

A meeting of the Walker River Irrigation District (WRID) Board of Directors was held on March 8, 2021. 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
Gordon DePAOLI	Legal Counsel, via phone
Dale FERGUSON	Legal Counsel, via phone
Jessica HALTERMAN	Secretary

**Public Present:**

Joanne Sarkisian, USBWC	Taylor Thomas, USBWC
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**Public Present via phone:**

Tim Bardsley, NOAA	Dave Hockaday	Silas Adams, WBC
Angela Bezonne, MBK	Mike Mantelli	Rob Lewis
Suzanne/Daron Kelton	Antonio Fuentes	

**1. Public Comment**

Silas Adams with Walker Basin Conservancy stated Jeff Bryant has moved on from the Conservancy and they are in the process of hiring another Executive Director. The request for water is still active and those interested can contact him or Bert. Silas stated preliminary data shows 4.2 cubic feet of water has made it to Walker Lake in the past 7 days of being in priority.

**2. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum**

All members present with legal counsel on the phone.

**3. Consideration of Minutes of the February 7, 2021 Regular Meeting**

Treasurer NUTI requested the percentages in the GM report on page 3 be corrected. Secretary Halterman stated a spelling correction was also needed in the same location.

Vice President MASINI made a motion to approve the minutes with the corrections; Director ACCIARI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed.

**4. Water Master's Report**

Joanne SARKISIAN stated there is currently 15,170 acre-feet in Bridgeport (36%) and 16,310 acre-feet in Topaz (28%). The SWE is currently at 59% of average and precipitation is 60% of average. There is a USBWC meeting on March 19<sup>th</sup>. Director GIORGI asked

who was on the US Board; Joanne stated Bruce Park, Joe Sceirine, Dale Borsini, Gary Garms, Jeff Hunewill, and John McMasters. Joanne reported the delivery for was 151.27 feet of decree. Treasurer NUTI inquired what the current priority was; Joanne stated it is 1872. Treasurer NUTI questioned when it is projected to go up; Joanne stated the peak runoff is expected mid-May.

**5. Staff Reports:**

**A. Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer NUTI reported as of February 1, 2021:

Cash in Checking	\$ 116,865.19
Cash in Money Market	\$ 816,369.19
Cash in CDs	\$ 749,661.39
Total	\$1,682,896.28

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

***January 2021 Bills & Payroll***

<u>Check Number</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Vendor Name</u>	<u>Check Amount</u>
121816	1/12/2021	Ameritas Life Insurance	\$ 907.60
121817	1/12/2021	Ferguson Enterprises, Inc.	\$ 351.89
121818	1/12/2021	AT&T	\$ 151.25
121819	1/12/2021	AT&T Mobility	\$ 116.29
121820	1/12/2021	Mason Valley Quicknet	\$ 305.00
121821	1/12/2021	True Value	\$ 27.78
121822	1/12/2021	O'Reilly Automotive, Inc.	\$ 9.97
121823	1/12/2021	Public Employees' Benefits	\$ 1,740.46
121824	1/12/2021	Quill	\$ 370.73
121825	1/12/2021	Jim Menesini Petroleum	\$ 70.90
121826	1/12/2021	Schneider Electric USA,	\$ 980.00
121827	1/12/2021	Sciarani & Co.	\$ 15,000.00
121828	1/12/2021	NV Energy	\$ 260.42
121829	1/12/2021	Alhambra	\$ 148.11
121830	1/12/2021	Southwest Gas	\$ 441.70
121831	1/12/2021	Standard Insurance	\$ 242.47
121832	1/12/2021	Wells Fargo Card Services	\$ 2,775.32

121833	1/12/2021	Allied Sanitation and	\$	80.00
121834	1/14/2021	PERS Administrative Fund	\$	8,295.72
121835	1/14/2021	City of Yerington	\$	122.90
121836	1/14/2021	Desert Research Institute	\$	14,409.36
121837	1/14/2021	Charter Communications	\$	222.32
121838	1/14/2021	Yerington Ready Mix	\$	2,482.58
121839	1/28/2021	ABILA Dept 3303	\$	186.64
121840	1/28/2021	Ferguson Enterprises, Inc.	\$	189.72
121841	1/28/2021	Giomi, Inc.	\$	245.55
121842	1/28/2021	Sticks and Stones	\$	474.39
121843	1/28/2021	Lyon County Recorder	\$	47.75
121844	1/28/2021	Mason Valley Quicknet	\$	2,935.44
121845	1/28/2021	MBK Engineers	\$	2,833.00
121846	1/28/2021	Nevada Employment	\$	710.68
121847	1/28/2021	Standard Insurance	\$	234.52
121848	1/28/2021	U.S. Geological Survey	\$	13,502.00
121849	1/28/2021	Verizon Wireless	\$	450.91
121850	1/28/2021	Vision Service Plan -	\$	186.05
121851	1/28/2021	Woodburn & Wedge	\$	91,978.75
121852	1/28/2021	Yerington Ready Mix	\$	1,045.30
121853	1/28/2021	PERS Administrative Fund	\$	7,884.96
121854	1/28/2021	MF Barcellos	\$	2,198.64
121855	1/28/2021	HomeTown Health	\$	7,421.23
PAYROLL	1/31/2021	January Payroll	\$	29,146.97
<b>Total Bills &amp; Payroll</b>			<b>\$</b>	<b>211,185.27</b>

