

KINGS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2021

As a results 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 Taylor called the regular meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

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

**DIRECTORS ABSENT:** Michael Murray

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Dennis Mills, General Manager  
Ray Carlson, Attorney (phone)  
Johnny Gailey, Delta View Water Assoc. (phone)  
Shawn Corley, Lakeside IWD (phone)  
Karen Ormsby, Kings County Grand Jury (phone)

**ESTABLISH QUORUM**

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

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

None.

**REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD**

President Taylor asked if there were any motions related to reorganizing the Board offices. Vice-President Dias made a motion to nominate Barry McCutcheon as President, himself as Vice-President and Manager Dennis Mills as Secretary. President Taylor seconded the motion and then called for a vote. The vote for all of the Directors was as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAINED:None

ABSENT: Michael Murray

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR NOVEMBER 5, THE SPECIAL NOVEMBER 19 & THE SPECIAL DECEMBER 18, 2020 MEETINGS**

President Taylor asked if there was a motion regarding the minutes circulated in this month's Board packets. Vice-President Dias made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular November 5, 2020 meeting, the special November 19, 2020 meeting and the special December 18, 2020 meeting. Director Taylor seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved the regular November 5, 2020 meeting, the special November 19, 2020 meeting and the special December 18, 2020 meeting minutes. The vote for all of the Directors was as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAINED:None

ABSENT: Michael Murray

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Manager Mills reported that:

- DWR staff had again revisited the Round 3 grant reimbursement request right around the end of December. It was again revised and resubmitted right before the end of the year.
- David Borba no longer desired to lease the Kishuie Slough property and had provided the District formal notice.
- Kings County had updated its lease related to 40 acres of Peoples Ditch Company Stock.
- State Board had sent out notices about the Semitropic WSD Water Rights petition and Fully Appropriated Stream (FAS) designation on the Kings River.
- Fresno ID had recently produced a centennial anniversary publication.
- James ID had parted ways with its former manager, Steve Stadler.
- Downey Brand had again sent a letter to the District related to CEQA notice for projects involving Kings River water.

## **GENERAL MANAGER**

### **BRIEF UPDATE ON SGM ROUND 1 IMPLEMENTATION GRANT APPLICATION**

Manager Mills reported that the total application requested was \$3,000,000 with no local cost share. The project was for the development of the Griswold Basin, two associated structures in Riverside Ditch, and turnout improvements at Lopez, Smith, Railsback Basins and Cody Slough. The grant application package was developed mostly the last three weeks of December and submitted on January 7, 2021. The District should receive notice on whether the application is successful around March 2021. Manager Mills reported that the consultant, Geosyntec, generally did a good job, although he had to be involved in writing a significant portion of the application text.

### **BRIEF UPDATE ON WEIDMAN BASIN EFFORTS**

Manager Mills reported that Hanford staff had helped to haul away debris from site. He also reported that maps of the vegetation piles had been developed and submitted to the Air District. Thoughts were to burn the first pile after a month or so. Kings CWD staff was working on repairing the barbwire fence around the property and hauling off remaining scrap metal. Sunrise Labor had invoiced the District roughly \$5,700 for the two days or clean-up crew services. Wood Bros, Inc. had not yet invoiced the District for the vegetation removal work by large equipment.

### **WATER SUPPLY UPDATE**

Manager Mills reported that conditions in the 2021 water year (WY) were drier to date than in WY 2015. The outlook was very bad, and potentially historic if conditions didn't dramatically change. It was reported that Peoples Ditch Company didn't develop any

entitlement in December, which almost never happened. It was also reported that currently it didn't appear that Last Chance would have enough supply to develop a run, similar to WY 2015. Also, the available local forecasts appear dry until the last week of the month. These conditions would likely mean the District would be running the Apex recovery wells to supplement the local water run. Manager Mills relayed that he recommended making modifications to the discharge of Well 3 to make it deliverable to Riverside Ditch. The Board supported that recommendation and there was some discussion about the condition of Well 1.

#### UPDATE ON RIVERSIDE – LAST CHANCE CROSSING EFFORTS

This effort had been somewhat stagnant through December, but a meeting was scheduled for the next day to get that back on track. Manager Mills relayed again that the rough budget for the facility rehabilitation effort was \$250,000. He relayed that the hope was to work through the remaining issues quickly and see if a contractor could be selected soon in order to make construction possible before the summer water run.

#### 2021 STAFF SALARIES

Manager Mills reported that in 2020 annual staff salaries was roughly \$185,000 for himself, \$66,000 for Renee Davis, \$47,700 for John Scribner and \$40,000 for Eddie Miranda. Manager Mills conveyed his view of staff performance in 2020, his evaluation of similar agency positions and comparable pay and other factors that he considered when developing 2020 annual staff salary recommendations. He then shared that his recommendation for 2020 annual staff salaries was that all staff salaries remain the same. However, he recommended that a performance bonus of \$1,000 be given to Eddie Miranda for his efforts to learn the Riverside system and develop a good working relationship with other District staff. Also Manager Mills recommended that receive a \$3,000 performance bonus related to overtime and work over the December holidays on the Round 1 SGM Implementation Grant application. The Board discussed the recommendations with Manager Mills as well a few other staff issues. After the discussion, Vice President Dias, made a motion to accept Manager Mills' recommendations for the 2021 annual staff salaries. Director Taylor seconded the motion and President McCutcheon called for a vote. The vote for all of the Directors was as follows:

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

NOES: None

ABSTAINED:None

ABSENT: Michael Murray

#### PROPOSED HANFORD ANNEXATION NEAR SMITH BASIN

Manager Mills relayed that he had recently received a letter from the Hanford Planning Staff that showed a proposed annexation area that came up to the south and east edges of the District's Smith Basin. He suggested that if the City developed out that far, it was likely that the District would encounter significantly increased trash and homeless issues at the site. Manager Mills recommended the Board authorize the development of a response letter to the City on the proposed annexation outlining the potential additional impacts and costs such an expansion might impose on District facilities. The Board agreed with this recommendation.

#### ON-GOING EFFORTS

KRWA

Manager Mills reported that he had recently provided KRWA with requested information on the daily operations of Apex Ranch and the deliveries to the Old River channel downstream. He relayed that other monthly information had previously been provided, but that KRWA staff had apparently needed the daily information to complete Water Year reporting, which they were trying to finish.

*Tulare Lake Subbasin '19- '20 Annual Report*

Manager Mills reported that the consultant Geosyntec was requesting water supply data for WY 2019-2020 as they prepared the Tulare Lake Subbasin's annual report that was due to DWR by April 1, 2021.

*Land IQ Services*

Manager Mills reported that he was still in the process of finalizing the contract for services and responding to suggestions about the locations for crop ET stations.

*Esajian Basin*

Manager Mills reported that he had recently had a conversation with G&J Heavy Haul and they relayed that work on the Dover Avenue overpass should begin in February and require roughly 400,000 cubic-yards of material from the Esajian Basin site.

*Ramboll Investigations*

Manager Mills reported that he was still in the process of finalizing the contract for services.

*Peoples Ditch Company*

Manager Mills reported on efforts by the company to address existing staff issues.

**EXPENDITURE LIST APPROVAL & FINANCING STATEMENT ACCEPTANCE**

On a motion by Director Taylor, with a second by Director Freitas, 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, Ernest Taylor

NOES: None

ABSTAINED:None

ABSENT: Michael Murray

**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 February 11, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Mills  
MIN01.14.21