

PALOUSE BASIN AQUIFER committee

MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2023, 2:00 PM

UI, FACILITIES SERVICES CENTER, JACK'S CREEK MEETING ROOM

<https://uidaho.zoom.us/j/89476554152> (Passcode: PBAC)

Attendance

X: In-person attendance

V: Video attendance

X	Pullman: Cara Haley (Chair) City Engineer	X	Moscow: Tyler Palmer (Vice-Chair) Deputy Director, Public Works & Services
	Pullman: Vacant Position	V	Moscow: Michael Parker Water Utility Manager
X	Pullman: Eileen Maccoll City Council Member		Moscow: Sandra Kelly City Council Member
	Whitman County: Mark Storey Public Works Director/County Engineer	X	Latah County: Paul Kimmell Citizen/County Representative
V	Whitman County: Tom Handy County Commissioner	V	Latah County: Tom Lamar County Commissioner
X	WSU: Jeff Lannigan Facilities Services	X	UI: Lana Cohen Research Associate
	WSU: Jason Sampson Asst Director, Environmental Services	X	UI: Rusty Vineyard Director of Facilities
V	WA, Dept of Ecology: Patrick Cabbage Unit Supervisor/Hydrogeologist		ID, Water Resources: Michelle Richman Regional Manager/Staff Engineer
V	WA, Dept of Ecology: Chris Beard Hydrogeologist		ID, Water Resources: Daniel Sturgis Hydrogeologist

Others:

Steve Robischon, PBAC Technical Advisor (V); Robin Nimmer, Alta Science & Engineering (X); Brooke Chase, Nez Perce Tribe (V); Colt Shelton, JUB (V); Cristin Reisenauer, City of Pullman (V); Sean Wells (V); Jamie Hill (V); Pamela Titerenko (V); David Hall (X)

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**Denotes Action Items*

1) Introductions

Meeting called to order at 2:01pm. Roundtable of introductions of in person and online participants.

2) *Approval of Minutes – ([Video Link 8:02](#))

a. March 23, 2023 - Meeting Minutes – [Attached](#)

Motion:	Approve Minutes from March 23, 2023, Meeting
Mover:	Tyler Palmer – Vice Chair
Seconder:	Rusty Vineyard
Result:	ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED

3) Public Comment for Items not on Agenda

- a. Vice Chair Tyler Palmer inquired about the new hire for Pullman Public Works Director - Sean Wells will be starting May 10. It is not yet confirmed if he will fill the vacant position on PBAC.

4) Unfinished Business – None

5) New Business – None

6) Presentations & Discussion – ([Video Link 10:18](#))

a. Discussion: Update from Committee Members regarding Contribution Increases Memo: Status of PBAC Funds & Future Contribution Increases – [Attached](#)

At the February meeting members were directed to discuss an increase with their individual entity leadership. Committee members provided roundtable updates.

- Pullman: Anticipating an update and accounted for an increase in the 23-24 budget. Will need a resolution at Pullman City Council to adopt. Leadership was concerned with UI's lack of Research contributions.
- Moscow: Council is anticipating the increase and supportive of water conservation and supply project.
- WSU: Okay with increase but needs a plan to go along with it. Need to be mindful of frequency for increases or establish an interval. Should discuss a combined funding source so funds can be easier to transfer from one account to another.

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- UI: Trying to get the PBAC Plan resolved, and in doing so there would be a payback of Research funds from the past 4 years. Then it would be a centrally funded effort. The increase has been communicated and a cost increase should be anticipated on a regular basis.
- Latah: Paul has not spoke with Tom but feel good about a continued commitment. Will be sure to get the increase into the next budget request as an early heads up.
- Whitman: Feels good and will give the Commissioners a heads up. The percentage increase is high but the dollar amount isn't too much.

Consensus is this increase should be approvable. The new Executive Director will draft a resolution for the upcoming fiscal year. Will follow up for one more check in at next month's meeting.

7) Subcommittee Reports – ([Video Link 26:19](#))

a. Transition

i. Job posted and open until April 26 for first round review

[Job Posting Link: PBAC Executive Director](#)

The subcommittee consists of Cara Haley, Tyler Palmer, Paul Kimmell, Rusty Vineyard, and Mark Storey. Meetings have been scheduled to review applications and the recruitment process will follow as such.

b. Budget

i. Monthly Budget Update - [Attached](#)

No new expenditures this month except the regular administrative compensation. No funds have gone to City of Genesee for the transducer quite yet.

c. Communications

i. Recent Meeting Update

Meeting was cancelled. Paul Kimmell will be drafting a press release for the Woods Hole visit and potentially coordinate a social hour with them.

