



Minutes

KID Board of Directors Special Meeting at the Red Lion Hotel,
1101 North Columbia Center Boulevard, Kennewick, WA 99336
Thursday, August 13, 2015, 6:30 p.m.

President Rathbun called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Mr. Freeman called roll.

Directors Present:

Kirk Rathbun, President
Gene Huffman, Vice President
Patrick McGuire, Director
David McKenzie, Director
Dean Dennis, Director

Staff Present:

Chuck Freeman, District Manager
Seth Defoe, Land and Water Resource Manager
Jason McShane, Engineering/Operations Manager
Dana Hernandez, Customer Accounts Supervisor
Lori Gibson, Executive Assistant
Jennifer Defoe, Public Relations Coordinator
Robert Blain, Asst. Operations/Maintenance Manager
Doris Rakowski, Executive Assistant

Other Persons Present:

Brian Iller, Legal Counsel
Troy Peters, PhD Associate Professor, Washington State University

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Director Huffman moved to approve the agenda. Vice President McKenzie seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

BOARD PRESIDENT WELCOME: President Rathbun thanked attendees for coming to the meeting and briefly introduced the agenda.

PRESENTATIONS:

Drought 2015 Introduction: Mr. Freeman introduced scheduled speakers and provided information about the District including:

- 23,249 Customer accounts
- USBR Yakima Project (Kennewick Division)
- Senior Proratable Water Right (May 10, 1905)
- 102,674 ac/ft annually (109,275 drought years)
- Return Flow District ~ big distinction/very important
- Federally-mandated target flow at the Prosser Dam
- Drought-caused supply shortage of approximately 110 CFS (cubic feet per second)

Troy Peters, PhD Associate Professor WSU: Mr. Peters, a WSU extension irrigation engineer from Prosser, spoke about growth stages of crops and when they were most and least sensitive to water stress. He noted that plant water use varies drastically over a season, with most peaking in July and August. He said many people tend to over irrigate in spring and fall, when cuts would have the least impact.

Mr. Peters said lawns would survive with up to 60% water reduction and could go into dormant states. He spoke about onsite water management, including the importance of uniform coverage, and controlling water loss through water vapor or deep percolation from overwatering. He said applying more water less frequently was best. Mr. Peters spoke about ways to determine when water was needed.

In response to questions from the audience, Mr. Peters said drip irrigation was most efficient. He referred people to the AgWeatherNet available online at weather.wsu.edu.

Policy 8.3, Drought Plan: Mr. Defoe spoke about the District's drought policy which was created with assistance from a volunteer citizen Planning Committee to provide a flexible and adaptive approach to managing droughts.

In response to a question from Director McGuire, Mr. Defoe spoke about what it meant to be a "return flow" district. He noted there was a 29 hours period from when water was measured at Parker until it reached the District.

Mr. Defoe described the Drought Plan's long term measures, such as automated gates, canal lining and storage ponds, and short term options like water transfers, emergency wells, trust water, recapture, public outreach, fallowing, and paying USBR overtime to maximize diversion. He said KID's goal during drought was equitable water distribution, as operationally feasible.

In response to questions from the floor, Mr. Defoe spoke about the proposed water transfer from Badger Mountain Irrigation District, which did not occur for reasons at the State level. He also confirmed that the Columbia River water permit was still held up in litigation.

Mr. Defoe said Section 1.8 the plan would allow the following prioritization of which types of water uses would get more or less of their allotment at the projected pro-ration percentage:

- Perennial crops
- Annual crops
- Public spaces (parks, cemeteries, schools, street trees)
- Golf courses
- Residential trees, shrubs, gardens
- Residential lawns

Mr. Defoe noted that Section 1.8 had never been implemented and would only be applied in the event that there was insufficient water available for any user to achieve beneficial use were the available water shared as equally as possible given system limitations and configurations, and water uses allowed to the District. He noted that this option was used in many other states.

Running the 2015 Drought: Mr. McShane spoke about the Yakima River System, KID's water source. He spoke about how the District benefited from return flows, but said they made supply unpredictable since return flows were dependent on water use upstream of KID. He spoke about the challenge of scheduling to manage demand based on diminished projected supply.

Mr. McShane describe the KID's two delivery methods, metered and non-metered, and how the District developed the water use schedule to balance metered and non-metered deliveries.

Mr. McShane showed a slide illustrating target and actual flow levels at Prosser, and average flows at Prosser and in the KID canal. He described the 29 hour lead time between measurement at Parker and supply reaching the District's canal.

Mr. McShane reported that some of the largest customers, such as the Kennewick School District and Canyon Lakes Golf Course, shut down during the lowest supply conditions to allow more water for other users. He spoke about small water storage areas including Cherry Creek, Zirkle Farm, Canyon Lakes Golf Course, and in-canal storage and how they were repeatedly filled and used down over the season. Mr. McShane said the small storage areas were inadequate to meet District needs of about 20,000 acre feet, which was on the scale of Bumping Lake in the Cascades.

