

A meeting of the Walker River Irrigation District (WRID) Board of Directors was held on January 8, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM at the District Board Room, 410 N. Main St, Yerington, Nevada by Vice President MASINI

**Present:**

Marcus MASINI	Vice President
Richard NUTI	Treasurer
David GIORGI	Director
Dennis ACCIARI	Director
Gordon DePAOLI	Legal Counsel, via Zoom
Robert BRYAN	General Manager
Jessica HALTERMAN	Secretary

**Public Present:**

Joanne Sarkisian, USBWC	Kat Dow, WBC	Carlie Henneman, WBC
Ed Ryan, MV/SVCD	Don Harper, NRG	Forest Halford, NRG
Taylor Allison, LCEM		

**Present on Zoom:**

David Hockaday, LCBOCC	Tim Bardsley, NOAA	Wes Walker, MBK
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**1. Public Comment**

None presented.

**2. Roll Call**

President SNYDER was absent.

**3. Consideration of Minutes of the December 7, 2023 Regular Meeting**

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

**4. Presentation and discussion by Tim Bardsley with NOAA regarding the current year weather and water outlook for 2024 irrigation season.**

Tim BARDSLEY presented an update on the current water year conditions and forecast. The highlights included:

- This year is nothing like last year.
- There is a storm pending that should hit on Wednesday afternoon/evening.
- There are potential storms that could hit over the weekend.
- 8-14 day outlook shows a slightly above normal precipitation expected.
- There is a chance of 2" of liquid or greater within the next two weeks.
- The January outlook shows an equal chance for normal temperature and the precipitation is leaning above normal.
- The snowpack is not at record low, but most sites are within the lowest 20<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- There is a 30% chance of meeting or exceeding the median water year peak.

- The April through July water supply outlook projects 108kaf for West Walker below Little Walker and 33.7kaf for East Walker at Bridgeport.
- In summary, the snowpack is off to a slow start and is worse than 5 out of 6 past years at this time; there are a couple moderate storms forecasted; there is still time to recover to a normal peak snowpack and water supply; and the water supply forecasts reflect low SWE.

**5. Consideration of request from Don Harper of National Resources Group, on behalf of Walker River Ranch LLC for a written statement from the Walker River Irrigation District concerning the District's easement rights pursuant to that certain deed dated October 2, 1921 from the Antelope Valley Land and Cattle Company to the Walker River Irrigation District, as those easement rights might affect Mono County, California Assessor Parcel Numbers 001-100-62 and 001-100-046 which are owned by Walker River Ranch LLC.**

Don HARPER gave an overview of what Walker River Ranch is requesting. There is an approximate 1 mile long piece of property along the highway in Antelope Valley. It is irrigated grazing ground. Asking for clarification on the 102 year old easement that is on the title so they can work on bank stabilization and improving the system. The river is taking the banks and eroding into the property. The WRR would like to reduce the erosion and loss of irrigated pasture. They are working with NRCS to do a pasture rehabilitation. Improve the irrigated pasture and do a streambank stabilization. The recorded easement provided WRID with two options on getting water to Topaz- use the existing Swagger (Swagger) Ditch or to create an inlet on the west bank, create a diversion. The WRR is asking the District to approve a resolution stating WRID elected to use the Swagger Ditch with a 200 foot (100 feet on each side) right-of-way, so that they can continue with their projects. Director GIORGI asked if any work would be done in the river; Don stated they have to work with all of the stakeholders once the specific projects are decided on. The first step is to clarify the easements. Treasurer NUTI confirmed Option 2 (Swagger Ditch) is what the District has historically used; GM BRYAN stated there is a blanket easement the District can exercise. Counsel DePAOLI stated in the memo he provided to the Board, the 1921 deed states there is a route for the inlet canal and 2 alternate routes. Alternate #2 would be the one that is along the Swagger Ditch. Legal counsel and staff were not able to find anything as to whether the District was asked to make an election on which alternate and if a request was made, which alternate was chosen. The Walker River Ranch LLC is looking for a confirmation on if there was a chosen alternate, it would be along the Swagger Ditch. Also as indicated in the memo, the deed seems to allow for the use of the Swagger Ditch to get water to the reservoir if needed, not under the guise of being a new inlet canal, but a way to get water to the reservoir. GM BRYAN stated the inlet to the reservoir is below the diversion and the inlet catches the tailwater from the Swagger Ditch. GM BRYAN stated legal counsel had provided a resolution and he had met with Don and Forest and the resolution covered everything they had requested. Treasurer NUTI confirmed with Don and Forest that they agreed with the resolution; Don stated they had not seen the resolution yet. Secretary HALTERMAN provided a copy to them for review. After reviewing, Don stated they agreed with the resolution. Treasurer NUTI made a motion to adopt the resolution presented as Exhibit D to the memo; Director GIORGI offered a

