

MEDFORD IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

April 12th, 2023 @ 1:30 pm

Present: Sean Naumes, Dennis O'Donoghue, Henry Vaninetti, Jack Friend-Manager/Secretary

Absent: Dave Urton

Call meeting to order: Chairman Naumes called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm.

Minutes: Chairman Naumes asks if there are any comments or corrections to the minutes. Chairman Naumes called for a motion to approve the regular board meeting minutes as corrected for March 15th, 2023. Director O'Donoghue motions to approve the March 15th, 2023, minutes, Director Vaninetti seconds the motion, and the motion carries.

Financials: Friend: We have our annual liability payment on 3-13 for \$58K. Chairman Naumes called for a motion to approve the financials for March 2023. Director O'Donoghue motions to approve the March 15th, 2023, minutes, Director Vaninetti seconds the motion, and the motion carries.

Delinquent Accounts: Flanakin: The summary sheets are for your reference. We sent a second billing. More accounts were brought current. The status on foreclosures is out of the 6 accounts, 2 are paid. The foreclosure property by the county will continue to accrue fees until it is paid at the sale of the property which could be 2 years. The property that is on the market is still for sale. There isn't a pending sale as of yet but will continue to monitor. The account that has been faithfully making payments is going to let us know his future payments to bring the account current. Director O'Donoghue: That's good progress. Chairman Naumes: For the other delinquent accounts for example the 3-4-year ones, are we going to work on removing their water rights? Manager Friend: We would take a look at the ones that rolled over to the 4-year mark and begin the process of removing the water rights.

Administration: Friend: The weather has been all over the place but overall we saw the low-elevation snow come off and the higher elevations packed down and the snow water equivalent come up. As of today the snotel site at Fourmile is 84" and snow water equivalent of 128% of the average. Billy Creek is 74" and has a snow water equivalent of 199% of the average. Fish Lake is 44" and 667% of the average. That goes to show that the snow is usually melted or nearly melted at Fish Lake by now. Howard Prairie is reading 31". I have attached some graphs illustrating the reservoir levels compared to the average. Our southern supply is at 34,128 a/f. That is 42% of the average and 29% of the full pool. With the snow left to melt we will be hoping to get closer to an average season again. Currently, the MID allotment is around 1,500 a/f. Last year we had 800 a/f after the snow melt. We are going to be in a much better position than last year, yet we still have to watch closely as the snow melts to determine what our supply is and forecast the season start and end dates. Our northern supply is currently at 8,168 a/f. That is 66% of the average and 35% of the full pool. Fish and Fourmile are still frozen for the most part so we will have to wait and see how the snow melt impacts these reservoirs. We will be plowing into Fourmile to clean the Cascade Canal once we get close to seeing runoff that high up. We are currently flushing out the system. We have had water to the end of the canal system several times but have had to shut it off and repair leaks that have arisen on Ride 4. It should be to the Scott lateral today or tomorrow and we can begin flushing laterals and working with patrons to test systems and bulges. We want to get all the kinks worked out on the lower end before the demand for irrigation comes. We have also been removing unapproved check structures that do not meet district operational requirements. We are currently still in a D1-Moderate Drought despite the precipitation. That is much better than we were last year but our reservoirs were depleted so until those get back to normal levels we will still have drought impacts. I have attached the latest drought monitor update. Several counties in central Oregon have had drought declarations. MID, TID, and RRVID plan to submit a request to our watermaster this week along with a letter showing our water supply situation. If approved, a drought declaration will allow access for our producers impacted by the drought to seek relief. The crew is focusing on training the three new ditch riders. There is a lot to learn, and a wet spring provides the perfect situation to get some experience before the season gets very busy. We are getting our tractor and mower soon. I have included some charts for snow pack results. Chairman Naumes:

What kind of time frame are you looking at for flushing all the laterals? Manager Friend: As soon as we get the water to the end of the line, we will be starting on the laterals. As soon as we start flushing the laterals, we will be contacting the patrons on ride 4 to test their systems. We are focusing on Ride 4 patrons since most of them didn't get any water last season. Our diversions are difficult to manage right now with the runoff from this last storm. They started from 200 CFS to 1200 CFS in 12 hours. Our screens are plugging up and we are still able to keep water to the lower end. We will try to keep the flows as consistent as possible. We may need to have a meeting mid-month between monthly meetings to discuss the Bear Creek diversion since it has bi-op requirements for bi-op flows we will try to use the stream flows for that otherwise we would need to use the storage.

