

# WEST EXTENSION IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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December 17, 2020

## **Monthly Board Meeting**

Chairperson Philippi called the Board meeting to order on December 17, 2020 at 9:08 a.m. at the Oregon Hay shop located on Patterson Ferry Road in Irrigon. Those in attendance were: Board members, Dalarie Philippi, Vern Frederickson, Abe McNamee, Warren Kemper and Bob Mueller; Board Secretary/Manager, Bev Bridgewater; Administrative Services Manager, Lisa Baum; Field Supervisor, and Ben de los Santos;

Note: No meeting was held in November due to Covid 19 restrictions enacted by the Governor.

**AGENDA:** Mueller moved to accept the agenda as presented. McNamee seconded. Motion passed.

### MONTHLY BUSINESS

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Frederickson moved to approve the minutes of the October monthly Board meeting. McNamee seconded. Motion passed.

**BILLS PAYABLE:** The Board reviewed the accounts payable list. Questions were answered. McNamee moved to approve the October and November accounts payable lists in the amounts of \$82,340.61 and \$123,043.99. Mueller seconded. Motion passed. Mueller wondered about emailing the reports. The others preferred paper, so staying with paper.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS:** The financial report for the period ending October 31, 2020 was reviewed along with a proforma budget. The new format for the budget reports, as recommended by our auditors, was sent to the Board members in October. The Board members had no questions about the new format and felt they provided a good overview of the District.

**BUDGET 2021:** A budget worksheet was handed out and the Board discussed various line items. Staff explained that expenses will go over the budget this year and has for the past three years. Prices are going up and we have not had a rate increase for O&M in 6 years. Discussion. Lisa pointed out that Hermiston ID (and others around the State) do an annual increase, based on the cost of living. The Board will take a close look at how the District is operating and asked for more detailed information in several areas.

## REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

### **OPERATIONS REPORT:**

Winter work has started. Ben reported the following:

- Dump truck and backhoe are down for repair.
- Crews have completed work orders in Umatilla and Irrigon and have moved to Boardman as most of the winter work is there.
- Crews are working under Covid protocols. One person per vehicle and masks if closer than 6 feet.
- The liner project has been prepped, but the welding machine is not available now
- The bathroom in the shop is complete; waiting for plumbing inspection.
- They have put up the sheet metal for the welding area.
- We are getting the private easements in place for the projects. It is common to have pushback on the easements, so we've had the survey work done in each area. This helps us and the landowners understand the impact of the federal easements.
- Cleanup along the canal is ready for electrical work and pump installations as well as tree removal needed in many areas.
- The dump trailer that we recently purchased has been a big help to our crews and productivity on the job.
- Work has started on the new pump station at Miller Road, but paused while we rethink the pump configuration; Gary Moore has done the design, so we need to meet with him.
- We will get a labor crew in after the holidays to start lateral cleaning.
- Fencing the rest of the shop area is being considered. Dalarie wondered about putting chips on our equipment so we could locate them if stolen.

Discussion and comments. Mueller suggested we talk to Mark at CID to see who he is using for telemetry, as we were not able to address our telemetry problems during the 2020 irrigation season (vendor not able to travel). The system was put in 2000-2002. Gates are functioning fine. It's the communication piece that is the problem.

**UMATILLA PUMP STATION:** The cleanup in the small feed channel for the UPS has not been cleaned yet. Ryan from Cleaver Farms is taking the lead on that. Abe mentioned that Ryan thought the pipes are leaking. Bob and Bev think the wetness is from springs in the area. Questions and discussion. The Board was surprised to hear the pipes hold water all season; there are no headgates at the canal. Vern thought we should get a bid to install headgates. Abe wondered about lining the inside of the two large pipes (30-inch??). Bev agreed that if the pipes rust mid-season, the canal would have to shut down for repair. The steel pipes were installed in 1969 and 1975.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:** Lisa gave an update on collections and reviewed her written report, which is attached and a part of the minutes.