second. The vote was called for and the motion passed. Director GIORGI asked if the 100 foot easement on each side of the Swagger Ditch continued on other properties; GM BRYAN stated he was not certain, but it could be recorded on each piece of property even after the fact.

**6. Water Master’s Report**

Joanne SARKISIAN reported Bridgeport was at 35,410 acre-feet (84%) and Topaz was at 41,498 acre-feet (67%). The current release from Bridgeport is 93 cfs and Topaz is 12 cfs. There is water coming through the natural channel that cannot be stored. Treasurer NUTI asked if the Bridgeport releases had to be increased due to the December weather; Joanne stated the minimum release for the temperature is 30 cfs. Joanne reported there is 22 feet of stock water being delivered systemwide.

**7. Staff Reports:**

**A. Treasurer’s Report**

Treasurer NUTI reported as of December 31, 2023:

Cash in Checking	\$ 175,293.78
Cash in Money Market	\$ 667,556.16
Cash in CDs	<u>\$ 757,568.24</u>
Total	\$1,600,418.18

**B. Consideration of Bills and Payroll for payment**

**Walker River Irrigation District  
December 2023 Bills & Payroll**

<b>Payee</b>	<b>Check No.</b>	<b>Trans. Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Ameritas Life Insurance Corp	100713	12/07/2023	\$1,086.70
Desert Engineering	100714	12/07/2023	\$721.30
Hunewill Construction Co., Inc.	100715	12/07/2023	\$4,698.10
Mason Valley Equipment	100716	12/07/2023	\$1.09
NV Energy	100717	12/07/2023	\$292.30
Pape' Machinery Exchange	100718	12/07/2023	\$17,136.00
Quill	100719	12/07/2023	\$129.57
Sierra Office Solutions	100720	12/07/2023	\$107.73
SUMMIT FIRE & SECURITY	100721	12/07/2023	\$197.94
USPS	100722	12/07/2023	\$224.00
Allied Sanitation and Septic	100723	12/14/2023	\$135.03
BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON	100724	12/14/2023	\$23,800.00
City of Yerington	100725	12/14/2023	\$90.80

