

April 26, 2016

A special meeting of the Walker River Irrigation District (WRID) Board of Directors was held on April 26, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM at the district board room, 410 N Main St, Yerington, Nevada by President Jim Snyder.

Present were:

Jim SNYDER	President
David GIORGI	Vice President
Richard NUTI	Treasurer
Dennis ACCIARI	Director
David LITTLE	Director
Bridget BANTA	Secretary
Robert BRYAN	General Manager
Robert Martinez	Water Master
Dale FERGUSON	Legal Counsel
Gordon DEPAOLI	Legal Counsel

Public Present

Gary Garms	Toni Garms	Mike Faretto	Marianne Leinassar
Kris Leinassar	Laurie Thom	John Markey	Richard Smolin
Jeff Rife	Donette Huselton	Brian Masini	David Sceirine
Louis Scatena	Reed Cozens	Jerry Rosse	Robert Perea
Chad Walling	Jeff Dengel		

Public Comment

No Public comment

Roll Call

All members present.

Discussion led by representatives of the State Engineer's office regarding ground water management and forming a committee to development a voluntary ground water management program.

Reed Cozens from the state engineer's office provided a handout regarding the ground water management committee to be a part of the ground water management plan. He advised he would like half a dozen people to step forward and be a part of the ground water management program to form ground water management committee. Cozens gave a short background from the previous special meeting. If a groundwater committee needs to be form, there needs to be two separate committees; one for Smith Valley and one for Mason Valley.

Donette Huselton requested to know if the two committees would come together and work together since there is common water. Reed advised there is a bright line distinction between the two valleys and he thinks it is easier to have two distinct groups. Richard Smolin advised they could still communicate with each other. Director LITTLE requested to know who Cozens desired to work on the committee...farmers, home owners, business owners etc. Cozens stated it needs to come from within the local water users and this includes domestic well holders. Members of the group needs to be water users from each basin. If you have a priority date, you may be subject to curtailment in the future. This

is new to everyone and the state is open to just about anything. There is no reason why we cannot explore all the options. Smolin stated if the committee is all farmers excluding domestic well owners, it may be a problem; domestic well owners are voters too. Should include them in the committees as well. Huselton requested to know how many people should be on the committee. Cozens stated he has worked on other committees of around 13, but there is no set number. Cozens stated the state does not have any plans on being the head of this group. He suggested to have some ground water commissioners who are local to ensure the proper water usage for each user in each basin.

Objectives

Cozens advised the state does not believe Mason and Smith Valleys need to be designated as a critical management area at this time. The objective is to get a committee together to work on a ground water management program in both areas.

Participation

All volunteer at this point. Critical management designation. You have 10 years to form the ground management programs. Mason and Smith does not deserve a critical management designation at this point. There are certain opportunities to fix the water issue. He doesn't want to see a group form and then fall apart. How the group formalizes is up to the members of the group.

Planning

The heart and soul of the water users group is the development and implementation of the groundwater management plan. Cozens advised the groundwater has been declining about a foot a year in both basins. Director LITTLE requested to know what an appropriate number would be for a decline in the ground water. Cozens advised they would like to see stabilization of the ground water. Director LITTLE requested to know what the perennial yield would be for the Mason and Smith Valley basins. Cozens advised the basins have a perennial yield and system yield. The system yield is 100,000 ground and surface water to be used in the system, not just pumping.

Cozens provided 3 different scenarios for a groundwater management plan.

1. Groundwater model—This model is highly sophisticated. Expensive to run and inflexible. This model is hard to understand.
2. Accounting Based System—This model is somewhat sophisticated. It is a balance sheet approach. You would set some sort of allocation based on the available supply. This is similar to WRID's management with the reservoirs.

The average pumpage from 1994 to 2015, the state has estimated Mason Valley pumped around 83,000 acre ft. per year. Director LITTLE stated that is obviously too much and they need to cut back and he stated he thinks it was much more than that in certain years. Cozens advised last year all manners of pumping including domestic and commercial wells was around 94,000 acre ft. This was down from the year prior from 140,000 acre ft. Jeff Dengele stated the reason for the decrease in pumping was from farmers voluntarily cutting back on their use. Cozens advised it was not just a few farmers cutting back, he saw almost everyone cut back. Masini stated the users should use less pumping on good years and bank the water for the bad years.