**CARES Act / Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRV):** Grant funds have been made available to local governments and Lisa mentioned a few areas we may qualify. Discussion. Vern wondered about the Paycheck Protection Plan and Lisa will check into that.

Frederickson made a motion to apply for reimbursement under the CRV for the bathroom expenses and for upgrading the District's phones, internet and computer systems to make online work, meetings attendance, and remote communication possible. Kemper seconded. Motion passed.

**AUDIT CONTRACT:** Lisa reported that our contract with Barnett & Moro has expired. We will put the contract out for bid and report at the January meeting.

**MANAGER'S' REPORT:** A written report was distributed to the directors and is attached to and a part of the minutes. Review & discussion.

**CITY OF IRRIGON / HUWE PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT:** Bridgewater was asked to sign a partition plat for Irrigon. Since there was not a plat review nor did the irrigation easement show on the plat, she refused. This is for lots in town owned by Wayne and Barb Huwe where Dollar General is working with the City to purchase the lots. There is a 1906 50-foot federal easement on two of the lots. The City has asked us to work with them to move the irrigation line to a 10-foot utility area being planned, but don't understand the federal rights on the property. The last time we worked with the City on a partition, they also refused to put the District easement on a plat. We were able to work around that, but this one seems like it might become complicated.

**MARSTON FEDERAL RIGHTS FOR LATERAL 12:** Bridgewater and Ben reported they have been working with Alan Marston about the fence on his Mom's property and getting it moved so our crews can lay the pipe. The surveyor located the quarter section line. Our ditch lies between 12-feet and 16-feet west of the quarter section line. There is a 20-foot Morrow County right-of-way (ROW) west of the quarter section line. So, Morrow County is mostly in the federal ROW for Lateral 12 (it carries a 50-foot ROW), but the Marstons are on their property boundary, except for the lower part with a small encroachment. They are, however, on the federal ROW with their fenceline. We only need to have it moved about ten feet at the lower end and have offered to move it for them if they pay the dump fees. We were scheduled to do the work on Monday, but Marstons called it off, wanting "proof" of the federal rights. Bev sent a packet to them and we anticipate the matter will resolve itself.

These issues are why we have a surveyor locate quarter section lines and we find property lines prior to digging. Folks understandably want to protect their rights. One thing Bev indicated she will do moving forward is to send the irrigation right information to the property owner early in the process. As we did on Lateral 9, we will send letters out letting folks know how close to the new pipeline they can put their fence once the work is done. We won't have easement issues with Lateral 15 project

as we are mostly away from the County Roads. But, Lateral 17 will need upfront work with the landowners. We will start with that at their next meeting.

**HYDRO INFORMATION:** Bridgewater handed out some information on getting hydro permits. The Board wondered what the potential dollar amount would be. She will try to figure that out. We have not heard anything from Farmers Conservation Alliance about when they will start with our District.

## DISTRICT BUSINESS

**EASEMENT STANDARD REVIEW:** Since easements seem to be a hot topic at the District now, the Board got a copy of the easement policies in their packet. Bridgewater has reviewed them and let the Board know we can revisit them, if they want.

**BRIDGE STANDARDS REVIEW:** The bridge standards were also in the packet and they don't appear to need any updating.

**BOARD MEETINGS:** Thank you to Vern Frederickson for arranging the meeting at his shop in Irrigon today. Bob Mueller mentioned that we can meet at Columbia Improvement District, in their Board room, so we will meet there the next time.

**WARREN KEMPER, BOARD MEMBER:** This is Warren's last meeting as a Board member. Chairman Philippi thanked him for his service and the others echoed their thanks. Warren came on the Board in January 2014, so has served six years as a Board member. While Warren did not know much about the irrigation district then, he knew that fairness was important and understood the workers viewpoint. He advocated for the smaller water users and assured that decisions by the Board treated all users the same. Warren was never afraid to ask a question or delve further into an issue.

## ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chairperson Philippi adjourned the meeting at 12:30 pm.

Signed:

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Bev Bridgewater, Secretary

Attest:

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Dalarie Philippi, Chairperson