Desert Engineering	100726	12/14/2023	\$234.96
Hunewill Construction Co., Inc.	100727	12/14/2023	\$4,437.83
JASON MILLIGAN	100728	12/14/2023	\$2,780.00
Jim Menesini Petroleum	100729	12/14/2023	\$292.78
John Deere Credit	100730	12/14/2023	\$1,812.13
NV Energy	100731	12/14/2023	\$38.98
O'Reilly Automotive, Inc.	100732	12/14/2023	\$78.07
PDM Steel Service Centers, Inc.	100733	12/14/2023	\$1,927.06
PERS Administrative Fund	100734	12/14/2023	\$11,778.10
Public Employees' Benefits Program	100735	12/14/2023	\$4,351.15
Purchase Power / Pitney Bowes	100736	12/14/2023	\$769.24
SCOTT ROBINSON	100737	12/14/2023	\$2,780.00
Southwest Gas Corporation	100738	12/14/2023	\$525.20
Sticks and Stones Buildings Material Inc	100739	12/14/2023	\$1,623.32
THE PARTS HOUSE	100740	12/14/2023	\$276.99
Xerox Corporation	100741	12/14/2023	\$217.09
Xerox Financial Services	100742	12/14/2023	\$30.22
MF Barcellos	100743	12/14/2023	\$3,407.04
Connolly Crane Service	100744	12/27/2023	\$7,770.00
D & S Waste Removal	100745	12/27/2023	\$203.64
Desert Ready Mix	100746	12/27/2023	\$11,240.06
Desert Research Institute	100747	12/27/2023	\$17,061.88
Hunewill Construction Co., Inc.	100748	12/27/2023	\$2,923.31
JASON MILLIGAN	100749	12/27/2023	\$1,520.00
Lyon County Recorder	100750	12/27/2023	\$35.04
MBK Engineers	100751	12/27/2023	\$4,661.50
NV Energy	100752	12/27/2023	\$42.29
Quill	100753	12/27/2023	\$20.12
SCOTT ROBINSON	100754	12/27/2023	\$1,520.00
Connolly Crane Service	100755	12/27/2023	\$8,220.00
Alhambra	300057	12/27/2023	\$125.90
HomeTown Health	300058	12/27/2023	\$8,297.04
Verizon Wireless	300059	12/27/2023	\$291.81
Vision Service Plan - Nevada	300060	12/27/2023	\$186.05

Payroll	12/31/2023	\$52,553.40
EFTPS	12/31/2023	\$846.90
<b>Total Bills &amp; Payroll</b>		<b>\$203,499.66</b>

Vice President MASINI asked what the Connolly Crane bill was for; Secretary HALTERMAN stated it was to set the culverts at Desert Creek. Director GIORGI made a motion to approve the bills; Director ACCIARI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed.

**C. Manager’s Report**

GM BRYAN reported Topaz is at 41,470 acre feet (69%) and Bridgeport is at 35,460 acre feet (84%). Since November 1<sup>st</sup>, Topaz has stored 14,350 acre-feet and Bridgeport has stored 7,700 acre-feet. GM BRYAN has continued to meet with MBK engineers to maintain the pool levels while storing as much as possible but keeping a safe buffer. The releases were increased starting December 21<sup>st</sup>. GM BRYAN would like to maintain the pools around 80% and that allows a safe buffer for the forecasted storms.

The shop crew is working on the Campbell Split project and should be done within a couple of weeks. The crew has also completed the cleaning of the Saroni cuts and has broken ground on the Colony modernization project. A lot of needed river repairs have been brought to GM BRYAN’s attention, but the schedule is full right now. GM BRYAN will work with the appropriate people on scheduling the repairs and establishing cost responsibility. GM BRYAN asked if repairs are needed on drains, let him know.

On December 18<sup>th</sup>, staff met with the Colony Ditch Board to have the deed signed for Local Improvement District #5. The deed has been filed and recorded with Lyon County. The first annual Local Improvement District #5 meeting is scheduled for 10am on January 12<sup>th</sup> at Rosie’s in Wellington. GM BRYAN brought to attention that the Old Smith Valley Courthouse is no longer available for meetings due to a well usage issue. The County is establishing a new meeting space.

GM BRYAN has been asked to be part of an expert panel at the Mid-Pacific Regional Conference on January 25<sup>th</sup>. He will be assisting Dr. Styles.

GM BRYAN will be attending the Nevada Water Resources Association conference in Las Vegas from January 29<sup>th</sup> to February 1<sup>st</sup>.

Treasurer NUTI confirmed the crew is close to finishing the Campbell project; GM BRYAN stated they should be done within the month. There are still areas of concern that need to be addressed.

**D. Legal Counsel’s Report**

Counsel DePAOLI stated he had nothing to report.

