

# WEST EXTENSION IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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February 21, 2019

## **Monthly Board Meeting**

Chairperson Philippi called the Board meeting to order on February 21, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the Irrigon Fire Hall located at 705 N. Main St. in Irrigon. Those in attendance were: Board members, Dalarie Philippi, Vern Frederickson, Abe McNamee, Bob Mueller and Warren Kemper; Board Secretary/Manager, Bev Bridgewater; Office Manager, Lisa Baum; Field Superintendent, Ben de los Santos; Manager of the Reclamation Hermiston Field Office, Sean Kimbrel. Water Users, Chris Marston, Jody Marston and Mike Allison.

**AGENDA:** There were several folks in attendance to make public comments. Chairman Philippi suggested we do that after approval of the agenda and minutes. Mueller moved to approve the agenda adding Public comments as suggested by the Chair. Frederickson seconded. Motion passed.

### MONTHLY BUSINESS

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mueller moved to approve the minutes of the January 24 organization and monthly Board meeting. Kemper seconded. Motion passed. Mueller moved to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2019 special meeting. Frederickson approved. Motion passed. Frederickson moved to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2019 special meeting. Mueller seconded. Motion passed.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chris and Jody Marston had several questions, suggestions and comments. Discussion or answers to his questions are noted in *italics* below.

- **They would like the bills to be itemized on the front page.** *Discussion on how it could be done for the annual billings.*
- **Their power bill does not make sense from the postcard they were sent.** *The postcard is an operational driven communication and shows the number of acre feet used during the season per acre. The power bill is a financial action and is based on the total acre-feet used during the season. The numbers are close when all calculations are done, with an allowance for rounding.*
- **The Marstons are concerned that flood irrigators are paying the same per acre cost as sprinkler irrigators and seem to receive more acre-**

**feet of water per acre.** *It depends on how efficient the flood irrigator is and how many times they take the water during the season. Certainly, there are some who use well in excess of 4.5 acre-feet and some who stay within the 4.5 acre-foot duty that the sprinklers are under.*

- **Is Lateral 11 done?** *There is some clean-up work to do. He complained about the pipe delivery truck that got stuck in the field and left ruts.*
- **How are decisions made on the laterals selected to be piped?** **It should be based on highest water savings and the all flood laterals should be piped first.** *Bridgewater explained that there is a large loss on the open laterals that have a mixture of flood and sprinkler irrigation. These laterals are the first priority for operational savings as well as conservation. Laterals 7, 9, and 11 are complete or almost complete. Laterals 12, 13, 15 and 17 are in the next group to be done. After that, the District will work with landowners next to the canal so that excess tailwater can be controlled. Thus irrigators off headgates 25, 26, 27, and 28 will be worked with in the next round.*
- **Chris stated that lateral 24 is the hardest lateral to make up and should be piped next.** *Bridgewater stated that the loss on this lateral is not as significant as others since someone is always picking up the tailwater. She thinks 30 and 31 have a larger loss than 24 and would prioritize those ahead of 24. It will be dependent on funding.*
- **Marston is concerned about the rising cost of water in the District. He thinks those who continue to flood have a lower water cost and should pay an additional fee.** *“The District has always been all for one and one for all”, stated Bridgewater. That is memorialized in the early Reclamation contracts and has been the case all these years as various parts of the District upgraded systems. State statutes require all land to be charged at the same rate unless receiving pressurized water. Dalarie explained that the District will be taking out a loan to match the grants for piping instead of raising the rates. Discussion with various Board members sharing personal concerns and experiences.*
- **Allison is concerned that some folks do not have their properties in condition to use sprinkler water.** *Phillipi asked if this was about the Russian Olives and it is.*
- **Jody Marston would like to see more planning on paper and less off the top of the head** *Frederickson stated as we move forward, we will get a better handle on this.*

After discussion was complete, Marstons and Allison left the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

## MONTHLY BUSINESS (cont)

**BILLS PAYABLE:** After review, Mueller moved to approve the January accounts payable list in the amount of \$169,172.47. Kemper seconded. Motion passed.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** The preliminary financial report for the period ending December 31, 2018 was reviewed. No action was required.

