

A meeting of the Walker River Irrigation District (WRID) Board of Directors was held on April 8, 2028. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM at the District Board Room, 410 N. Main St, Yerington, Nevada by President SNYDER.

Present:

Jim SNYDER	President
Marcus MASINI	Vice President
Richard NUTI	Treasurer
David GIORGI	Director
Dennis ACCIARI	Director
Robert BRYAN	General Manager
Counsel DePAOLI	Legal Counsel, via Zoom
Jessica HALTERMAN	Secretary
Sandy NEVILLE	Water Rights Specialist

Public Present:

Joanne Sarkisian, USBWC	Jeanette Jacobs	Kat Dow, WBC
Lauren Bartels, NDWR	Jodi Roan, NDWR	

Public Present via Zoom:

Angela Bezzone, MBK	Shawn Stavang
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1. Public Comment

None presented.

2. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

All 5 members were present.

3. Consideration of Minutes of the March 7, 2024 Regular Meeting

Director GIORGI made a motion to approve the minutes; Treasurer NUTI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed.

4. Water Master's Report

Joanne SARKISIAN reported that Bridgeport is at 40,800 acre-feet (96% of capacity) with an outflow of 125cfs and Topaz is at 58,430 acre-feet (97% capacity) with an outflow of 186cfs. The delivery systemwide is 294cfs. There is not much of a demand at this time. The first bit of storage water is being delivered over the weekend. Director GIORGI asked to have a tablet placed in Topaz for the decree.

5. Staff Reports:

A. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer NUTI reported as of March 31, 2024:

Cash in Checking	\$ 321,411.72
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Cash in Money Market	\$ 930,967.05
Cash in CDs	\$ 757,568.24
Total	\$2,009,947.01

B. Consideration of Bills and Payroll for payment

Director GIORGI asked how the money being billed to NFWF was calculated; Secretary HALTERMAN stated they are billed the exact expenses. The fuel bills are broken into projects and only the NFWF project amount is billed to them. The same goes for all of the bills. Vice President MASINI asked what the turn around was for getting paid; Secretary HALTERMAN stated it used to be monthly but it has been around 2-2 ½ months. If they do not pay on one month’s submission, they will add multiple submissions together and that is where the auditor notes his findings because there are payments made for different fiscal years. GM BRYAN stated unfortunately the District is at the mercy of the government as to when they will pay. Vice President MASINI asked if there was a contract that outlined when payments will be made; Secretary HALTERMAN stated there is a contract stating they will reimburse, but not a timeline or schedule. Secretary HALTERMAN stated if all of the departments give their approvals within a timely manner, the money is paid quickly, but if one department does not approve the submission, the payment is delayed.

Director GIORGI made a motion to approve the bills; Vice President MASINI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed.

C. Manager’s Report

GM BRYAN stated the USGS gage readings are included in the packet. Topaz is currently at 97% capacity and Bridgeport is currently at 96% capacity. There is roughly 1500 acre feet of space available in both reservoirs. GM BRYAN stated they are encouraging a little bit of spill from Topaz. He has been in constant communication with BIA because they are having issues with Weber right now. If the flows at Wabuska are around 300cfs it is okay, but if they get close to 500cfs it is a problem for BIA. GM BRYAN has been having regular meetings with MBK engineers in regard to reservoir operation and a potential reallocation. There are only 2 ditches taking water in Smith Valley and there has only been 2cfs of storage water ordered. GM BRYAN has been in communication with people in the upper part of the watershed and has been taking the cool weather into consideration with not having a larger buffer in the reservoirs. As long as it is below 59,000 acre-feet in Topaz, it should be okay. There is nothing in the forecast for rain on snow events nor significant warming trends. The reservoirs are being operated as tightly as possible to maximize the available water. If there is a need to spill more water from either reservoir, GM BRYAN will need to notify BIA as they cannot spill at Weber right now. Vice President MASINI asked why Weber cannot spill water; GM BRYAN stated they are working on the dam. BIA did reach out earlier and requested that the Water Master send the water straight to Walker Lake so they can take the whole dam down, but there was some back and forth on getting the water

back after the dam was reinstalled. GM BRYAN stated he stayed out of the conversation as it is out of the District's jurisdiction.

GM BRYAN stated the shop crew is finishing the Colony Ditch modernization. The electronics are not installed yet. Maintenance will need to be completed on the Colony and the Saroni and will be done as soon as the modernization is completed. Last week there was an emergency repair on Campbell Lane. With the help of the Lyon County Road Department, Yerington Paiute Tribe, Peri & Sons, and the City of Yerington's ditch witch, the culvert was replaced.

On March 22nd, GM BRYAN gave a presentation to the Subcommittee on Public Lands Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources in Schurz. GM BRYAN presented on what the District is, how it works, how the water rights work, and gave a list of recommendations on asking for assistance with the East Walker gaging, funding to replace the Yerington weir, supporting the retirement of groundwater rights, and starting to look at a more catered approach to each basin regarding the conjunctive use.