Director GIORGI questioned if DRI was doing the cloud seeding this year; GM BRYAN stated they are and, when the opportunity arises, they will turn on the ground generators as no flyovers are being performed right now. Director GIORGI questioned who pays for vandalism to the generators and other equipment, GM BRYAN stated he was not sure, but the District's contribution goes directly toward the actual seeding.

Vice President MASINI questioned who WEST Consultants were; GM BRYAN stated they are the consultants performing the sediment study. President SNYDER asked if any results have come of the study; GM BRYAN reported the group has developed potential alternatives for addressing the sediment problem and must make them acceptable to the NRCS-National level. President SNYDER requested to know when the study should be completed; GM BRYAN stated the current agreement expires at the end of the year, although there is a similar project at a

basin much smaller than WRID in Arizona and they are on their third year of the study. President SNYDER asked how much the District has paid over the past five years for sediment removal; GM BRYAN stated each year the total changes, but it is easily six figures combined throughout the past five years. The bulk of the charges are in-kind with labor and equipment. Treasurer NUTI confirmed that a couple ranches along the East Walker are now owned by the Conservancy or the State and sediment removal is no longer occurring; GM BRYAN confirmed. GM BRYAN stated sediment removal had historically happened at the Pitchfork Ranch and helped with lowering the amount coming further down the river. GM BRYAN stated a bridge on Minister Road was replaced, but no other work has been done along that section of the river since it was sold. Treasurer NUTI suggested reaching out to the State of Nevada to help with the sediment; GM BRYAN stated he would do that as it is very concerning since the sediment load through the East Walker corridor is higher than the West.

Director GIORGI made a motion to pay the bills and payroll; Director ACCIARI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed.

**C. Manager's Report**

GM BRYAN reported Bridgeport is currently at 15,190 acre-feet (36%) and Topaz is at 16,290 acre-feet (27%).

The shop crew is finishing the Wes Smith project on the High Ditch. They have installed meter gates and pipeline. GM BRYAN had been going back and forth with repair requests on the G&H and Fox/Mickey, but the repairs have been put on hold per the ditch companies. The shop crew will begin maintenance on the West and Main Drains then move to Smith Valley and the Topaz Inlet for maintenance.

There was a fire on the Spragg Ditch that burned the culvert under the city road. The road is closed. GM BRYAN worked with the City of Yerington and the Spragg Ditch Company to install 3' culverts for the time being, but engineering for 4' culverts in the works. The Yerington/Mason Valley Fire Department has advised the District that each individual ditch company must get their own burn permit; they cannot burn under the District's permit. GM BRYAN stated it is good practice to put the fire department on notice when doing any burning and have a water source. Secretary HALTERMAN will be sending letters to the ditch companies regarding the request from YMVFD. Vice President MASINI stated the permit is nothing new. Director GIORGI questioned if a permit was needed for the ditch company if the burning was being done on personal property; Secretary HALTERMAN advised to contact the fire department to verify.

GM BRYAN attended the two virtual sessions on February 24<sup>th</sup> concerning the presentation by Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Group. The presentation was largely based on project committees in other parts of the state. There was nothing pertaining directly to the Walker River. The group proposes reintroduction of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout but there was no timeframe or location given. GM

BRYAN stated he will monitor the project and will keep the Board updated. Treasurer NUTI stated the last time the group was in the area it cost the District \$3 million. Vice President MASINI confirmed the group cannot do anything without the District's approval; GM BRYAN stated the projects have a variety of people and agencies involved in the other regions, so it would be expected the District would be included in any future proposal.

The District is awaiting maps for Draft Application 1282021-20 requesting the permanent transfer of 9.75 acre-feet from the High Ditch to the Joggles Ditch. Once the maps are obtained and approved, the District will make the legal posting for 4 consecutive weeks then have the item on the agenda for a hearing and then for an approval.

Justice Hardesty is leading a water committee that will be made up of select people throughout Nevada. There has not been any word on who the select people are. AB 146 has been introduced to Legislation. GM BRYAN has concerns but legal counsel will elaborate further in the agenda.

The District is still taking names for John Lee. He will be in the area from March 29<sup>th</sup> through April 7<sup>th</sup>. NDWR is mandating self-reporting, so if anyone is interested in having their well checked, contact the District.