**E. Storage Water Leasing Program Update**

Wes WALKER stated the petitions were submitted to the California State Board. It takes a few months to process the application and issue the order, so hopefully the order will be approved by the end of March. The order will then be taken to the Federal Court for the decree order, then the changes can be applied for with the Nevada State Engineer. The timeline will be similar to prior years. Wes will work with Sandy over the next few weeks on getting the timeline set and the mailings scheduled.

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

Secretary HALTERMAN read the following email from AJ Jensby:

‘NDWR will not be attending this month’s board meeting. A few notes, all pumpage inventory work is done as well as water level analysis. We are excited to get to February and see how the spring water levels look. Currently we do not have a replacement for my position but hope to fill it in the coming month. Hoping for snow!!’

Vice President MASINI asked what the timeframe was for the fall readings; GM BRYAN stated they get everything inputted into the computer in November & December. They will be back to do readings in April. GM BRYAN is not sure if a joint meeting or separate meetings will be held but he will let everyone know as soon as he finds out.

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

Carlie HENNEMAN stated there were no updates from the Conservancy this month.

**10. Presentation and consideration of FY 2022-2023 Audit Report by Sciarani & Co.**

GM BRYAN stated this item needs to be tabled until next month. The hope is that a draft will be available at least a week in advance of the March meeting so the Board and public have a chance to review before the meeting.

**11. Review and discussion on adoption of a Resolution for WRID to be a cooperating partner for the Lyon County Hazard Mitigation Plan.**

Taylor ALLISON gave a brief overview of the plan and the requirements and intention behind it. The plan is comprehensive in the fact that it identifies hazards within the County and what agencies would be affected. The hazards were identified during a multi-month planning process. The risks include those identified in the prior plan as well as new ones such as technological hazards. Some risks, such as canal or dam failure, were expanded. Any risk identified as High or Very High was profiled and includes a description and the vulnerability breakdown by jurisdiction. The vulnerability breakdown shows what the potential impacts to labor, equipment, infrastructure, etc. would be if the risk were to present. If WRID signs on as a participating jurisdiction, and FEMA formally adopts the plan, the WRID could be eligible for certain mitigation funds for the next 5 years. A federal law was passed last year and identifies certain census tracts that have more benefits for projects- Lyon County does have one of the census tracts. Taylor was not certain of the

exact boundaries but believed the tract begins at Goldfield and continues north to Wabuska and east to Churchill County. Being in the census tract has many benefits, but the biggest one is a 10% cost share for mitigation funding instead of a 25% cost share. Taylor stated FEMA wants to see a hydrological and hydraulic study completed, a drainage area master plan completed, and mitigation projects identified and this plan would assist in getting those tasks started and completed. Secretary HALTERMAN asked Taylor to explain the legal constraints of being a partner. Taylor stated there is a requirement for the County to have a Hazard Mitigation Plan in place, but it is not required for the District to be a participating jurisdiction. There has been concern about liability in other counties. Treasurer NUTI stated there are often no legal ramifications until someone decides to sue. Vice President MASINI stated the liability aspect needs to be looked at. Counsel DePAOLI stated he has not found anything on whether there were or were not any claims made where local governments have been found liable because of their participation in the plan under the Stafford Act. Vice President MASINI asked if there was a mitigation plan in effect when Fernley had the canal failure; Taylor stated there was one in place, but at the time, the City of Fernley was not a participating agency. Treasurer NUTI made a motion to table the item pending more research and information regarding liability; Director GIORGI offered a second. The vote was called for and approved. GM BRYAN asked what the deadline is to sign on; Taylor stated there are a couple jurisdictions that are meeting in February. If the District decides to hold off all together, the District has a year to change their mind. After the year, the District would have to wait until the next update in 5 years.

**12. Director Comments**

None presented.

**13. Public Comment**

None presented.

**14. Adjournment**

Director ACCIARI made a motion to adjourn; Treasurer NUTI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:10 am.

ABSENT  
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Jim Snyder, President

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Marcus Masini, Vice President

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Richard Nuti, Treasurer

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Dennis Acciari, Director

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David Giorgi, Director