

REGULAR MEETING OF THE IRRIGATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Thursday, April 20, 2023

2:00 P.M.

6425 Main Street, Georgetown, California 95634

Irrigation Committee

Ray Griffiths, Chairman
Bill Threlkel, Vice Chair
Carla Sutton, Secretary
Fran Todd

Alexandra Duarte
Kristy McKay
Eric Mead

Board of Directors Liaison

Donna Seaman
Mike Thornbrough

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the purpose of the Georgetown Divide Public Utility District to:

- Provide reliable water supplies.
 - Ensure high-quality drinking water.
 - Promote stewardship to protect community resources, public health, and quality of life.
 - Provide excellent and responsive customer services through dedicated and valued staff.
 - Ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability are observed by balancing immediate and long-term needs.
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1. CALL TO ORDER — ROLL CALL — PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE-

Chairman Ray Griffiths called the meeting to order at 2:24 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken.

PRESENT: Bill Threlkel, Carla Sutton, Fran Todd, Alexandra Duarte, Kristy McKay, and Ray Griffiths

ABSENT: Eric Mead

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Member Carla Sutton moved to adopt the agenda and Member Fran Todd seconded the motion.

Ayes: Bill Threlkel, Kristy McKay, Alexandra Duarte, Ray Griffiths, Fran Todd, and Carla Sutton

Nays: None

Absent: Eric Mead

The motion passed **unanimously**.

3. PUBLIC FORUM -

Cherrie Carlyon submitted public comment per the attachment.

Ray Paul requested clarification regarding a potential rate hike. Given the big water year, he inquired about extending the irrigation season by one month making a six-month season as opposed to the five-month season currently.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 16, 2023, and March 16, 2023

Public Comment-

Cherrie Carlyon commented that the February 16th 6A item was not available, and the attachment was not included in the minutes. The item is also not on the website. She requested its inclusion in the minutes.

Member Carla Sutton moved to approve the February 16th minutes with the handout attachment added/amended. Member Bill Threlkel seconded the motion.

Ayes: Bill Threlkel, Kristy McKay, Alexandra Duarte, Ray Griffiths, Fran Todd, and Carla Sutton

Nays: None

Absent: Eric Mead

The motion passed **unanimously**.

5. IRRIGATION COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS AND REPORTS

No reports were delivered.

6. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

A. Water Resources Statistics

The Operations Manager Adam Brown reviewed the report. This year reflects that the Stumpy Meadows Reservoir is full. The three-month outlook on precipitation and temperature average prediction was reviewed.

7. ACTION ITEMS

A. Review Proposed Ordinance Changes

Member Kristy McKay presented four items;

- 1) Are the terms ditch and canal interchangeable? The answer the upper or larger pieces are generally referred to as the canal or main canal and the lower smaller infrastructure is generally referred to as ditches.
- 2) The definitions appendix is missing and misspelled.
- 3) Addressing item 1D, the addition of the word service (due to lack of water service) after water in the last sentence is needed.
- 4) Regarding the selling of available water item, current documents give the option to decrease not increase inches. This option needs to be added to the ordinance, the option to sell and assign a process, she suggested adding this language to the end. This would need to occur in a short time frame. Perhaps The District could give a pre-

season view of areas with water availability. The application could contain a link to the site which would then reflect areas of availability, and place public outreach in the front of the packet, also possibly including a cover letter with the application to clarify regions of availability, were all suggested items shared. She also inquired about adding inches and what would be the mechanism triggering an action sending information to the public in general.

The General Manager Nicholas Schneider offered that The District could reopen and build a waiting list now. This can also be included in the proposal next year. It was also shared that the current form does allow for an increase in water amounts, inches.

Public Comment-

Cherie Carlyon suggested that there be a post declaring available inches on the website. Ray Paul inquired as to how the waiting list is generated. Is it from existing customers or non-irrigation properties? The answer irrigation service is limited, most with easy access already have the service. Those with properties further from the ditch face challenges of cost, and easements. Ultimately cost and mechanics on the customer side are the biggest hurdles and challenges for potential new irrigation accounts.

B. Review Customer Letters and Applications

The General Manager Nicholas Schneider shared that it would be best to table this item and bring it back after more time for review.

C. Identify Needed Media Content for Development

The General Manager Nicholas Schneider shared project intentions of educating and sharing more information with customers. Various social media platforms have been started, and the idea of mailers is being explored as well. The main idea is to utilize media platforms for educational content. The project will also include a method for potential customers to express interest in starting an irrigation service. He then asked for topics the committee had identified for development.

Member Fran Todd offered the idea of a responsibility explainer video. This would clarify at which point on the line a maintenance issue becomes a customer's responsibility versus the District's obligation. This could be presented by possibly filming the line from the street to the customer connection emphasizing the sides of the valve for clarity.