FYI: FCA Monthly district update. I did have another meeting with FCA about moving forward on the document for the EPA grant finished. We need to start construction this fall. We do not want to wait another year.

Public Comment: Chairman Naumes: Just before we start, we have been very interactive before but in the interest of time, and other items on the agenda that need to be addressed, each person gets 2 minutes to speak. We will start with those who are on the agenda and move around the room from there. We will be giving each person 2 minutes for what they want to comment on and move along to the next person.

Michael Fowell: I would like to read the response that I got from the board members regarding my letter in January:

Thank you for your recent letter. You made several good points, particularly regarding the inequity of being charged for water that you never received. As you are well aware, our patrons are charged for a "water right", which is not a guarantee of water. The water rights fees we receive fund the operations and maintenance of the district's system of canals and laterals, i.e., the water delivery system, regardless of how much water is available to deliver. Throughout the history of the district, this charging model has worked well and has met the needs of the district and its patrons.

In "normal" seasons, there is enough water stored in our streams and reservoirs to meet everyone's needs. During unusually dry years, there is not, and some of our patrons, including you, are left with little to no water for the season. While we understand that being charged only for the water you use would be a more fair and equitable charging model, the fact of the matter is that we are not structured to operate in that way. To move to this kind of business model would require major changes, some of which would take years to effect. While we are not opposed to putting some, if not all of those changes in motion, we want to ensure we exercise "due diligence" in studying all of our options, understanding the costs and impacts to our patrons, and pursue all possible avenues of federal and state funding. Please be assured that the board is doing just that, and while we all wish it could move faster, we are moving as fast as we can to address this new reality of limited water in our Valley.

Thank you again for your thoughtful letter. We welcome your continued participation and your ideas on how to modernize our irrigation system and ensure more fair and equitable solutions for all our patrons.

Matt Borman: I have a cultural update brought in by Reclamation. So far there is 30-40" of saturated moisture in the ground for crops currently.

Dave Erickson: I have questions regarding the ditches and the maintenance. I would like to know what I can do and what I cannot do to clean and maintain the ditch that runs through my property. Manager Friend: Please leave your contact information with Dusk after the meeting and we will come out with the new ditch rider to answer all the questions you have and address them as best we can.

Sarah Del Rosa: Are there any anticipated changes prior to this year's election? Do those have to be implemented in a certain period of time prior to the election? If there are changes, how will the patrons be notified? By-Laws and procedures on the website drastically vary, especially in regard to the election and registering to vote. When were the procedures added to the website? Those two things do not match at all.

Manager Friend: I believe that most of those things can be discussed at any time. We can touch on a few of them here because it is in the public interest. This meeting isn't a forum for Q&A. Those questions are easy answers that I can answer right away as they arise. We can also clarify things on the website. I can see the first issue can be important and wasn't covered. However, the solar project is being paid for completely by grants and not by the patrons. Sarah Del Rosa: Regarding Election, Fish Lake, and Fourmile, do you want me to put it into an email then? Chairman Naumes: Yes, that would be a good idea to get those answers quickly. If you can let the office know ahead of time what your questions are, we can address them completely at the time of the meeting.

Director O'Donoghue: I think we need to put the questions and answers on our website. Not all comments but ones that pertain to all the patrons.

Manager Friend: So many laws have changed over the years and our bylaws are being reviewed by our legal team and will be updated as soon as we are able to review them.

Director O'Donoghue: How long have you been here Tammi?

Flanakin: A little over a year.

Director O'Donoghue: Since Tammi has come on board, she has really dug into a lot of these things and brought us up to compliance where there were a lot of discrepancies and needed to be updated. She is only one person and she's really cleaned up a lot in a short period of time. We're by no means all there but there was a lot let go in the office that needed correcting. I appreciate the effort.

Adjourn Regular Session: Meeting adjourned at 2:26 pm

Call to Order Executive Session: Chairman Naumes calls executive session to order at 2:28 pm

Adjourn Executive Session: Meeting adjourned at 2:56 pm

Call to Order Regular Session: Chairman Naumes calls the regular meeting to order at 2:57 pm

District manager vehicle stipend of \$750.00 per month. Chairman Naumes called for a motion to approve the stipend, Director Vaninetti motions to approve the district manager's \$750.00 vehicle stipend, Director O'Donoghue seconds the motion, and the motion carries.

Adjourn Regular Session: Meeting adjourned the meeting at 2:58 pm

Sean Naumes – Chairman

Jack Friend – District Manager/Secretary