G) Concrete Tank Hatch.** The hatch has a four-week lead time. The replacement will take the tank out of service and will result in two tanks being out of service at the same time, but by Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) requirement, the hatch must be replaced by May. The outage is prior to peak season, so the schedule is acceptable.
- **Northern Water's Annual Canal Shutdown:** The canal shutdown began February 16 and is expected to last until February 20. As Monday is a holiday, CLFP will start the Dry Creek pumps on February 13. The high-pressure line will still be operational, but water supplies will be 50 to 60 percent from Dry Creek Reservoir for the week. There was discussion regarding the lack of Taste and Odor issues with the water mix. The consensus was a combination of treating the water for algae in 2025 and how cold the water currently is likely contributed to the water tasting better.

Public Hearing: Action Item – Motion to Approve: Resolution 2026-04 Inclusions:

The Public Hearing was properly publicized. No written objections were received. President McMurtrey opened the Public Hearing at 7:10 p.m. All members of the public in attendance had left the meeting earlier, and the Public Hearing was closed.

It was moved by Director Szmyd and seconded by Director Heiland to adopt Resolutions 2026-04 Inclusions of properties located in Larimer County as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

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

- **Water Resource Manager.** A candidate was offered and accepted the Water Resources Manager position. James Sutherland starts with LTWD the week of February 23rd.
- **NoCo Water Alliance.** Ms. Kauffman attended a meeting with the main points of discussion being how to begin the conversation outside of the room with ditch companies and other agencies. Also discussed was membership and whether the meetings should be opened to the public.
- **Regional Water Resiliency Working Group.** Operations Manager Reese Saxton and Ms. Kauffman met with several first responder agencies and other regional water providers to continue discussion of interconnects and opportunities for grants to provide emergency connections between water providers. This group started after the Anderson Fire almost reached the Hansen Feeder Canal. If that canal had been compromised, water service for Loveland would have been difficult. Due to this situation, the Loveland Rural Fire Protection District (LRFPD) started looking for resources to ensure water service stability in the area and this group.
- **Windy Gap Firming Project.** Ms. Kauffman attended a meeting with CDPHE and Northern Water to help represent the Windy Gap Firming Project allottees. This meeting was intended to help CDPHE understand the path of the group and for Northern Water to understand any red flags with the mitigation options moving forward. Nothing was determined at the meeting, but CDPHE agreed to get back to Northern Water with any concerns.
- **South Platte Roundtable.** Ms. Kauffman is applying for a seat on the roundtable.

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

- **Benefit Statement.** A Benefit Statement including both salaries and LTWD contributions to health insurance, PTO, holidays, retirement, life insurance, and miscellaneous benefits was produced and delivered to all employees. The Benefit Statement also included what each employee contributes to retirement, life insurance, and miscellaneous benefits that are available. Ms. Diekhoff received positive feedback from employees stating they were both surprised and amazed at how much LTWD provides in benefits. The statements aided Ms. Diekhoff in productive conversations with employees on increasing their contributions to retirement. Twice a year, the agent representing the LTWD retirement plans comes to the office for individual meetings with employees to assist everyone in (hopefully) setting themselves up for retirement success. The statements will help with that conversation as well. Colonial Life was onsite at the end of 2025 to review optional benefits available to employees (employee paid); such as Accident, Critical Illness, and Cancer insurance.
- **New LTWD Phone System:** The current phone system is outdated and will not be supported starting in April. The timing of implementing a new system coincides with the office remodel and server upgrade. The new phone system will be on the Cloud allowing for less downtime should internet service be interrupted.
- **Eye-On-Water (EOW).** Sign-ups continue to increase with 24 new accounts by the second week of February.

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

- **Commitment to Serve Requests:** LTWD received one new tap, and no new ADU Commitment to Serve Requests in January, bringing the 2026 year-to-date total to one new tap and no ADUs.
- **Capital Projects:** The 30-inch transmission line is moving forward quickly.
- **Development Projects:** With the continued mild weather, all active developments remain busy.
- **Budget Revision:** Mr. Eaton advised the Board that he will be bringing a Budget Revision proposal to the Board in March. There have been delays to some projects opening up fund availability, while the timelines for others need to be moved forward.
- **Other Engineering Activities:** Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has provided 90 percent design drawings for the joint 24-inch and LTWD waterline relocations at Interstate 25 (I-25) and Weld County Road (WCR) 34. The plans are under review by LTWD staff. The LTWD Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) map was updated for the February 2026 Board Meeting.