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d. Research

- i. **Meeting to Review Implementation Plan scheduled for May 11, 2-3:30pm**
- ii. **Plan will be presented to Committee at May PBAC Meeting**
Meeting with Alta and Jacobs to review plan with the technical subcommittee. The draft will be sent out a week prior so the subcommittee can bring feedback to the meeting for discussion. Larger discussion with the entire Committee at the May meeting.

8) Other Reports and Announcements – ([Video Link 34:13](#))

- a. Committee to sign a thank you card to John Bush for his time spent on lecture series

b. Agency Updates

This is a new item that would allow entities and agencies an opportunity to provide informational updates. It isn't expected to be formal, simply a verbal update to improve communication and sharing information.

- PBAC submitted additional information to IDWR for their Sustainability Project List.
- Latah County: Funds will still be able to accommodate an AmeriCorps member.
- WDOE: Washington legislation will allow funding in Oregon that will benefit Washington, specifically for the Walla Walla Basin which is bi-state.
- Website: Is now secure! Committee/New ED should contemplate purchasing email and domain to allow for record preservation.
- Pullman: Irrigation ordinance passed and now working on outreach and education.

c. Update: UI PBAC Plan – *Tyler Palmer*

Update provided earlier in the meeting (Item 6a).

d. Reminder: Well Sampling with Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution – Visiting May 8-12

Paul Kimmell to provide contacts and coordinate a get together.

e. Update: Website Domain

Update provided earlier in meeting (Item 8b).

- f. May 20th Music Gathering in Viola – Paul Kimmell will send out invite.

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9) Next PBAC Meeting:

a. **Thursday, May 18 at 2:00 PM**

10) Adjourn at 2:52 PM

Motion:	Adjourn
Mover:	Paul Kimmell
Secunder:	Tom Lamar
Result:	ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED

Minutes adopted at the May 18, 2023 Meeting

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DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2023, 2:00 PM
 UI, FACILITIES SERVICES CENTER, JACK'S CREEK MEETING ROOM
<https://uidaho.zoom.us/j/8947654152> (Passcode: PBAC)

Attendance

X: In-person attendance **V:** Video attendance

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	Pullman: Vacant Position		Moscow: Michael Parker Water Utility Manager
X	Pullman: Eileen Maccoll City Council Member	X	Moscow: Sandra Kelly City Council Member
X	Whitman County: Mark Storey Public Works Director/County Engineer	X	Latah County: Paul Kimmell Citizen/County Representative
V	Whitman County: Tom Handy County Commissioner		Latah County: Tom Lamar County Commissioner
X	WSU: Jeff Lannigan Facilities Services	X	UI: Lana Cohen Research Associate
	WSU: Jason Sampson Asst Director, Environmental Services	X	UI: Rusty Vineyard Director of Facilities
V	WA, Dept of Ecology: Patrick Cabbage Unit Supervisor/Hydrogeologist		ID, Water Resources: Michelle Richman Regional Manager/Staff Engineer
	WA, Dept of Ecology: Chris Beard Hydrogeologist		ID, Water Resources: Daniel Sturgis Hydrogeologist

Others:

Steve Robischon, PBAC Technical Advisor (V); Jeff Langman (V); Robin Nimmer, Alta Science & Engineering (X); Allison Lebeda, Nez Perce Tribe (V); Colt Shelton, JUB (V); David Hall (X); Alan Seltzer (V); Rebecca Tyne (V)

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**Denotes Action Items*

1) Introductions

Meeting called to order at 2:03pm. Roundtable of introductions of in person and online participants.

2) *Approval of Minutes – ([Video Link 10:29](#))

- a. February 16, 2023 - Meeting Minutes – [Attached](#)

Motion:	Approve Minutes from February 16, 2023, Meeting
Mover:	Paul Kimmell
Seconder:	Eileen Maccoll
Result:	ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED

3) Public Comment for Items not on Agenda

- a. Community Member, David Hall, suggested Moscow and Pullman implement a water use budget as a tool.

4) Unfinished Business – None

5) *New Business – ([Video Link 12:05](#))

- a. **Contribute \$4,500 for Datalogging at Genesee Well – Steve Robischon**

Brief overview from Steve. Contribution is for the technology and training associated with the proposed transducer in Genesee's deep well. The Committee discussed the potential of installing a separate transducer (a lower amount but an annual check in by PBAC's Datalogger Contractor) but City of Genesee does not prefer that. It was also presented that these funds would be spent without knowing of connectivity within the Palouse Groundwater Basin. The Committee agreed there are ample funds in the Research budget and it's a minimal amount worth spending to see if there is connectivity.