Future Water Supply Projects: Mr. Freeman explained that District customers pay for operations, maintenance, replacement and improvements to infrastructure, including a share of the five Cascade Mountain Reservoirs, Yakima River system operations, fish screens, a 11.2 mile diversion canal, Chandler Pumping Plant, a siphon under the river, 64 miles of canal, the Amon hydro-pump, 120 pump stations and 300 miles of pipe with associated appurtenances.

He listed future projects and their expected benefits and costs, including:

- Automation for better water management (\$500,000, in 2014/2015)
- Canal Lining for efficiency (\$10 million, over seven years)
- Recapture & Reuse as a water source (\$1 million)
- Amon Reservoir for storage (\$7.5 million)
- Yakima Basin Integrated Plan (\$4 - \$8 billion, over 30 to 50 Years)
- Columbia River for additional water (\$150 million, however, tied up in court)
- Chandler Electrification for increased reliability (\$30-60 million) This project would allow pump drive water to stay in the river.

Mr. Freeman spoke about what individuals could do to help including:

- Supporting Senate Bill 1694 Sections 1205 & 1208, also known as the Integrated Plan or YRBWEP III, to Senator Cantwell, Representative Newhouse and Representative Reichert. He offered attendees copies of a handout detailing impacts to the KID's supply.
- Supporting funding of Electrification of Chandler Pumps
- Protecting themselves against drought by installing high-efficiency irrigation and planting drought tolerant shrubs, trees, or grasses.

Mr. Freeman thanked customers for following the drought watering schedule and asked that they continue to do so. He suggested people sign up to receive the KID e-Newsletter. He said staff would follow up written questions and would post questions and answers on the District's Facebook page.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Public comments were limited to three minutes per speaker and written comments were encouraged. Speakers were encouraged not to repeat matters already stated.

Allyn Boldt, spoke about the District being subject to return flows. He said Columbia River water was the only thing that would give the District more water and asked the Board to reinstate the project and put it to an election of the people.

At the request of President Rathbun, Mr. Iller spoke about the state lawsuit which was resolved adversely to the District. He said the Tribes would oppose new Columbia River water rights without 100% mitigation of flows, and that the federal government, including NOAA Fisheries, adopted that argument and put in place a No Net Loss rule. In order to get them to sign off on a new withdrawal permit, water would need to be purchased upstream to fill the hole of the water taken out a hypothetical Edison pump station. Mr. Iller said electrification of Chandler would benefit fish as well as help meet the target flows over which KID could use the water in the river.

A **guest** suggested using water no longer needed at Hanford to replace Columbia River water.

Mr. Iller confirmed to a guest that the Tribes had a time immemorial right due to treaties and spoke briefly about rights of the Tribes.

Al Ankrum spoke in favor of obtaining Columbia River water.

A **guest** characterized this as a supply and demand problem. He spoke in favor of continuing litigation to obtain additional water. He asked if there was availability of water from Hanford.

Ted Venetz, agreed with Mr. Boldt that return flows would decrease with upstream conservation. He suggested tying Chandler Electrification (which would benefit fish) to water from the Columbia.

Mr. Iller said certain downstream tribes and the NOAA Fisheries have stayed firm with not allowing any additional water to be taken from the Columbia River. He noted that the Chandler drive water already went to the Columbia, so electrification would not “fill the hole.”

John Darrington thanked the board for the meeting and commented that now was the time to press the Columbia River water right.

President Rathbun asked for a show of hands in support of continuing Columbia River water litigation at varying levels of cost.

Jim Wade spoke against litigation of the Columbia River water right, as the higher costs were not sustainable to people on fixed incomes.

Mr. Freeman commented that the rate study, done by a Harvard economist after a competitive bid, showed that it was incorrect that one rate class subsidized another.

A **guest** spoke about the change in rates and said that the schedule was working. She agreed that increasing rates would not be acceptable.

Mr. Freeman said that the District used realty proceeds from 1940s foreclosures to keep rates artificially low in the past, but it was at the expense of capital work and maintenance. He spoke about various operational costs. Regarding the sale of the downtown Kennewick building and the new metal building at the shop site, Mr. Freeman spoke about why it was important to consolidate employees in one location.

Mr. Freeman confirmed that the original USBR construction loan would be paid off in 2022.

June Farnkoff said the new building looked like a temple.

Mr. Freeman said the new building would cost about \$3 million.

Randy Dolven spoke about the importance of communication. He said when his water went off in June there was water in the canal, and while customer service was good about getting back to him, she didn't know why it was off and the outage map never showed anything the whole time it was off. The engineer didn't provide an answer of when it would be turned back on.

Richard Durka said he was surprised that watering times were not all 3.5 days apart. He did not think that was equitable and asked that KID try to put everyone on the same schedule. He said he thought people who were not happy with KID's value should be allowed to opt out.