Member Kristy McKay offered the idea of water district introduction videos. This would include clarification around; the definition of a ditch, maps, and general service areas being defined. She also pitched the idea of explainer videos educating on accessing and opening accounts.

The General Manager proposed using a drone to follow the water path from The Stumpy Meadows Reservoir down through canal and ditch paths. This would allow folks to experience parts of The District not always viewed.

The Operation's Manager Adam Brown pitched the idea of going over common FAQs in videos.

Liaison Donna Seaman presented the idea of educating the public on the infrastructure vis a vis the irrigation ordinance. She also suggested a video illustrating the infrastructure near the ditches and emphasizing that those items are not for personal use. She also

pitched creating an explainer on the ditches as part of the overall water system and reviewing ordinance facts to create understanding around, not recreating in ditches and ponds.

Member Bill Threlkel shared the idea of showing customers where to turn off water, and location finding in the case that maintenance or other needs should arise.

Liaison Seaman shared the idea of education around actions to take when a customer receives a cleaning notification email, for example how to open the valve for flushes.

8. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT IRRIGATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Member Fran Todd requested additional sales of water as a subject for examination. The details needed include historic data on irrigation inches sold and data on the loss of service inches from recent years for examination. Information about the possibility and process of adding inches after approval by the Board with a possible ordinance collaboration was suggested.

It was discussed and decided to prepare the ordinance with final changes for approval and recommendation to the Board of Directors

Ray Paul requested exploring extending the irrigation season to start on May 1 next year adding a month at the end for a six-month season total. He requested an exploration of the legal issues surrounding season extension from 5 to 6 months to accommodate both agriculture and fire issues.

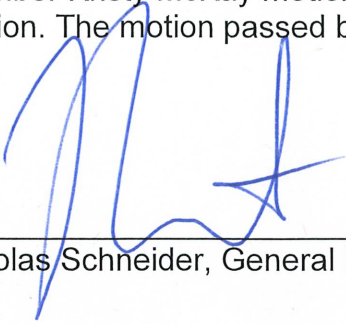
There was discussion around the idea of creating a standing action item that would be included in every committee meeting for open irrigation season discussion. This item would give the public and the committee an open forum for public feedback and active season updates. It was decided to include this item on agendas moving forward.

Continued work on the customer letters and application forms were decided upon for the next agenda's inclusion.

There was a discussion with public participants, who had not been in attendance for the last committee meeting, to address concerns surrounding the current irrigation season decisions. The April meeting was when the discussion and recommendation to the Board of Directors for the season was formulated. The General Manager Nicholas Schneider shared that there had been agricultural operations requests for a later season, as there is currently enough water in their systems for the crops, and they wanted water at the end of the season instead. In terms of the other aspects which were weighed in consideration of a later season start for the year, there is a stream gauge system that measures water amounts which paired with the Stumpy Meadows Reservoir being at full capacity and this aberrational water year was used to make the determination that there was enough water early for a later season start. The approaching fire season has the potential to pose higher risks given the vegetation density growing this year as a result of the precipitation. Operations Manager Adam Brown shared that there are also siltation accumulations in the system from the Mosquito Fire. There is water at the headworks, but not the capacity to move the water due to the siltation from the fire and runoff. Access to the upper canal is difficult at the moment. Due to the late heavy snow, and The Mosquito Fire silt run off into the upper reaches of the canals a May first season start is not feasible this year.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT – The Irrigation Committee set the 3rd Thursday for regular committee meetings during the Irrigation season, and as needed or directed by the Board.

Member Kristy McKay motioned to adjourn the meeting. Member Bill Threlkel seconded the motion. The motion passed by acclamation. The meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM.



Nicholas Schneider, General Manager

7-24-23
Date

Attachments:

- 1) The public comment of Cherie Carlyon

GDPUD Irrigation Committee Meeting
April 20, 2023 2:00 pm
Cherie Carlyon's Public Comments

I would like to bring to the attention of the Irrigation Committee that the 2023 Irrigation Season total is 17.5 minor's inches less than the 2022 season.

When the 2018 Rate Study was completed the Rate Study Consultant stated repeatedly that treated water Customers cannot subsidize the service of the Irrigation Customers.

Below is a chart of each year's total demands in Minor's inches:

2003	632
2017	617.5
2018	562.5
2019	544
2020	509.5
2021	516
2022	518.5
2023	501

$617.5 - 501 = 116.5 \times \$77 = 8,970.50 \times 5 \text{ months} = \$44,852.50$ loss in irrigation revenue for the 2023 Irrigation Season.

Since the District is planning to do another Rate Study soon, you will probably see that the current rates will have to be raised because of the loss of the above revenue.

The Board approved the 2023 Irrigation Season on April 11, 2023. I would like to ask why today's packet did not include the Irrigation Staff Report.