

WEST EXTENSION IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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March 20, 2017

Monthly Board Meeting

Chairperson Philippi called Board meeting to order on March 20, 2017 at 9:05 a.m. at the Irrigon Fire Hall located at 705 N. Main St. in Irrigon. Those in attendance were: Board members, Dalarie Philippi, Bob Mueller Vern Frederickson Abe McNamee and Warren Kemper; Board Secretary/Manager, Bev Bridgewater; Office Manager, Lisa Baum; Guests Boris Belchoff, Bureau of Reclamation Manager Umatilla Field Office; Janet Greenup and Kevin Payne from Morrow County Soil & Water Conservation District; Kacee Lathrop, and Engineer from Morrow County National Resource Conservation Service.

AGENDA: Chairman Philippi approved the agenda.

GUESTS FROM MORROW COUNTY SWCD & NCRS

Brdigewater explained that the District is looking for funding assistance for itself and landowners as the Boardman laterals are piped and irrigators convert to using 8.5 gallons per minute (gpm) per acre. The District is also concerned about drainage issues, especially when the laterals are piped. The open lateral take water now in the off season.

Janet stated there are cost share grants available to assist with water conservation. Frederickson asked about Russian olive removal assistance. Kacee stated that grant has closed, but she could consider another if there is sufficient interest.

The following points were brought up and discussed:

- Folks from Heppner think it's best to focus on each area as we pipe the laterals.
- We would look at a 3-5 year time frame, estimate a dollar amount needed.
- It is important to get the engineers involved early.
- The amount of cost share will vary.
- The private applicant must have the ability to produce \$1000 gross ag income per year. This would be crops, livestock, greenhouse, food or fiber.

There is a grant cycle through the national Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) now with pre-proposals due April 21. Kacee will send information on this. Janet stated EQUP funds may be available on a larger scale for the big infrastructure, then follow up with on-farm work. She would like to do a five year strategy that we can expand upon.

Bridgewater commented that our Boardman Master Plan with our Water Conservation and Management Plan can be fitted into such a strategy. They are both going through revisions in 2017. Janet also mentioned Watershed Enhancements funds for up to \$10,000 that would help a small landowner. They would need to contact her. Current funding ends in June, then new funding in September.

Janet and Kacee will come to our lateral meetings and discuss opportunities with the landowners. These folks left the meeting at 9:35.

RECLAMATION INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Boris reported what Reclamation is doing to begin addressing aging infrastructure in its transferred works. Of the Reclamation facilities nationally, 30% are reserved works (such as McKay Reservoir) and 70% are transferred (such as to WEID on our O&M Contract). Data gathering is taking place for the reserved works and he expects it to start for transferred works once the BOR Transparency Act passes in Congress. If the bill passes, additional reporting will be required with the plan to target funding for deteriorating facilities.

He reviewed a Major Renovation and Repair (MR&R) report that he has from WEID. It shows a need of \$300,000 for canal repairs and \$300,000 to construct a regulating pond. Discussion. We will update that data. Points brought up:

- Three Mile Dam belongs to Feds, but WEID has O&M. The only partnership with the Tribes is not written, but they take care of their side (east) and we take care of the diversion side (west).
- Bev is concerned that this past winter moved many problems across the western states from damage prevention and minor repairs to a need for full-blown maintenance projects.
- Foundation at the gatehouse is wearing. Planning should be done for repair.
- WEID Key issues – need for re-reg reservoir; Boardman groundwater table and drainage; Replacing main canal panels
- There is a real need for finance assistance; ability to get bonding on the federally-owned facilities; extended payments and loan guarantees
- Does Reclamation have engineers to help assess our facilities?

MONTHLY BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mueller moved to approve the minutes of the March 2017 Board meeting. Frederickson seconded. Motion passed.

BILLS PAYABLE: After review, Frederickson moved to approve the January accounts payable list in the amount of \$77,714.31. McNamee seconded. Motion passed.

REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

CANAL REPORT: The canal is in rough condition after this long, hard winter freeze. We were able to see the upper canal and started cleaning Feb. 21. We brought in the concrete work crew from Two Rivers on Feb. 27. We originally planned for 100 panels to be replaced, but it will be more. Concrete work should be done by the end of this month.

RODENT ISSUES: Rodents along the canal, (muskrat, moles, rats, etc) are becoming more and more of a concern and potential liability. The crew is filling in holes and checking for tunnels behind the canal when they see a problem. Discussion. Abe knows of a licensed trapper that he will check with.