**D. Legal Counsel's Report**

Counsel DePAOLI expanded on AB146 stating it has not yet been heard by the National Resources Committee. The bill proposes to require the Department of Conservation and National Resources to establish a program to reduce, control, and mitigate water pollution from diffused sources- otherwise known as non-point sources. This is happening in a lot of other places in the country as well as California. Non-point sources are considered to be a significant source of water pollution with agricultural runoff being a significant contributor. It is essentially making the Department begin the process to figure out a way to deal with non-point source solution which is very difficult to deal with because, like it's name, you cannot tell exactly where it is coming from. It is difficult to figure out ways to deal with it at its source. The Bill also has an unusual provision in it, which requires some explanation on. It states when the environmental committee is adopting regulations related to this and other pollution matters, they are to consider any disproportionate impact on historically oppressed or marginalize communities in the respective river basins in this state. Counsel DePAOLI stated he had never seen this provision before, and this addition is somewhat unusual regarding what a historically oppressed or marginalized community is.

AB5 and AB6 have been heard and were non-controversial provisions.

**E. Storage Water Leasing Program Update**

Angela BEZZONE with MBK reported the program is moving forward. The packet with a letter and application form will be mailed on April 9<sup>th</sup> to update landowners of the program requirements and availability. There are some differences between the 2019 program and this year's program. Hydrology will be done this year. A final commitment deadline has been set for May 21<sup>st</sup>. If there is a reallocation, a second solicitation package will be mailed, and new participants will be able to participate even if they did not participate in the original solicitation. Treasurer NUIT asked what the set price was; Angela advised the price will remain \$147/acre-foot for the Program entirety so that a new valuation will not need to be completed.

**F. 2021 Election Update**

Secretary HALTERMAN stated nominations close on March 16<sup>th</sup> and there is one nomination for each open district at this time. If there is no opposition, an election will not be held, and the two nominations would be appointed as Directors. If there is opposition, an election will be held on April 6<sup>th</sup>.

**6. Time Specific 10:15 AM: Recess as Board of Directors and convene as Board of Corrections for corrections of assessments pursuant to NRS 539.680.**

The Board of Directors recessed at 10:15 am and convened as the Board of Corrections. President SNYDER asked for any corrections to assessments; no corrections were presented.

**7. Adjourn as Board of Corrections and reconvene as Board of Directors.**

The Board of Corrections was adjourned at 10:17 am and the Board of Directors reconvened.

**8. Presentation and discussion by Tim Bardsley with NOAA regarding the current year weather and water outlook for 2021 irrigation season.**

Tim Bardsley showed a brief presentation. Points included:

- February was not an impressive month regarding precipitation at 29% of average
- Water year to date is 60%; down 10% from last month
- Water year is somewhat better than 2020 and below 2018 at this time, but the soils are much drier
- Less than 1/20 chance to reach an average water year
- Soil moisture is near the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile; below 2020 and 2012; only 2008 was slightly lower
- Strong winds are expected early this week with periods of snow in the Sierra and NE California on Tuesday and Wednesday
- Long range outlook indicates drier and cooler than normal
- The April-July water supply forecast for the West is 55% of median with approximately 90,000 acre-feet. Forecast for the East is 40% of median with approximately 25,000 acre-feet.
- Peak flow is expected mid to late May

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

Secretary HALTERMAN received an email from Wyatt Fereday stating ‘I’m planning on the week of March 15<sup>th</sup> for the spring groundwater level measurements in Smith and Mason.

Wanted to say thanks for all who have sent in their meter forms to get their online reporting accounts set up. After the forms are received, we will send the login credentials via email to report monthly meter readings at [meters.water.nv.gov](https://meters.water.nv.gov). If you’re having trouble with getting the meter form filled out, please contact me ([wfereday@water.nv.gov](mailto:wfereday@water.nv.gov)). If you’re having trouble reporting the meter readings at [meters.water.nv.gov](https://meters.water.nv.gov), please contact [metersupport@water.nv.gov](mailto:metersupport@water.nv.gov).’