Motion:	Approve contribution to City of Genesee, not to exceed \$5,000, from the Research Budget
Mover:	Jeff Lannigan
Seconder:	Sandra Kelly
Result:	ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED

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6) Presentation & Discussion

a. Presentation: Well Sampling with Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution – *Dr. Alan Seltzer & Dr. Rebecca Tyne* – ([Video Link 28:15](#))

i. Well Sampling Request & Locations – [Attached](#)

Brief overview from Alan and Rebecca. The goal is to learn about the age of the groundwater, the source, and the flow paths. Committee asked questions about well sampling procedures. WHOI will send an email with information to obtain contacts and coordinate logistics. The timeline is to visit in May 2023, with a quick update 2 months afterwards, with final results in 10 months. Communication Subcommittee will coordinate a press release.

b. Discussion: PBAC Participation in Feasibility Study for Alternative 1 – *Paul Kimmell* – ([Video Link 50:36](#))

Last July's Alternatives Water Supply Report contemplated a partnership with a local utility for Alternative 1. Avista is moving forward with a feasibility study for a pumped storage option on the Snake River and there could be a cost share that PBAC could join. More information will come.

c. Update: UI PBAC Plan – *Tyler Palmer*

A quick status update: a plan has been submitted to UI Leadership and waiting for feedback.

7) Subcommittee Reports – ([Video Link 53:53](#))

a. Transition – Job Posting

The Executive Director position will be posted soon and will be shared on the website and social media, and will close after 30 days.

b. Budget – ([Video Link 57:45](#))

i. Monthly Budget Update – [Attached](#)

A brief overview of the budget. PBAC has paid the invoice for the infographics from Fuse. The Latah County ARPA funds have been received and deposited in the Program account so as to track every expenditure, and the remaining amount from the Program account was moved to the Admin account.

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ii. **Status of PBAC Funds & Future Contribution Increases – Attached**

An overview of the memo was presented and the Committee discussed. Committee members need to go back to their entities to present a 25% increase to the Admin contribution fee. A later discussion could involve moving Research funds to Admin in the interim. Ideally, PBAC needs to decide by summer so it can be effective in FY25. Members need to report back at next month's meeting.

c. **Communications – None**

With the infographics complete, a future Stakeholder Engagement Group (SEG) will be scheduled. A subcommittee meeting will also include a press release for the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution visit.

d. **Research – None**

The subcommittee will convene once Alta has a draft prioritization plan to review.

8) **Other Reports and Announcements – (Video Link 1:19:45)**

a. **Received Concerns of Proposed Biodiesel Plant in Pullman**

PBAC has received emails with concerns from the public. There isn't much information to provide back and City of Pullman will take the lead with next steps and what will be appropriate. The application has been withdrawn for the particular site that was proposed.

b. **Geologic Lecture Series by John Bush**

John Bush, who started work on the Basin in 1976. With the help of Steve, John recorded a 9-part lecture series based on 50 years' worth of knowledge. They are available on the website and on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUwu37hHLVRka7HissEOjVyXMWx35RvBJ>

c. **New Webpages**

With the Fuse infographics, two new webpages were developed: [Aquifer System](#) and [Water Supply Project](#). The website should be updated to become a secure site. Communications subcommittee will work on a press release to feature this info.

d. **Save the Date: Saturday, May 20th at 7pm, in Viola, there will be a fundraiser event with a live band (Riverside Folk) for water awareness.**

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- e. Pullman City Council's next meeting (March 28) will have a proposed irrigation management ordinance and appoint a new Public Works Director.
- f. Keynote speakers are being contemplated for the Palouse Basin Water Summit: Erica Gies (Water always wins) – Will Sarni (Water Foundry). No date yet reserved for October yet.

9) Next PBAC Meeting:

- a. **Thursday, April 20 at 2:00 PM**

10) Adjourn at 3:30 PM

Motion:	Adjourn
Mover:	Tom Handy
Second:	Jeff Lannigan
Result:	ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED

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DATE: March 23, 2023

RE: Status of PBAC Funds & Future Contribution Increases

OVERVIEW

When the PBAC Board approved the Executive Manager position to transition to a full-time Executive Director position in FY22, the understanding was reserves would be drawn down within 2-3 years, and an increase request to the participating entities would be necessary. This memo provides information to the Committee regarding the expected expenditures, the current balance, and future forecasting with regards to this need.