Mr. McShane spoke about how the schedule was made to allow storage to be filled on low demand days and be used during the high demand days. He said that KID would like to allow people to water whenever they needed to.

In response to a guest's question, Mr. McShane spoke about why new subdivisions and Red Mt did not take water from others.

In response to a guest's question, Mr. Iller spoke about the relegation policy. He said that under the current policy, if service was available, relegation was not allowed.

Randy Jackson spoke about Section 1.8 of the Drought Plan and the drought watering schedule. He spoke about his credentials. He said Roza Irrigation District distributed water equitably and equally to all users. He referred to his handout and offered copies of all correspondence between himself and the KID upon request. He spoke about ownership of water in the District and used an analogy to explain why he thought water was not equally distributed and therefore risking loss of water rights through reversion.

Mr. Iller said District staff had responded to Mr. Jackson's claims and demonstrated that Mr. Jackson's claims were fundamentally flawed.

Ken Wells said customers were paying for maintenance of the system. He said the schedule only worked if water was available on scheduled days.

Mr. McShane said since KID set expectations for customers, it had to meet its expectations as well. He likened the existing system with many small pumps to having a small unique power plant on each corner. He said it was not possible to stock parts for every type of pump. He said things being done included remote monitoring through SCADA to catch problems quickly, more robust maintenance by identifying problem areas, and pump consolidations.

A **guest** said that when there was a problem with a pump in her area, she was told she could not water off the schedule when water came back on and to use city water. She said she was on Social Security and using city water would cost additional money. She asked that people be allowed to water when their water came back on after an outage. She said she did not care about lawn, but did care about her garden.

Mr. Freeman said hoses were being allowed again. He noted that watering out of cycle was allowed under certain circumstances and said customers with hardship cases should call him.

A **guest** asked if the District looked into use of reclaimed water, such as from sewer treatment.

Mr. Freeman said it had been discussed with the city of Kennewick, but they discharged to Columbia, so water from that source would have to be mitigated. President Rathbun said reclaimed water would be a very small volume relative to KID deliveries.

Pete Mellinger described his calculation of the amount of water used in his neighborhood of County Meadows Estates compared to water use by other areas. He said his area was averaging 19% of normal.

John Gilmore said he was dissatisfied over the years with KID's service. He spoke about clogged filters. He said raises to the Board were contrary to State law. He said people were asleep at the switch about Columbia River water. He said arguments about less use of water at Red Mountain made no sense to him.

Mr. Freeman said the Department of Ecology had to be sued by KID regarding the Columbia River water, but the District had lost in every venue. He added that the District could not deny water to areas of development that had water allotments.

Mr. McShane said canal lining reduced weeds in the canal, but said the District delivered raw river water. He noted that temperatures were high this year, encouraging aquatic weed growth.

A **PSA 163 (Canyon Lakes) customer** said they do not see the value of adding on projects. He questioned whether the Board thought value was there. Mr. Freeman responded that the District recognized the problems with Southridge.

A **Simes Addition partial private line area customer** spoke about being without water for a week due to a plastic bag in their filter. He said they used to have a grating, but now the weir was open allowing litter to clog the filter.

On behalf of **June Farnkoff**, a guest asked about cost of the new building. Discussion ensued. Information provided by Mr. Freeman and President Rathbun included:

- The cost was about \$3.4 million, not including \$900,000 from the downtown building sale.
- The project started about 18 months ago, before the drought began.
- The new manufactured steel building would be less elaborate than the current building; efficient but not unattractive.
- The building was purchased by competitive bid which went to lowest bid.
- The driving force for move was to consolidate staff.
- The District was financing the buyer of the old building at better rates for the District than could be earned from investments.

A guest asked about the projected water off date and Mr. McShane would not be shut down early due to return flows. He spoke about KID's annual and monthly allotment.

Sheri Miller said her neighbor used a fire hose to water the back of their property. She said Mr. Freeman was disrespectful. She said her neighbors had brown yards. Ms. Miller spoke about how many times she called and said no one made her neighbor stop overwatering.

Bill Sutton reported that people on the west side of the mountain were impacted by the drought as well and had brown grass. He noted that KID had a watering schedule, but City of Kennewick did not, while on the west side, restrictions were for everyone. Mr. Sutton asked how long the temporary pump in Division 4 would be there. He said 300 homes were planned at Thompson Hill. He said he expected to get something for his payment and wanted his allocation of water. He said the customer service representative was very gracious. He said it didn't make sense to him to see water at Panoramic Heights and have his water come from a different canal. He spoke about the Columbia River Canadian Treaty. He said that drinking water was most important and grass was the least important.

In response to the statement that water from upstream districts would disappear when they enclosed their canals, President Rathbun said that the district was aware of the danger of losing return flows.

Director Dennis moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 p.m. Director Huffman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Attest:



Kirk Rathbun, Board President
Approved September 1, 2014

Witness:



Chuck Freeman, District Manager

Prepared by Doris Rakowski