**10. Discussion and consideration of storage water allocation for the 2021 irrigation season.**

GM BRYAN stated a breakdown of how the allocation was figured. For Bridgeport, the allocation was determined by considering the acre base of 32,647.18 acre-feet minus the current pool of 15,190 acre-feet minus pan-evaporation of 3,689.48 acre-feet minus the minimum pool of 2,000 acre-feet minus 25% transportation loss of 2,375.13 leaves 7,125.39 acre-feet available for allocation. GM BRYAN recommends a 22% allocation for East. For Topaz, the allocation was determined by considering the acre base of 48,954.24 acre feet minus the current pool of 16,290 acre-feet minus pan-evaporation of 5,720.26 acre-feet minus the dead pool of 3,500 acre-feet minus 25% transportation loss of 1,767.44 acre-feet leaves 5,302.31 acre-feet available for allocation. GM BRYAN recommends an 11% allocation for the West. Treasurer NUTI questioned how much could be saved if the season was shortened by one month; GM BRYAN stated there would potentially be a minimal evaporation savings, but it depends on the year. Depending on the weather, there are some days where the full 25% trans-evaporation will be necessary and some days it would not be. There is a benefit for people to take their water early on, but GM BRYAN does not see a great benefit to shortening the season. There is also potential for complaints from a recreational standpoint if the reservoirs are lowered too quickly. In 2015, a temporary urgency change was obtained because the minimum releases and the minimum pool could not be met. The District spent \$10-15,000 for the State of Nevada to tell the District to contact Cal Trout and work with them; fortunately, the District was able to balance the release and the pool without incident. The State likes to see users use their storage water before using supplemental wells. The Storage Program water will be released when the decree is depleted, and the water could be used to keep the river levels as steady as possible to minimize losses.

Treasurer NUTI made a motion to set the allocation as 22% on the East and 11% on the West; Vice President MASINI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed.

**11. Discussion and determination of the season for delivery of storage water in 2021 as provided in Section 9.3 of District Regulation No. 9.**

GM BRYAN stated that per the Rules & Regulations, the storage season must be set each year. Historically, the season has started around the 1<sup>st</sup> of April. Once the season is set, the

office staff will print out and send the allocation reports. Director GIORGI recommended starting the season before April 1<sup>st</sup> to take advantage of the decree in the ditches. GM BRYAN stated all the ditches have decree except the Colony and the High. Treasurer NUTI suggested to start the season on March 15<sup>th</sup>; GM BRYAN stated most of Mason has decree water to get the ditches wet and the Colony has junior decree at 1888 but can hold a large amount of water.

Treasurer NUTI made a motion to begin the season on March 15<sup>th</sup>; Vice President MASINI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed.

**12. Discussion and determination of the last date to allow irrigation season changes in place of use of storage water from reservoir to reservoir as provided in and required by Section 6.1 of District Regulation No. 6.**

GM BRYAN reported that typically reservoir to reservoir transfers are not allowed unless the water year is above average. He recommends to not allow reservoir to reservoir transfers because of the below average year and low allocation amounts. Users are still allowed to transfer water downstream, but West water cannot be transferred to the East and vice versa.

Director ACCIARI made a motion to not allow reservoir to reservoir transfers this season; Director GIORGI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed.

**13. Consideration for making available and delivering well water for the District Well under Nevada State Engineer Permit No. 25813, Certificate No. 8861 to lands within the District beginning April 1, 2021.**

GM BRYAN reminded the Board that the permit states the District can pump water from April 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup> under Permit 25813 as long as the Water Master can make the exchange at the reservoir. When the pump runs, 7-8 cfs hits the weir and Joanne uses an exchange formula to credit the water back to the reservoirs. All of the rules from previous years will be in place. GM BRYAN stated there is 1 draw per entity and it is up to the user to put their name into the drawing.

Director ACCIARI made a motion to start the well on April 1<sup>st</sup>; Treasurer NUTI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed. Secretary HALTERMAN reminded the Board of the policy voted into place last year where the drawing will be on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the month of award and the payment must be received in the District office by the last business day of the month or the water is forfeited and given to another user.

**14. Presentation by Shawn MacCabe on the revised user interface on the WRID website for account information.**

Shawn MacCABE presented the new log in procedure on the District's website. Users will now use email addresses to log in instead of PIN numbers. All entities owned and/or leased will be available under the one email address, so keep the District informed of what properties are being leased. Some new features include:

- Larger usage graphs
- Legend with colors



- Storage/decreed amounts corresponding with Ditch Rider entries
- Corresponding information on the site and monthly usage statements
- Real time information after 12:30pm when orders have been approved

Shawn stated users must contact the District with a good email address and an account will be set up. Once the account is set up, the user will receive an email requiring them to verify/activate their account. If there are any inconsistencies, contact Sandy right away as it is easier to fix them when they happen rather than months later. Director GIORGI asked if the Lessor could see what the Lessee is using; GM BRYAN stated that would be a special case and Shawn would have to make some changes to allow for two email addresses to view the data. President SNYDER requested to know if multiple people could access the account with different email addresses; Shawn stated, as of right now, only one email address can view the account. Shawn suggested that a generic email address be set up for users that will have multiple people accessing the account.

**15. Director Comments**

None presented.

**16. Public Comment**

None presented.

**17. Adjournment**

Director ACCIARI made a motion to adjourn; Vice President MASINI offered a second. The vote was called for and passed.

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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