3. Across the board cut when drought occurs—In multiyear drought water use is incrementally cut back at year one, and the more so at year two, etcetera.
4. Combo of all 3 models.

Cozens stated the water rights need to be distributed to the user how it is intended. That is 4 acre ft per acre across the board. Louis Scatena asked if they all followed the rules and pumped only the 4 acre ft. if the system would be benefited. He advised he has pumped over before.

Cozens advised the committee will not only address the issues today, but future issues as well. Huselton requested to know how a committee can tell a farmer to cut down their use. Cozens advised the committee cannot force them, but it is an assistant in common sense when it comes to the cut back on water use. He is hoping people will join in the voluntary effort to cut back on water. The law is the law

Cozens advised calibrating meters are very important. He wants users to make sure they are getting what they deserve but not taking more than they deserve. The first step of the committee is showing up and trying. If the committee doesn't do it, it will come from priority and he is not sure if that is in anyone's best interest. The priority for wells is by date and that includes domestic wells. Domestic wells could be cut and that includes health and hygiene. Legislation is hoping to take the health and hygiene part out of the curtailment made however, if a farmer is asked to cut the water use on their crops, then the domestic wells will have to cut back on watering their lawns, etc. Asking the domestic users to reduce with the farmers will help as well. Cozens advised commercial wells also have priority dates and will be curtailed as much as agriculture. This is why having a commercial user sitting on the board with domestic and farmers is a good idea. If you can get everyone to jump on board, all will benefit.

The state engineer can declare preferred use. He does not want to make that decision. Priority was made for a reason and is fair to all. Water Master Martinez requested to know if someone puts in a change of water application, does the state engineer look at the surface water as well. Cozens confirmed they do look at both the surface water and ground water.

Cozens asked if anyone now who wants to commit their time and talent to assist with starting a committee. Jeff Rife, Jim Snyder, and Louis Scatena would like to come together to set up another meeting. The committee will need to meet with Reed throughout the year. At least one meeting prior to the start of each irrigation year. Marianne Leinassar and Richard Nuti offered to assist in the Smith Valley Group.

GM BRYAN advised he has had a couple meetings with Chad and Reed. WRID will facilitate meetings for them and give a place for the committee to meet.

The biggest component is the records. All water cards in 2016 will be going to Reed's office throughout the year. The district is drafting a letter and putting all users on notice that all information will be going to the state's office.

Director LITTLE stated he thinks there should be a director involved with the committee. WRID has a well and the members are also water users and important to have a member on the committee. He has talked to people who would like to see a board member on each committee. Cozens agreed with having a member on the committee. Toni Garms stated she thinks the board does not have any business on the committee. There is too much going on in this office at the time with minimal staff. WRID cannot keep up with information at the moment. Director LITTLE stated he thought Toni Garms' view is in the minority. President SNYDER advised this is the responsibility of the farmers. If we all pump less, we can get away from the thought of enforcement. Director NUTI advised he thinks the board does not need to run the committees, but does need to be involved. For anyone who thinks they may not want to participate, we better get something in place because 5 years from now we may get someone else in the office who does not look at agriculture the way the current engineer looks at it. It may be different. We need to get going now with someone who is willing to work with us.

Cozens advised he is available the rest of the day for any other questions anyone may have.

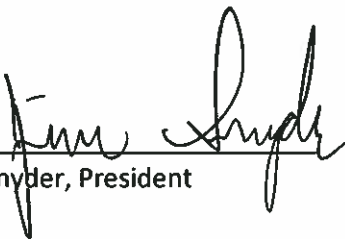
Director Comment

None presented.

Public Comment

Dengle advised there is a handout with the RCPP available for people to take and look at. It is more or less a glorified version of their conservation incentive programs. It's a way to potentially secure almost 10 million in funding over the next 5 years pointed at a resource related issue. He would like to partner up and look at groundwater management and get the money channeled towards the plans the committee creates. The pre-proposal is due May 10. It's a voluntary deal, but the more partners we have the better chance we have. It's a good opportunity to get technical assistance.

Director LITTLE made a motion to adjourn. Director NUTI seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 1015.




Jim Snyder, President



David Giorgi, Vice President



Richard Nuti, Treasurer



David Little, Director



Dennis Acciari, Director