

WEST EXTENSION IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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November 28, 2022

Monthly Board Meeting

Chairperson Philippi called the Board meeting to order on November 28, 2022, at 9:05 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 Abe McNamee. Board Secretary/Manager, Bev Bridgewater; newly elected Board member, Von Studer.

AGENDA: Chairman Philippi asked if there were additions to the proposed agenda. There were none. Mueller moved to approve the agenda as presented. McNamee seconded. Motion passed.

SPECIAL BUSINESS

DIVISION THREE DIRECTOR: The Division Three Director position has been vacant since Whitney Coffman resigned in September. Von Studer applied for the three-year position beginning in January, 2023. Being the only candidate, the Board declared him elected and his certificate of election was accepted at the October meeting. The Board planned to fill the vacant position as soon as possible.

MOTION: Frederickson moved to appoint Studer to the vacant position for the remainder of the term which ends with the organizational meeting in January, 2023. McNamee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

OATH OF OFFICE: Von Studer took the oath of office for the Director Division Three position.

MONTHLY BUSINESS

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

BILLS PAYABLE: After review and discussion, Mueller moved to approve the October accounts payable list in the amount of \$81,067.20. McNamee seconded. Motion passed.

FINANCIAL REPORT: The September 2022 financial reports had been distributed to the Board. They were reviewed and discussed.

REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

OPERATIONS: Ben was not at the meeting yet, so discussion was delayed.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT: Lisa was not available today.

SDAO BEST PRACTICES: The Best Practices requirements for FY 2022 revolved around Board trainings and standards. They were reviewed and discussed. The Board will all take the on-line training. An in person training will be given in Hermiston on January 18.

COLLECTIONS REPORT: Postponed.

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

PROJECT BUDGET REPORTS: Review postponed.

DISTRICT BUSINESS

BOARD DIRECTOR POLICY REVIEW: One of the items that SDAO requires in its 2022 Best Practices for Districts is to review their Board Director policies. They provided a sample policy. Bridgewater has merged the District's standards for Board members with the SDAO template. While the new document is much longer, there is no significant difference as to how the WEID has been operating, other than providing clarification and continuity with the new document. The written document with highlighted changes was distributed and will be discussed at the next meeting.

Operations Manager, Ben de los Santos arrived at the meeting at 9:50 am.

2023 PRELIMINARY BUDGET: Bridgewater has been working on the 2023 budget. With the high cost of inflation and many unknowns, she needed some direction from the Board before continuing. Discussion. The Board wants to see what other local districts are charging. They ask management to look at cost difference for key operational items from December 2021 to now and take that into consideration. They agreed the wage increase for continuing employees (more than one year with the District) will be at 8.7% with appropriate adjustments for the new hires.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board went into Executive Session at 9:55 a.m., in accordance with ORS 192.660, to discuss water right settlement issues and the proposal from CTUIR. The session adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE (cont)

OPERATIONS: De los Santos reported the following:

EQUIPMENT: Annual maintenance and some repair work is needed on the main pieces of equipment – excavator, backhoe, two dump trucks and mower. The brakes have been fixed on the mower and it is ready to be used. The other four need work done. Ken Bailey will work on the excavator. The District does not currently have someone “in house” to do the work on the other three and is looking for someone.

DISCUSSION: The board questioned the daily and routine maintenance. Is it being done? Ben said he thought it is, by the operator or driver. The District has a check system for each piece of equipment and the vehicles, but no one has been looking at the information since March, when the irrigation season started. He and Alan have been focused on irrigation needs, so no one was advocating for the equipment. Abe wondered if Alan is the only CDL driver, why isn't Ben “on him” for not checking? Ben said that Alan is doing his checks, but no one is following through on the maintenance. This is the time for annual maintenance to be done, before the repair season, but there is no one to do the work. The same issue is with the pumps. There are inspections and maintenance work to be done, but no one specifically trained on staff to do the work. The Board told Ben to talk with Aaron Kern and others to learn the basics.

MAIN CANAL WORK: Dalarie wondered how much concrete work is needed this winter. Ben stated he has not had time to drive the canal.

TWO RIVERS WORK CREW: We have brought in the Adults in Custody work crews from Two Rivers to get a head start on the lateral cleaning. There is only one crew working right now, so it is not always easy to get on their schedule. Ben wanted to get them here while the weather holds. Part-time employee, Shara, will run the AIC crew. The Board wanted to be sure she is comfortable working with them. She volunteered for the work and actually ran the crew for a few weeks during the summer. She has received training from Ben and Bev to work with them.

We plan to bring the AIC back for five weeks starting in February to help with the Gattenbein corner work and concrete work. Discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chairperson Philippi adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Signed:

Bev Bridgewater, Secretary

Attest:

Dalarie Philippi, Chairperson