REVENUE

The Committee is financed through contributions from its member entities. Pullman, Moscow, WSU, and UI each contribute a larger amount as the major pumpers in the basin, while the counties (i.e. Whitman and Latah) contribute a smaller amount since they represent a small number of individual pumpers. Details of the contribution breakdown was formally agreed upon in the [interagency agreement](#). In total, PBAC receives \$181,500 each fiscal year from members (Table 1). If UI re-establishes their research contribution, the annual revenue would be \$201,500. Each entity's contributions have been received for FY23. PBAC's fiscal year (FY) is July 1 through June 30.

TABLE 1: ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION BREAKDOWN			
Entity	Admin	Research	Total
Pullman	\$27,000	\$20,000	\$47,000
Moscow	\$27,000	\$20,000	\$47,000
Whitman County	\$6,750		\$6,750
Latah County	\$6,750		\$6,750
WSU	\$27,000	\$20,000	\$47,000
UI	\$27,000	*	\$27,000
Total	\$121,500	\$60,000	\$181,500

**UI has not contributed since FY19 due to budget constraints*

OPERATING BUDGET

PBAC's base operating budget includes compensation (salary and benefits) for two positions, professional development, membership dues and fees, supplies for events and educational outreach, and the cost to perform annual well monitoring, for a total of \$162,300. The interagency agreement details operating costs must be paid from the Admin account and research costs can be paid from the Research account. Only the well monitoring expense from the overall budget has been approved to be paid from the Research account, leaving a remaining \$142,300 of the annual costs to be paid from the Admin Account. This exceeds the current annual \$121,500 Admin contributions.

TABLE 2: PROPOSED FY24 BUDGET	
Item	Cost
Compensation	\$131,800*
Professional Development	\$3,000
Membership Dues	\$1,500
Events/Marketing/Supplies	\$6,000
Well Monitoring	\$20,000
Total	\$162,300

**This number will increase each year due to annual salary increase dictated by the State of Idaho*

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Furthermore, compensation needs will gradually increase each year by a percentage determined by the State of Idaho. Increases can vary from 1-3% each year. Taking an average of a 2% increase over a 5-year period, compensation needs are expected to increase by approximately \$3,000 each year. In FY24 compensation will be \$131,800. By FY29, compensation needs could be up to \$146,800, increasing the annual expenses from the Admin account to \$157,300.

The base operating budget does not consider technical or research efforts as projects vary from year to year. Over the years projects have ranged anywhere from \$5,000 to \$300,000, taking as short as a few months to several years to be completed. Research contributions, as outlined in the interagency agreement, should be at \$80,000 annually but are currently at \$60,000. To be able to commit to larger projects, it takes several years to build up reserves. If the prioritization plan being created by Alta outlines projects that PBAC should take the lead on, the research account may need increased funds so more than one project can occur every 3 years.

ACCOUNT BALANCE

PBAC’s current account balances, as of February 28, are shown in Table 3. Future known expenses have been accounted for in the allocated column, such as the analyzing of the Genesee well chips (not to exceed \$7,000), the remainder of FY23 compensation needs (\$44,054.08), and the ARPA funds specifically for outreach and education efforts (\$50,000).

TABLE 3: ACCOUNT BALANCES		
Account	Current	Allocated
Admin	\$215,710.59	\$171,656.51
Research	\$255,708.63	\$248,708.63
Program	\$50,000.00	\$0.00
Total	\$521,419.22	\$420,365.14

Contributions are not all received at once, so a sensible limit to the Admin account would consider at least 1 years’ worth of compensation, not to dip below \$130,000.00. Likewise, an appropriate amount for the Research account is at least \$50,000 to ensure 2-3 years’ worth of annual well monitoring.

The Research account’s current balance is healthy and should allow for an upcoming RFP process, if the Committee approves, for data refinement of Alternative 5 influenced by the prioritization plan.

FORECASTING NEEDS

The Admin account’s projected balance is diminishing. Taking the current allocated balance with the current annual revenue and estimated expenses leaves a remaining balance of \$150,856 at the end of FY24 (Table 4). By the end of FY25, the projected Admin account balance would be below the sensible limit, and it continues to decrease in FY26 and FY27.

TABLE 4: FORECASTING ADMIN ACCOUNT BALANCE WITH CURRENT RATE				
	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
Current Balance	\$171,656	\$150,856	\$127,056	\$100,256
Revenue	\$121,500	\$121,500	\$121,500	\$121,500
Expense	(\$142,300)	(\$145,300)	(\$148,300)	(\$151,300)
Remaining	\$150,856	\$127,056	\$100,256	\$70,456

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One immediate, short-term solution with no increase to annual contributions is to allocate the Technical Advisor’s compensation to the Research account. Since the Technical Advisor (TA) collects, reviews, analyzes, and presents the pumping and water level data, it could be inferred that the work is research related. The TA’s average compensation needs are approximately \$19,000 annually. This would extend the account balance closer to FY26 but use reserves in the Research account. If this were to occur, the major pumpers would need to approve this change as it would be a new expense to the Research account.