RECLAMATION URBAN CANAL REVIEW: We received the final assessment from Reclamation under its Urban Canal Review program. This section was the lower 23 miles of canal. Some liner exposure where the roads are below the liner, problem at HG 86 and brush removal were the main concerns. The District is addressing those with some of the work already complete.

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

OREGON STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE (SHPO): Bridgewater reported about the on-site visit from Jessica Gabriel, Preservation officer from SHPO and Warren Hurley, Environmental specialist from Bureau of Reclamation. In order to move forward on piping the laterals, we will need to request Reclamation to do a Section 106 consultation, At that time, we will lay out our historic district and do mitigation for approval. Mitigation will likely be maps, documents, kiosk, and preservation of gate houses, specific headgate structures, bridges and a few section of laterals. Discussion. Frederickson wants us to contact Rep Greg Smith for help on the parameters of the survey or as things seem to be out of line. Bev would like to apply to Wildhorse Foundation for financial assistance with the cultural document costs. She is estimating \$40,000 - \$50,000 for the costs of the cultural/historic document. Dalarie suggests we refine the scope and look at options to keep the costs down. Discussion.

IPS PUMP STATION: The 300 Hp pump has been installed after shortening the shaft. Layne took 12 inches off the shaft. After measuring the "can" with the pump out, we have determined that the pump is 25" off the floor. This may or may not solve the cavitation problem, according to James at Layne. We won't know until we

are operational at flows above 12 cfs. Abe wants us to contact the larger landowners early to take water so we can see if it runs properly.

FOUR-YEAR NON-USE NOTICES: Lisa reported that 140 non-use letters were sent out on the Irrigon system, and 32 were certified. About half of these were notifying irrigator about the need to transfer off buildings and driveways. The rest were non-irrigated areas. Transfer OFF information has been sent to subdivisions along the main canal. Warren wondered why Irrigon was different than the main canal. Frederickson explained the main canal system was older and the water rights have been properly assigned. The Irrigon certificate is just four years old. New houses and building have been erected since the certificate was issued.

GROUNDWATER WORK/MCKAY CERTIFICATE: We have nudged the State with an e-mail asking when they will get to the groundwater work in the Umatilla Basin that they promised us a year ago. Bridgewater will work with attorney to prepare a letter to Reclamation about the McKay certificate. They have not asked the State to regulate and we want to make sure they know we are not giving up our claim on those return flows.

DISTRICT BUSINESS

ALTERNATE POINT OF DIVERSION/KAIZEN PROPERTY: The cost of filing the alternate point of diversion is \$2500. We estimate \$600-\$800 for preparation of document and mapping. Kaizen will pay the POD change fees. Bridgewater recommends that the per acre fee of \$54 be cut in half for this property. She based this on comparing administrative costs to delivery costs of the water. If personnel costs are removed (ditchriders) more reduction could be considered. Vern stated that none of us were the designer of this issue. The goal is to deliver the water and cover expenses, not make money. Matter tabled until costs can be written for Board to consider.

EMPLOYEE VILLEGAS/CDL: His one year anniversary is coming up and he does not have a CDL or pesticide license. He just got CDL permit, so we haven't been able to give him much drive time. Bev recommends we not dismiss him and give him time to get the CDL. We have put training into him including sending him to Cornell Pump School. Discussion. Board wants to keep the trained employee, but understands they need to take a stand on the certifications they require. Mueller moved to extend Villegas' deadline to get his CDL to June 1. Kemper seconded. Motion passed.

WATER START-UP: No dates have been set yet. The Board wants firm target dates. Wed, April 5 was set for main canal; Mon, April 10 for Boardman, Thurs, April 13 for Irrigon.

APRIL BOARD MEETING: The Board agreed to move the April meeting to Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 9:00 am.

OTHER BUSINESS

DRAINAGE/ROBBINA AREA: The sump has not been put in yet. The electrical work is done.

GROUNDWATER PROBLEMS – BOARDMAN AREA: Bridgewater is concerned about groundwater in Boardman. There are no plans for what will happen when the District pipes the laterals. The County does not have ditches in many areas to encourage run-off to happen. The Board requested Morrow County Commissioners be contacted and maybe Doherty or Russell could come to a meeting for discussion. Mueller suggested we add Gary Neal at the Port of Morrow to this discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

Director Kemper asked for time at next month's meeting. With no further business, Chairperson Philippi adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Signed:

Bev Bridgewater, Secretary

Attest:

Dalarie Philippi, Board Chairperson