



Minutes of Regular Meeting, Board of Directors February 9, 2021

The Board of Directors of the Porterville Irrigation District met this day in regular session in Porterville, California. Consistent with Executive Order N-29-20 and social distancing directives, the meeting was conducted by teleconference only, with no physical location for the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

President Borba called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Borba, Gisler, Chambers, McCowan, Witzel

DIRECTORS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Sean P. Geivet, District Manager
Jody A. Griswold-Bratcher, District Secretary
Brett Stroud, District Legal Counsel
Numerous guests via Zoom and One tap mobile

AGENDA – No changes or additions were made to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – President Borba asked if there was any public comment.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

M/S/U Gisler, Witzel to approve the Minutes of the Board of Directors Regular Meeting held January 12, 2021 as presented.

AUTHORIZATION TO PAY BILLS

M/S/U Chambers, Witzel to authorize the Treasurer to pay all outstanding bills against the District as presented.

MONTHLY REPORTS – Financial Reports: The Treasurer included in the Board meeting packet the December 2020 Balance Sheet, showing status of the banking accounts, and Income Statements for the same period. It was noted that these reports are considered preliminary pending any additional year-end entries made as a result of the upcoming audit. The BNY Mellon bank statement as of December 31, 2020 was also included as a quarterly update, although due to recent District refinancing, these statements may no longer be necessary.

M/S/U Chambers, Gisler to accept the preliminary financial reports as presented and to place the reports on file.

Administration Report: The Manager reviewed a recent letter from Friant Water Authority (FWA) proposing their OM&R Billing for Phase 1 of the Friant-Kern Canal (FKC) Middle Reach Capacity Correction Project. He explained the District's obligation and timeline for repayment if response from this and other FWA home Boards this month is favorable. He cautioned that if any up or down stream of this phase choose not to participate, it could be harmful to the entire FKC service area. He said, "we are all in the same boat, some in the front, some in the back, but if the boat fails, we all sink".

Also included in the meeting packet was a letter from the District's insurance carrier transmitting several "President's Special Recognition Award" certificates issued to the District.

Operations/Water Report: Manager Geivet speculated that the Bureau will likely release an initial allocation later this month in the 20-35% range depending upon results of snow pack data.

Status Report of Authorities: DCTRA, TRA, VAWC & FWA: Nothing new to report beyond what was discussed above.

Eastern Tule Groundwater Sustainability Agency (ETGSA): Mr. Geivet shared that ETGSA is still working on 218 Election details. He also noted usage figures for fallow ground has been surprising so they are looking to study evaporation and use data on fallow grounds. He encourages landowners to get signed up on the ETGSA website to get APN and mailing information up to date. He also shared that bills from ETGSA for "safe yield extraction fees" should be going out in coming weeks.

Success Reservoir Enlargement Project (SREP) Update: Nothing new to report. The Manager reminded folks that they can follow project progress by visiting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers website under Tule River Spillway Enlargement Project.

Future Planning: Nothing new to report.

GRIFFITH FARMS – Consider extending the term on the Griffith Farms lease agreement and the potential to re-negotiate the rent

Manager Geivet shared that we are still in negotiations and we will discuss the status of those negotiations with the Board in closed session at the end of the meeting so as not to interrupt other agenda items before guests are asked to depart.

2021 BUDGET – Review and consider adopting the draft 2021 Budget.

The Board took under review and held discussion on the 2021 draft budget and water rates. The Manager suggested that PID utilize the process of his other districts for implementing the water rates and suggested a 45-60 day public review period before adoption.

M/S/U Chambers, Gisler to approve the 2021 PID Budget as discussed; to approve the 2021 PID Water Rate at \$85.00 per acre-foot; and to set a Public Hearing to review the water rates for April 13, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. at the District office; to publish the water rates and Public Hearing notice, after which the budget and water rate will be adopted.

(A copy of the 2021 Budget as approved is incorporated in the minutes by reference and is on file in the office of the District.)

EMPLOYEE MATTER – Consider adding a full-time staff position at PID

Mr. Geivet presented the Board with a revised Job Classification listing for PID that includes two different Administrative Assistant positions based upon work experience. He reminded the Board and guests of the current arrangement under the long-standing clerical agreement with Terra Bella Irrigation District (TBID), in which we are sharing one full-time staff member to split their schedule between both districts.

He and President Borba shared their beliefs that the workload here will very likely increase with the additional record keeping needed under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) gets more detailed. We are also experiencing an increase in surface water use in the District leading to more landowner interest than in recent years for developing and utilizing the new service area turnouts, installing new turnouts on existing ditches and reactivating older turnouts that have remained dormant for some time.

The Manager shared that his other two districts run smoother with 2 or more full-time positions allowing the office to remain covered even when staff have vacations, medical appointments and in less frequent circumstances, sick days and emergencies. He recommended that we offer this position to the TBID/PID shared employee, Ann Eriksen, and would like to offer her the same waiver of the standard probationary period of a new employee as we did for previous staff commandeered from TBID since she has been on staff at another District under his management. This means being eligible for health insurance and the PID retirement plan effective of her hire date. He also noted there are some slight differences between the employee policies and benefits for the two districts that he will explain when he offers her the position.

M/S/U Witzel, Chambers to approve adding a full-time office staff position as presented; and to approve the Manager to offer this position to TBID employee Ann Ericksen to start at the Administrative Assistant 1 – Step 1 rate.

All guests departed the online Board Zoom meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Pursuant to Government Code Sections 54956.9, the Board adjourned into closed session at 10:23 a.m. The Board adjourned from closed session at 10:42 a.m.

GRIFFITH FARMS – Consider extending the term on the Griffith Farms lease agreement and the potential to re-negotiate the rent

No reportable action taken.

**CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION –
[Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(1)] *City of Fresno, et al. v. United
States of America*, Court of Federal Claims, Case No. 16-1276L**

No reportable action taken.

**CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION –
[Government Code Section 54956.9] (1 Case)**

No reportable action taken.

**ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION
54954.2 (RELATING TO ITEMS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA)**

No reportable action taken.

ADJOURNMENT –President Borba adjourned the meeting at 10:43 a.m.



Jody A. Griswold-Bratcher, Secretary