Last Friday April 5th, GM BRYAN attended the NDEM Arcstorm meeting. DRI is trying to model an approach for the Carson, Truckee, and Walker Basins along the lines of the largest storm that occurred in 1861-62. They are building models to show what the impact would be in each basin if a storm of that size were to present. The 1861-62 storm brought roughly 3 times the amount of water that was seen last year. During the workshop, GM BRYAN was presented with an award by the NV Preparedness Association as the Western Nevada Chapter Partner of the Year for the efforts with the Spring Thaw last year.

Next week, NDWR will be hosting well user meetings. The Smith Valley group will meet at the Smith Valley Library on Wednesday 4/17 at 11am; and the Mason Valley group will meet at the WRID office on Thursday 4/18 at 11am. They will be presenting the water levels and the pumping data from last year.

The ITRC Flow Measurement Class will be held from September 10-12, 2024. If anyone is interested, get ahold of someone in the office.

Director GIORGI stated there is a Topaz Working Group that posted a picture of a fish ladder at the entrance of Topaz Lake. Director GIORGI believes the picture was from 1934 but had not heard of a fish ladder being there; GM BRYAN stated he would be curious to see the picture.

D. Legal Counsel's Report

Counsel DePAOLI reported that the Department of Justice has given its final approval for the proposed resolution of the Walker River Indian Reservation claims for additional water pursuant to the stipulation the Board approved. Now have all of the needed the approvals from the United States. Counsel will be figuring out how to move forward to present to the Court for approval by the Court. The expert

reports are due today in the Mineral County vs Walker River Irrigation District case and Counsel is working to get those served as well as giving notice to others who want a copy.

E. Storage Water Leasing Program Update

Angela BEZZONE stated the applications have been coming in and there are approximately 2400 acre-feet enrolled in the Program at this point (670 acre feet from Topaz and 1730 acre-feet from Bridgeport). The applications are due May 15, 2024 and the agreements are due May 31, 2024. There may be a reallocation in April/May and all participants who would like to include the reallocation water in the Program would need to fill out and submit a second application.

F. Storage Water Transfers

Director GIORGI made a motion to approve the transfers from March; Treasurer NUTI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed. Director GIORGI confirmed the well water needed to be used in the month it is awarded; GM BRYAN stated the user needs to attempt to use it within that month because it is not guaranteed after that and the exchange at the reservoir occurs in the award month. Vice President MASINI stated there was a rule made to use it within the award month; GM BRYAN stated that is the rule, but the first month is lenient because not a lot of people take water that month. Director GIORGI asked if the well draws should be delayed a month since some users do not use water in April; GM BRYAN stated there is minimal carryover. GM BRYAN stated that if an entity is enrolled in the leasing program, it cannot sign up for the well lottery.

6. Update from the Division of Water Resources regarding groundwater pumping and upcoming fieldwork schedules.

Lauren BARTELS stated there will be well user meetings next month where they will present the water level and pumping data.

7. Update by the Walker River Conservancy on activities related to the Walker Basin Restoration Program, including Acquisitions and Conservation and Stewardship Activities.

Kat DOW stated she had no updates.

8. Consideration and action on proposed District Budget for fiscal year July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, including the fixing of the charges and levying assessments for that fiscal year on the water right lands within the District, on lands with appurtenant stored water rights within the District, on water right lands within the Local Improvement Districts within the District, on water right lands held by the High Ditch within the District, on reserved water rights, presently or formerly appurtenant to water right lands within the District, and Equipment Rental and Interfund Rental rates.

GM BRYAN stated there is not recommendation to increase any rates this year and current assessment rates are:

- General \$13/acre
- Reservoir \$6/acre
- Equipment \$4.50/acre
- Local #1 \$1/acre
- Local #2 \$2/acre
- Local #3 \$1.30/acre
- Local #4 \$20/acre
- High Ditch \$10/acre

Local #5 is added to the budget this year as the District now owns and operates the Colony Ditch. The proposed assessment for that is \$10/acre based on the vote of the Colony users.

Repairs and maintenance will continue on all drains and canals throughout the District. The equipment and labor rates remained the same.

