

WEST EXTENSION IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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September 24, 2020

Monthly Board Meeting

Chairperson Philippi called the Board meeting to order on September 24, 2020 at 9:05 a.m. at the Port of Morrow offices in Boardman. Those in attendance were: Board members, Dalarie Philippi, Vern Frederickson, Abe McNamee, and Bob Mueller; Board Secretary/Manager, Bev Bridgewater; Administrative Services Manager, Lisa Baum; Bureau of Reclamation Natural Resource Specialist, Chet Sater. Director Warren Kemper was unable to attend.

AGENDA: The agenda was approved by Chairperson Philippi.

MONTHLY BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mueller moved to approve the minutes of the July monthly Board meeting. McNamee seconded. Motion passed.

BILLS PAYABLE: After review, Mueller moved to approve the July and August accounts payable lists in the amounts of \$133,579.52 and \$119,442.76 respectively. Frederickson seconded. Motion passed.

FINANCIAL REPORT: The financial report for the period ending August 31, 2020 was reviewed. The 2019 Audit was distributed and briefly reviewed. Members will conduct further review on their own before the next Board meeting.

UPDATE FROM RECLAMATION: Chet Sater gave a couple of updates:

- Canal inspection: folks from Reclamation arrived and did a canal inspection for the Urban Reaches program. There were some vegetation issues, as in the past, but a lot of work has been done and it showed. He apologized for the short notice. He commented that Reclamation folks noted that we are managing our right-of-way well. They appreciated the canal road gates and keeping them locked. The canal road is in good shape and most of it sprayed and mowed.
- Trees are difficult to control, but he could see where a lot of work has been done. Saplings growing back in some areas. Mueller echoed trees are difficult, especially Russian Olive. We have to cut at ground level and apply Roundup immediately with a paint brush, paying attention to the growth rings.
- The cultural review for the East Boardman project is back on Bev's desk. The State wants a form that Reclamation hasn't used. Bev and Lisa are going through old documents to find any work done in the last fifty years to add to the document. Discussion.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board went into executive session at 9:20 a.m. to review CTUIR water right negotiations. Executive session was closed at 10:05 a.m.

REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

OPERATIONS REPORT:

CANAL ROAD MAINTENANCE: There are three areas of canal road in Boardman that are being used by District landowners as access to their homes. They are:

- Paul Smith Road west to Lateral 18. Efrain Murillo uses this road under agreement, plus there is damage caused by the Kerslake pipeline leaks.
- Peters Road, west to Suter property: Philippi allows landowners to cross their property. Pierce, Bebb and Partlow (2 parcels) have authorization agreements.
- Toms Camp Road west to Endspill: Boor, Poe and Lomas use this road under agreement.

In the Right to Use agreement with the landowners for the road, there is a maintenance clause. The District pays no more than 50% of the total cost.

The Board agreed the roads can't continue the way they are. We have a bid from Reffett. Discussion. The landowners will need to be contacted and worked with in advance. Abe pointed out they each have a different idea of what maintenance would look like. The Board felt the contractor should do all the work as the District crews have a lot of other work we never seem to get to.

MOTION: ROAD MAINTENANCE: Mueller made a motion to approve the canal road maintenance work as outlined, working with the landowners and staying with the commitment that the District will not pay more than 50% of the cost. McNamee seconded. The Board wants a bid from Wise. Motion passed.

SHOP UPDATE: We have the permit for the bathroom. The crew hopes to have it completed before the end of water season.

There are security issues. A pickup was stolen out of the parking lot while the crew was in their morning meeting. We reported it stolen and it was found abandoned in Hermiston that evening. We are getting the locks changed on the truck as, obviously, the thief now has the keys to the truck.

The crew thinks it won't take much to put in fencing, especially with surrounding landowners already having a fence. Board agreed it's inevitable, but not time or budget for it right now. They asked about heating. We have not budgeted for heating in the new shop as the old shop does have heat for the morning meetings and small projects. Abe pointed out that we built the new shop so we could do our own work on screens and other projects. He thought a diesel heater might work for a project when it's very cold.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board went into executive session at 10:30 a.m. to discuss a BOLI claim, attorney response and a personnel issue. Executive session was closed at 10:55 a.m. Bob Mueller and Chet Sater left the meeting at this time.

REPORTS CONTINUE

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT: Lisa gave an update on collections. One property is in estate and she has not been able to track down the son of the owner. The Board wants to give it another month before moving to legal action.

POINT & PAY: Lisa presented information on the Point & Pay platform, which is designed for cities, counties and special districts. She went through the documents and told the Board where this is currently being used. It would allow our customers to check on their account balances and pay over the internet. Her recommendation is a \$500 start-up cost with manual input each month that indicates what each landowner owes on their account. The customer would pay the transaction fee with their on-line payment. She will need to post balances at the end of each month as it would not be connected to our accounting system.

MOTION: Frederickson moved to adopt the Point & Pay system, as recommended by Lisa. McNamee seconded. Motion passed.

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

FARMERS CONSERVATION ALLIANCE UPDATE: Contract is signed and initial calls have taken place, including with Department of Energy. DOE wanted to review hydro potential before they committed to the grant. The "kickoff" meeting has yet to be scheduled. The Board would like to get this going as soon as possible, understanding that COVID may be a limiting factor.

DISTRICT BUSINESS

DIRECTOR ELECTIONS: Several positions are open and District election date (second Tuesday in November by statute) is coming up. Three positions will be open:

Division One: Three-year term. Robert Mueller is current director.

Division Two: One-year term.. Abe McNamee is current director.

Division Three: Two-year term. Warren Kemper is current director.

MOTION: Frederickson moved to hold the District election on Nov. 10, to start looking for judges and to do a mail-in election. McNamee seconded. Motion passed.

JOB RECRUITMENT FORMS: We have worked with Special Districts on revising out forms to assure all required criteria is met. We've handed out sample forms. Next will be a job description and SDAO will also review that. With all of today's requirements for hiring a public body worker, we will assure we follow a basic procedure of using Lisa as the Human Resource person (which is in her job description). She will receive the applications and determine which ones meet the minimum requirements. It is important that the job description clearly states all minimum requirements plus the knowledge, skills and abilities desired for the job. We will have two persons involved at each step of the review and interview process.

PERFORMA BUDGET: A proforma budget was distributed. There are several areas that Bridgewater highlighted. The cost of conjunctive use pumping will be well under budget as is the consultant line item. Taxes and benefits will over as well as weed control. Discussion. Brdigewater will work on the proforma budget with the new format for next meeting. The Board would like to look at any cost cutting measure including Bridgewater working under contract.

WINTER WORK & PROECT WORK: Bridgewater said that she and Ben plan to do both Lateral 12 and 15 this winter. There is some work they have started that can be done without the cultural approval, such as site clearing, laying pipe for District facilities not part of the grant, and installing the pump stations

We will need two excavators to get all the work done, but have one operator. We could bring Gary Kroske back and rent equipment. We also could ask several local folks about renting equipment/operator – take bids. We will act as our own contractor. We will have to check into liability issues and confirm our actions with SDAO, so we are in compliance with State laws.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chairperson Philippi adjourned the meeting at 11:32 am.

Signed:

Bev Bridgewater, Secretary

Attest:

Dalarie Philippi, Chairperson