

WEST EXTENSION IRRIGATION DISTRICT

P.O. BOX 100 IRRIGON, OREGON 97844
PHONE: (541) 922-3814 FAX: (541) 922-9775

March 23, 2023

Monthly Board Meeting

Chairperson Philippi called the Board meeting to order on March 23, 2023 at 9:03 a.m. at the Columbia Improvement District meeting room located at 501 E. Columbia Ave. in Boardman. Those in attendance were: Board members, Dalarie Philippi, Vern Frederickson, Bob Mueller and Von Studer; Board Secretary/Manager, Bev Bridgewater; Administrative Services Manager, Lisa Baum; Field Superintendent, Ben de los Santos. Director Abe McNamee was not able to attend. Ben de los Santos, Field Superintendent, and Bob Schlosser, new employee, arrived at 10 a.m.

AGENDA: Chairperson Philippi asked for additions to the agenda. There was the addition of several reports for the Manager and the Phillips subdivision plat in Irrigon. Frederickson moved to accept the agenda. Studer seconded. Motion passed.

MONTHLY BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mueller moved to approve the minutes of the February Board meeting. Frederickson seconded. Discussion. Motion passed.

BILLS PAYABLE: Mueller moved to approve the February accounts payable list in the amount of \$117,271.72. Frederickson seconded. Motion passed.

REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

OPERATIONS: Diversion work at Three Mile Dam was completed yesterday. We have hired Wayne Reffett for the work. He will move the rental excavator to the spillway and do work on the pond there.

Rock Enterprise crew has started work for installing the communication tower at the office. Discussion

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 9:30 am, the Chairman called the Board into Executive Session for the purpose of meeting with their attorney, Spencer Rockwell, regarding litigation. The session was closed at 9:45 am,

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT: Baum reported on collection activities. Discussion. The Board reminded staff that its policy is that patrons must pay off the previous year's assessment before taking water. And, if they are continually late, they must pay the first half timely or make payment arrangements in writing to do so. Discussion. Staff understands that shut-off notices will go out.

OPERATIONS REPORT (cont): De los Santos arrived at the meeting. He reported that Aqua Systems had their technician in town this week. The tech and new employee, Bob (who is familiar with our SCADA due to his previous job at Roza ID), were able to install the updated program, recognize which stations need new PLU/HMI, back up the program, and troubleshoot issues. The sites are not coming into the office as it seems they are not talking to the radios. Discussion.

Frederickson left the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

MAIN CANAL WATER START-UP: The crew needs four low-wind days to burn the canal. The weeds are quite packed in and tall in many cases as they have been piling up all winter. The crew can burn small piles with winds above 15 mph. Ben stated they have a good system, but it is just slow.

PIVOTS SPRINKLING THE CANAL ROAD: Ben pointed out that while the crew was working on the telemetry at 15, the end gun from the pivot on the north side of the canal dumped water on them. The technician stated this is likely why that particular box has so much trouble as they are not made to withstand that amount of water. The landowner has been called. The board agreed that every attempt to stop this practice needs to be taken, especially with damage to the canal road and ROW.

MANAGER'S' REPORT:

The Board reviewed the Manager's report. She reported on several issues of interest to the Board, such as recent Oregon Legislative action.

BUDGET & OPERATIONAL REVIEW:

Ben stated that the crew had a very busy winter this year. Since there were no projects, a lot of work was done on the main canal. He wants to start the canal cleaning at the end of this season to get ahead of the work needed. They did get the main canal sprayed.

With some of the large issues that have shown up so far this season, several areas of the budget will be well over. She reviewed these with the Board. Discussion.

UPCOMING PIPING PROJECTS: Bridgewater met with NRCS yesterday and they discussed a piping project for 2024. She let them know we need to delay lateral 24 piping as we just don't have the funds. They have money set aside to help with a project. They discussed the area west of Peters Road, which would include Philippi, Pierce and Bebb properties lying just north of the canal. About 120 acres would convert to flood. The District would install a pump station, running the mainlines along its canal ROW and the owners would take off that mainline. Discussion. Once a contract is signed, the landowners have two years to complete the transition from flood to sprinkler. Pierce is interested. The Board suggested we get letters out to the landowners and start the process.

DISTRICT BUSINESS

RIGHT-OF-WAY TRESPASS: Discussion about adding some gates for patron safety along the canal. Umatilla area west of Powerline Road is a major concern with all the foot traffic. Sunrise off Root Lane and the gate at 18 were brought up as other areas to secure. The canal road gates are left open by the crew during start-up and some project work times. It is the policy to close all gates on Fridays. We need to be sure the new employees understand that procedure.

BARQUIST PLAT/MORROW COUNTY: This property is located south of 4th Street and Nevada in Irrigon. It does not have a way to get water from the District. The Relocation Canal, specifically RL-4, serves the properties parent parcels. The area has been split up over the years without considering how they can get water. Now, Barquist wants to divide his property and keep the water rights. Discussion. Unless the neighbors can work together, we do not have a solution for the problem. Board suggested we send a comment letter that delivery for the parcel has not been developed.

PHILLIPS SUBDIVISIONMORROW COUNTY: Ben reviewed the operational changes we would do to accommodate the Phillips lot across from the Huke station as they develop that land from agriculture to 2-acre lots. Discussion. The Board stated that whatever is done needs to be clearly stated in the Shared Delivery Agreement.

OTHER BUSINESS

INCREASED METERING: Bridgewater stated that she mentioned in the recent newsletter that patrons above 15.0 acres off the main canal and 3 acres in Irrigon would be asked to have meters for next season. The idea of metering everyone off the Huke station, where lots of overuse occurs was brought up. Continuing to require meters is how we get to a fully metered system and assure patrons are using their water efficiently.

OFFICE STORAGE: The need for secure office storage was brought up and discussed. The Board had some good ideas. Bridgewater was asked to contact our contractor and look at all ideas. Also, a reminder that the office roof is 30-years old.

LATERAL 24: Philippi mentioned that there are new owners on the 4-C property and they are removing trees. She thought we should check the District ditch to make sure it is not impacted. She also reminded the staff about the lateral where it lies north of Kunze Road. It needs work because the irrigator can't get a full head of water without the ditch overtopping and flooding the road and adjacent ground.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chairperson Philippi adjourned the meeting at 11:30 am.

Signed:

Bev Bridgewater, Secretary

Attest:

Dalarie Philippi, Chairperson