

# WEST EXTENSION IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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November 18, 2021

## **Monthly Board Meeting**

Chairperson Philippi called the Board meeting to order on November 18, 2021 at 9:17 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, Whitney Coffman and Abe McNamee; Board Secretary/Manager, Bev Bridgewater; Administrative Services Manager, Lisa Baum. Field Supervisor, Ben de los Santos arrived at 9:35 a.m.

**AGENDA:** Frederickson moved to approve the agenda as presented. Coffman seconded. Motion passed.

### MONTHLY BUSINESS

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Frederickson moved to approve the minutes of the October 2021 Board meeting. McNamee seconded. Motion passed.

**BILLS PAYABLE:** Review and discussion. McNamee moved to approve the October accounts payable list in the amount of \$182,085.03. Mueller seconded. Motion passed.

**FINANCIALS:** The financials for the period ending September 31, 2021 were reviewed.

### REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

**OPERATIONS:** Ben de los Santos gave an update on operations. The inmate crew is working for a week or so along the south side of the main canal off Division – removing overgrowth and pouring new panels where rodent activity had caused panel failure. He and crew will pull the IPS motor and pump tomorrow. Kern Brothers will haul in their crane for the work. He is meeting with Monte from UEC on Monday to finalize the quote for bringing power to the new pump station site.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:** Baum presented historic information on District assessments. She recommends the District consider cost of living increases each year to keep up with the costs. Discussion.

She then reviewed Board governance information from SDAO. Ethics, conflicts of interest and public meeting laws were specifically discussed. She advised the Board of a new State rule requiring public meetings to allow remote access. Discussion.

**MANAGER'S' REPORT:** A written report was distributed to the Directors and is attached to and a part of the minutes. It was reviewed and discussed.

**EAGLE CREST BRIDGE:** Bridgewater requested guidance for the Eagle Crest Subdivision bridge. The approach to the bridge will need to be improved. McNamee, who cleaned the lateral last year, pointed out that the embankment is so steep that we cannot clean 40-feet either side of the bridge and it has to be done from the back side. The approach will need to be built out quite a distance. He also suggested that concrete be used instead of asphalt because the excavator will chew up the asphalt. This is happening at the Kurz bridge in Umatilla. Discussion. The Board agreed that safety of our crew and the public is the main concern along with our ability to maintain the canal and ROW. We do not want to open up our canal roads to public access. Bridgewater will set up a meeting with her, Ben and the current owners of the bridge.

McNamee wondered about drainage issues from the Eagle Crest development. Do the landowners understand there are wet areas likely caused by ag run-off. We want to be sure the canal is not blamed. Board requested Bridgewater to follow-up on this; provide comment to get our concerns on record.

**PARTLOW VARIANCE REQUEST:** Steve Partlow has asked the District to support his request for variance of the set-back required for a County permit needed due to a shop he has already started. The Board has no objections as long as the federal ROW is not used for access to his shop, parking and so forth.

**IRRIGON LANDOWNER MEETING:** Several questions have come up from the Irrigon folks about why they were shut off early; how can water be better monitored for overuse; why are they asked to read their meters; how does the rotation work; and other questions. Bridgewater recommends a public meeting. She has tentatively set it for Dec. 13 (later changed to January). Discussion.

**RECLAMATION, NEW APPROACH TO CROSSING AGREEMENTS:** Reclamation has changed how they plan to do crossing agreements moving forward. This is an effort to decrease the time taken to review and complete the documents. They plan to send a letter of agreement to the third party, allowing the District to acknowledge the agreement via electronic signature. Discussion. The Board agrees to shorten the time. Reclamation needs to respect the O&M contract and assure the District has reviewed the crossing documents before they approve them. Also, some agreements, like fencing, can be done by WEID and filed at the County, which is a more accessible record to future owners. Bridgewater will follow up with Reclamation.

## DISTRICT BUSINESS

**PROFIT & LOSS REVIEW:** A profit and loss report spanning the past 11 years was presented to the Board. The report shows how the money we received from our patrons was spent. It was reviewed and discussed. Regarding reserve accounts, we have not put money into reserves from our budget since 2018. We depleted reserves in 2016 and 2019 due to operational overruns. Discussion continued.

**WAGE & PAY EQUITY ANNUAL REVIEW:** The Board reviewed employee wages. Each employee was reviewed with input from Supervisor, de los Santos. The Board discussed COLA and the Union contract. The Board approved a 5% pay increase to be put into the budget. The Board also directed that a \$50 VISA card be purchased for District employees as a holiday gift.

**2022 BUDGET PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION:** The Board directed a 3% increase to the budget; not across all accounts, but adjusting to reflect actual with an overall 3%.

## ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chairperson Philippi adjourned the meeting at 11:55 p.m.

Signed:

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Bev Bridgewater, Secretary

Attest:

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Dalarie Philippi, Chairperson