

KINGS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2022

As a result of the COVID-19 emergency, the public was able to participate through a conference call. Directors could choose to meet with Staff in the Board Room or participate through a conference call. President McCutcheon called the regular meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Barry McCutcheon, Ernest Taylor,
Steven P. Dias, Joseph Freitas (phone),
Michael Murray (phone)

DIRECTORS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Dennis Mills, General Manager
Ray Carlson, Attorney (phone)
Shawn Corley, LIWD (phone)
Geof VandenHuevel, Milk Producers Council (phone)

ESTABLISH QUORUM

It was determined that a quorum was present at the meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS REGULAR MEETINGS

Manager Mills explained that he had not yet completed the minutes for the regular meeting of June 2022.

COMMUNICATIONS

Manager Mills reported that both the Kings CWD and Mid-Kings River GSA websites were currently down with technical problems. The issue seemed to be on the service provider end, and a repair was expected very soon.

GENERAL MANAGER

FALL GROUNDWATER MONITORING

Manager Mills reported there had been efforts to review monitoring wells that had access issues in the Spring. He also reported that there had been consultant efforts to update approximate ground surface elevations for monitoring locations using a new digital elevation model from DWR.

APEX RANCH

Manager Mills reported that efforts continue on Ranch Well 19. Modifications are now planned with Rain4Rent and are estimated to cost approximately \$30,000. Plans are for this

work to occur in the beginning of October. Also efforts continue on Domestic Well 2 with B&B Well Drilling. There are plans for this well to be drilled in mid-October.

Manager Mills reported that the Apex Groundwater Bank started the year with approximately 7,580 AF in storage and roughly 2,800AF was recovered this season, for an ending amount of roughly 4,780 AF remaining in storage. Much less recovery occurred this season than was planned because Recovery Well #4 went down for a few weeks during the water run. There appears to be enough water remaining in storage for recoveries next year. Manager Mills also reported that monitoring results were still being evaluated, but indicate there were some all time groundwater level lows on the ranch.

CONVEYANCE SYSTEM SURVEYS

Last Chance System

Manager Mills reported that a District consultant recently surveyed the East Main, Center Branch, West Main and Shore side ditch. The area was bound by roughly Lacey Blvd. on the north and went south of Hwy 198 down to roughly Houston Avenue. The results of the survey showed that on all canals there was very little fall in them anymore. Basically the canals operate as flat pools now. Subsidence seems very likely part of what has happened, but there has not been a significant effort to dredge any of the canals in that area for several decades. Over the last two years, it appears that roughly 1.5 feet of subsidence occurred in that area. Also it is difficult to say how long this condition has been the case as the entire system capacity has declined over time as irrigation methods transition to drip from flood. This is now being considered by the Last Chance Board. Manager Mills' view is that gravity turnouts need to be converted to lift pumps and projects need to be pursued to restore or improve capacity.

Peoples System

Manager Mills reported that a District consultant recently surveyed the Peoples main from the Burris check down past the Esajian Basin. The consultant also developed a HEC-RAS (hydraulic model) evaluation on the channel to evaluate flow capacity. The results indicate that the structure floors between Simons and Esajian Basin don't seem to be set consistently. Also, there are issues with low banks in several places.

DUTRA PROPERTY

Manager Mills reported on a recent agreement is with Bill Tos to allow walnut hulls to be spread on the property north of Peoples Ditch. This agreement would be for this fall only, Mr. Tos has agreed to disc the property when spreading finished and repair any damage that might be caused on the property by the effort. Manager Mills also reported that work on the domestic well at the residence on Elder Avenue was needed.

Manager Mills then explained that plans for the Dutra Property would be further discussed in Closed Session, later in the meeting, but that he would report on scenarios that had been considered by staff.

The first scenario described involved keeping all of the 420.82 acres property, including the two livable residences. The purchase price was \$12,417,500. The current loan with Farm Credit West could be converted to a longer term, like 10 years, but it would require a down payment of roughly \$1.25M with an annual payment \$1.45M. The benefits of this scenario would include avoided groundwater pumping on 400 acres, which was estimated to be 1,473 AF/yr. Earthen berms could be developed around the fields to facilitate flooding in wet year's for additional recharge benefits.

The second scenario described involved a mixture of developing basin(s) and selling portions of the ranch. The scenario considered developing 130 acres to shallow basins. At the purchase price, that would mean paying \$3.835M for the property. Earthwork costs could range from roughly \$150K depending on how much dirt is moved. Power and pumps might be another \$45K. Benefits would be roughly 1,100 AF/yr include ag land not involved in pumping and groundwater recharge in wet years. Cost/Benefit ratio was from \$160-200/AF. The scenario considered the sale of the remaining ranch. The benefits would primarily be to District finances. The down-side of sale is the property will likely increase groundwater use in the area soon after development.

There was also a third scenario that was discussed that involved using the property to trade for other basin development sites.

Esajian Basin

Manager Mills reported on discussions with G&J Heavy Haul and Mesa Alta Construction.

CHSRA Proposed Agreements

Manager Mills reported that the District had received three draft agreements from CHSRA. In reviewing the agreements they appear very confusing and do not seem to tie back well to previous agreements with CHSRA. Attorney Carlson was also still reviewing the agreements.

KCWD Recharge Basin Project – Tulare Lake Subbasin

Manager Mills reported that this effort has a reimbursable grant funded budget of \$2.900M. The effort will include the Griswold Basin development as well as improved turnouts at Smith/Azevedo Basins, Railsback Basin and Cody Slough. Manager Mills conveyed the need to contract with P&P for CEQA and design of facility. Also, the MKR GSA will need to contract for grant administration.

KCWD Delta View Project – Kaweah Subbasin

Manager Mills reported that this effort has a reimbursable grant funded budget of \$1.374M. Manager Mills reported that a project location still needs to be established and acquire the property or access. Also, Manager Mills conveyed the need to contract with P&P for CEQA and design of facility.

Update on GSP Revision

Manager Mills provided an update on GSP revision efforts in both the Kaweah and Tulare Lake Subbasins.

ON-GOING EFFORTS

Manager Mills relayed that staff had disced the Griswold property. He also reported that the Riverside Ditch delivery percentage was roughly 55% this season. Manager Mills relayed he was not sure what caused that, but that the loss percentage seems very high. He is suspicious of the readings of the flume at the head of the ditch.

EXPENDITURE LIST APPROVAL & FINANCING STATEMENT ACCEPTANCE

On a motion by Vice-President Dias, with a second by Director Taylor, it was unanimously approved by the Board that the expenditure list and financial statement be accepted as submitted. The vote for all of the Directors was as follows:

AYES: Steven P. Dias, Joseph Freitas, Barry McCutcheon, Michael Murray,
Ernest Taylor

NOES: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: None

TRANSFER OF FUNDS

None

BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS OR REPORTS

None.

SET NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regular Board of Directors meeting was set for October 6, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.

**CONVENE TO CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE
54956.9 (A) AND 54956.9(D)(1)**

CLOSED SESSION

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

Following the Closed Session, President McCutcheon reported that there was no reportable action from the Closed Session.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Mills
MIN09.08.22