Another solution is to increase contribution rates, which have been done several times throughout PBAC’s history. Most recently was in 2019; the Admin contributions increased by 35% from \$20,000 to \$27,000 for the major pumpers, and \$5,000 to \$6,750 for the counties. In order to stabilize the Admin account, a 25% minimum increase would need to be considered. As shown in Table 5, if revenues were increased to \$152,000, it would stabilize the balance until FY31. A 25% increase would raise rates to approximately \$33,750 for the major pumpers and \$8,500 for the counties.

TABLE 5: FUTURE ADMIN ACCOUNT BALANCE WITH A 25% INCREASED RATE IN FY25 & EXPENDITURES AT \$10,500				
	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
Current Balance	\$171,656	\$150,856	\$157,556	\$161,256
Revenue	\$121,500	\$152,000	\$152,000	\$152,000
Expense	(\$142,300)	(\$145,300)	(\$148,300)	(\$151,300)
Remaining	\$150,856	\$157,556	\$161,256	\$161,956

This considers other expenses outside of compensation needs would remain around \$10,500. With the priority of additional public outreach and education, these costs will likely vary each year (from \$10,500 - \$15,000), so a slightly higher increase to contributions to 30% would provide more flexibility. Revenues would total to \$158,000 annually, and rates would be approximately \$35,100 for the major pumpers and \$8,800 for the counties.

TABLE 6: FUTURE ADMIN ACCOUNT BALANCE WITH A 30% INCREASED RATE IN FY25 & EXPENDITURES AT \$15,000				
	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
Current Balance	\$171,656	\$150,856	\$158,559	\$163,526
Revenue	\$121,500	\$158,000	\$158,000	\$158,000
Expense	(\$142,300)	(\$150,300)	(\$153,300)	(\$161,300)
Remaining	\$150,856	\$158,556	\$163,526	\$159,956

During discussions, the Committee should also review the research contributions. Many options could be contemplated - whether it be to formally request UI to continue to contribute their agreed upon amount or to wait for the prioritization plan to be completed (April/May 2023) so as to support the justification to increase the research rate. Another option could be to restructure the contributions completely, removing the delineation of Admin and Research, and simply have one PBAC contribution fee. From there, PBAC would need to adopt a more formal budget and fiscal planning process.

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The calculations are based off minimal expenditures, encompassing compensation and \$10,500 in other expenses. If priorities change, unforeseen expenses or opportunities arise, the spend down could occur even more quickly. Starting discussions early and agreeing to increased rates as a Committee before the start of the next fiscal year (FY24: July 1, 2023) would be an admirable goal. This would allow member entities a full year to plan their individual budgets for the increased rate to become effective in FY25 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025).

RECOMMENDATION

The Budget Subcommittee recommends a discussion with the entire Committee to include:

- Confirming typical annual expenditures of \$10-15k
- A minimum 25% increase to the administrative contribution rate
- An increase to the research contribution rate and what future projects will be led by PBAC or the entities
- Adopting fee increases to be effective in FY25

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MONTHLY BUDGET REPORT Overview of FY23 PBAC Funds (as of 4/17/23)

CATEGORIES	ACTUALS
Revenue	\$ 235,665.71
Entity Contributions	\$ 235,665.71
Administrative Assessment Fee	\$ 121,500.00
Research Assessment Fee	\$ 60,000.00
Other Funds	\$ 54,165.71
Research / Technical	\$ (64,401.89)
Professional Services	\$ (64,401.89)
Consultant - Alta - Data Logger	\$ (14,401.89)
Consultant - Alta - Outreach Extension	\$ (50,000.00)
Operations	\$ (103,684.16)
Operating Costs	\$ (10,157.20)
Events	\$ (977.71)
Office Supplies	\$ (179.49)
Marketing	\$ (9,000.00)
Professional Development	\$ (2,741.41)
Conference/Registration Fees	\$ (1,958.41)
Dues/Memberships	\$ (783.00)
Salary & Benefits	\$ (90,785.55)
Executive Director	\$ (74,044.99)
Technical Advisor	\$ (16,740.56)
Earned Year to Date	\$ 235,665.71
Spent Year to Date	\$ (168,086.05)

UI Account Balances	Totals
725PAD Admin	\$ 168,156.51
725PRS Research	\$ 255,708.63
725PPG Program	\$ 50,000.00
725PSL Compensation	\$ 41,536.68
Overall Total	\$ 515,401.82