**RESERVE ACCOUNT REPORT:** The reserve report for the period ending December 31, 2018 was reviewed and discussed.

## **REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

**OPERATIONS:** The snow the past few weeks has slowed things down. Ben reported that the liner project would start next week if the clear weather holds. This is in the Coyote Springs area south of Hwy 730 where the springs have severely impacted the main canal. Snow has drifted, especially in the Boardman area and the canal is impassable. Laterals 17, 18, 15 29, and 12 have been cleaned. There is about three weeks of work along the canal from when the snow is melted to be ready for water start-up. If we don't get the laterals finished by then, we will do them after start-up.

**SHOP BUILDING;** Discussion ensued about the shop. We have a quote from a contractor to build the shop, put in two bathrooms, heated, walls up – complete for \$145, 000. Bev figured the costs of the components to be about \$89,000 for a basic shell. No heat or bathrooms. This is the ag building, concrete work, electrical and is based on costs obtained last summer and the District doing site prep and acting as general contractor. McNamee is concerned that the cost will go up as we start adding equipment. Others are concerned the cost of the structure will continue to increase due to inflation. Mueller moved to approve the shop as a basic shell building for \$89,906 or similar. Kemper seconded. Motion passed with McNamee abstaining. Bev and Ben will narrow in on the price.

**NEW EMPLOYEE:** Deagan Bigsby has been hired as ditchrider/maintenance worker. He will likely train to be the Boardman ditchrider.

**OFFICE MANAGER – RESOLUTION NO. 19-007 – FORECLOSURE ORDER:** Discussion. Frederickson moved to send three lands to the attorney for collection proceedings. Kemper seconded. Motion passed.

### **MANAGER'S' REPORT:**

**LANDOWNER MEETING REVIEW:** The Board reviewed discussion at the landowner meeting. Flood irrigation overuse was a “hot’ topic as was the cost of water.

**WATER RATES:** The board reviewed the legal aspects of water rates. According to state law it was confirmed that each acre must be equally except for pressurized water. This does not support an argument for a tiered structure.

**DUTY OF WATER:** The Board discussed having tighter control of the flood irrigators. Many are taking water longer than allotted (typically overnight) because the water will only go out the end if it is turned back in. Having a re-reg pond will help the District conserve this water. Having a tighter flood schedule will be helpful. Bev will work on this for the next meeting. The Board requests that Ben or a qualified staff member looks at the flood ditches on private property to assure they are being maintained and not overgrown.

Mueller left the meeting at 11:20.

**HYDRO:** Frederickson wondered if hydro is a possibility on the WEID canal. Bridgewater thinks the only place we have sufficient drop is at the UPS. The District has looked this over several times in the past 30 years and it didn't seem to pencil out and support from the CTUIR was doubtful. Frederickson would like to explore it again.

## **DISTRICT BUSINESS**

**BOARDMAN PROJECT FUNDING PLAN:** A plan showing the anticipated costs of piping future laterals and how it would be funded was presented to the Board. This was reviewed. It will be looked at again when we get into our application for funding through the DEQ revolving loan program.

**RESOLUTION NO. 19-002- 2019 BUDGET:** The Board held two special meetings in February to work on the budget. Frederickson moved to pass the proposed 2019 budget. Kemper seconded. Motion passed.

**RESOLUTION NO. 19-003 – O&M FEES:** Frederickson moved to adopt Resolution No. 19-003 which sets the annual rates for the District. McNamee seconded. Motion passed.

**REVIEW OF DISTRICT REIMBURSEABLE DESIGNATION:** The District is a reimburseable employer of Oregon State. This mainly affects our unemployment rate. Baum presented a report showing what we would have paid and what we did pay including reimbursing the state for benefits. Discussion. The Board felt we are best to stay as a reimburseable employer.

**POLICIES:** Bridgewater handed out the policy for billing the power costs back to the customers. She also prepared a new policy for rate and duty of water. Review of these was postponed to the next meeting.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board went into executive session at 11:40 a.m. for legal purposes. Executive session was closed at 12:14 p.m.

## OTHER BUSINESS

**PRESSURIZATION FEE COLLECTION BREAKDOWN:** Frederickson would like to have discussion about the amount collected per pump station at a future meeting to get a better understanding.

## ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chairperson Philippi adjourned the meeting at 12:15 pm.

Signed:

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Bev Bridgewater, Secretary

Attest:

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Dalarie Philippi, Chairperson