Treasurer NUTI asked if the new vehicle was still being considered; GM BRYAN stated it is. The truck will be the same as the one we purchased a few years ago and would pull the fuel and construction trailers. If it is not purchased this year, it must be purchased next year. The old truck has not had any issues with it, but GM BRYAN is attempting to avoid having to make any repairs as it will have 125,000 miles next year and will be 5-6 years old. Treasurer NUTI asked if the Tractor Brush Hog budget amount would get anything; GM BRYAN stated it would not. It is being budgeted each year in an attempt to put money away for a purchase. The last quote we got was approximately \$100,000 just for the brush hog and no tractor. The loader was the most current quote the District got and the loaders are still on rental but being covered by the grant. The Conservation District did purchase a brush cutter, but their tractor is too powerful for it. GM BRYAN spoke to someone in Smith Valley who quoted between \$200-\$1000 per hour. Treasurer NUTI asked how the face of Topaz is being cleaned; GM BRYAN stated he hired someone with a skid steer a few years ago. The face of the dam is lined with big boulders so the Conservation District sprays every year and every 5-10 years a skid steer is needed to clean.

Director GIORGI asked if the High Ditch was repaired from last year's high water; GM BRYAN stated that was part of the spring project that occurred and FEMA is supposed to send money for it. Director GIORGI asked if the District and private ditches would need to purchase culverts or pay anything for the Hwy 95a project; GM BRYAN stated the project is on hold, but the last conversations indicated the contractor would pay for the culverts. The biggest challenge will be to coordinate the work with the irrigation season. If the culverts are older than the road, then NDOT will pay for the culvert, but if the road supersedes the culverts, the District and ditches will need to pay.

Vice President MASINI stated he has been confronted with the budget and increases. He suggested looking at operations and finding ways to cut back. He stated that the District will become an expensive District soon. GM BRYAN stated that this District is the least assessed district in Nevada; Vice President MASINI stated he understands that, but users

are being assessed for three sources of water and is not comparable to TCID or any other district. Vice President MASINI stated the price keeps being pushed up but there is no getting ahead. He requested to look at the budget from an operations standpoint; GM BRYAN stated he would be happy to accept any ideas from the Board. GM BRYAN stated he would like to find revenue sources to bring money in but things that used to take a couple of days to do now take a couple of weeks. Other districts charge for copies, card changes, etc. and it is hard to maintain the status quo. There are users that have hundreds of water cards and when they make a change it is a long process and expensive. Ditch companies are turning to the District for history searches, stock verifications, etc. The shop crew are not being paid according to what they are doing. There are going to be challenges with the larger jobs, and unless there is grant money, GM BRYAN stated he will not be doing larger jobs. There is approximately \$11 million in the NFWF grant that cannot be given to the District at the end of the grant. There are SCADA systems that will not be maintained after the grant because the ditch companies cannot afford repairs. If the Board would like to take the time to go through the numbers and offer suggestions, GM BRYAN would sit down and talk. President SNYDER asked if the legal fees are likely to go down with the advancements in the cases; Counsel DePAOLI stated the prior to current legal expenses have gone down because of the US Tribe case settlement discussions. The Mineral County litigation expenses will be there for a while as it could move into depositions this summer. The fees should not result in the amount of expenses in the US Tribe case. President SNYDER is concerned with the fact that the reserves are still declining; GM BRYAN stated last year's high water expenses did impact the final balance. GM BRYAN stated there is still work to be done on the Bridgeport Dam that will need a contractor to complete. President SNYDER stated he did not want to continue to see the reserves being used. Treasurer NUTI stated that with the work done last year and no financial assistance, it is tough to tell people to help or flood. Vice President MASINI stated there are people who think the District needs to be paid for the work done to protect the City. Treasurer NUTI stated last year's flood impact would not be like the 1997 flood where the water came and went within a short amount of time. President SNYDER stated another thought is that \$0.50 per year increase is more palatable than going 5 years with no change and a bigger increase at one time. Vice President MASINI asked GM BRYAN if he has talked to Lyon County on assessing non-water righted acres and creating a fund to pay for flood mitigation; GM BRYAN stated he has been working with the County as well as the Carson Water Subconservancy. GM BRYAN stated the City of Yerington is not willing to discuss the issue. A comprehensive H&H study will help with FEMA funding the next time around. Vice President MASINI stated something must change as the little pocket of water users are paying to protect a lot of people and they are not contributing at all. GM BRYAN stated there is the possibility to assess not water-righted acres like TCID does, but there will be pushback. Vice President MASINI stated it needs to be looked at and a contingency fund needs to be built up before the expenses come. Vice President MASINI stated the topic needs to be brought up at a City Council meeting; GM BRYAN stated he agrees and he is willing to sit down with Board members if they have any ideas. Treasurer NUTI stated that assessing more acres means there will be more requests for things to be fixed. Vice President MASINI stated if he owned a home in the City and had to pay \$10 per year knowing that someone is attempting to keep his home from flooding, he would pay it.

Director GIORGI made a motion to approve the budget as presented; Treasurer NUTI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed.

9. Director Comments

None presented.

10. Public Comment

None presented.

11. Adjournment

Director ACCIARI made a motion to adjourn; Vice President MASINI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:17am.

Jim Snyder, President

Marcus Masini, Vice President

Richard Nuti, Treasurer

Dennis Acciari, Director

David Giorgi, Director