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

- **Water Use:** The January water use was on par with projections.
- **Cumulative Water Use 2026 Water Year:** LTWD paid for the carryover and that will be reflected in the March report. If monthly usage continues to hit projections, and Northern Water does not issue a supplemental quota, LTWD will need to use the water in Dry Creek Reservoir.

Discussion occurred around several scenarios including Northern Water issuing a 50 percent quota with no supplemental quota for three years in a row, LTWD would be out of Dry Creek Reservoir water. Ms. Kauffman noted that Windy Gap water does not yield every year. Once Chimney Hollow Reservoir is filled and online, and LTWD's native waters are through Water Court, LTWD will be in good condition. Director Heiland asked Ms. Kauffman to include a presentation for the March Board Meeting reviewing the water supply.

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

- **Locates and Leaks:** Locates are still higher than average in part due to repeat tickets being called in. Not as many LTWD lines have been hit by contractors lately, but the number of leaks was higher than average for January. The Backhoe Crew had eight leak repair calls over the past holiday weekend.
- **Project Updates and Notes:** The Backhoe Crew was replacing a leaking meter and setting a new vault at Picos Dairy. They knew a power pole could become an issue but thought they would be able to work around it. As their excavation expanded, the power pole became a serious safety concern. They stopped work, made a couple of phone calls and were able to have United Power come onsite and hold the pole with a crane truck so they could finish their work safely. Mr. Saxton had already scheduled a Safety Training with United Power to bring their High Voltage Safety Demonstration Trailer to LTWD that will occur in May.
- **New Locator:** Mr. Saxton advised the Board that a new Locator was hired. State regulations on backflow prevention have increased the responsibilities of the current Backflow Prevention Specialist resulting in the need for a full-time position, instead of managing backflow prevention part-time and locates part-time. The new employee is a good fit and learning the job duties quickly.

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

- **Office Remodel, Site Improvement and Accessory Structure Project.** Ms. Tinney publicly thanked Business Manager Diekhoff and Operations Manager Saxton for engaging their staff members to prepare areas for staff relocation ahead of the project start. LTWD received the first round of comments for proposed Site Improvements from Larimer County. District Manager Kauffman stated that Ms. Tinney, Ms. Diekhoff, and Mr. Saxton were doing an amazing job with preparation. Ms. Kauffman also noted LTWD will need to annex into the Town of Berthoud to connect to their sewer system and this will lower the District's water rates as it will now be in-town rather than outside of town.
- **Employee Engagement Activities.** All staff members received Valentine's Day treat bags.

DIRECTOR REPORTS

- Director Garret Maurer noted that on a recent trip to Arizona the lack of water in Lake Powell was a very big television story. Mr. Maurer also mentioned that he spoke with a contractor in his development who advised him that one of the building companies has no plans to purchase new lots in Colorado for 2026.
- Director Brandt noted that a group of Coloradoans are moving to Texas because they are unhappy with changes within the state. He also mentioned that an agricultural organization provides grants to help military veterans start or expand farming operations in Colorado and that he plans to apply for a grant.
- Director Heiland advised that President Trump has issued an Executive Order to protect the production of glyphosate for national security.

President McMurtrey called for a break at 7:45 p.m. The meeting resumed at 7:48 p.m.

It was moved by Director Szymd and seconded by Director Brandt to adjourn to Executive Session subject to Colorado Revised Statutes 24-6-402 part 4 subpart e for Determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for negotiations; and instructing negotiators for item 6.4, Chimney Hollow Uranium Mitigation. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board reconvened in Regular Session at 8:25 p.m. upon motion duly made by President McMurtrey and seconded by Director Brandt. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Director Heiland and seconded by Director Brandt to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Kauffman
Secretary