

EIWRC BOARD MEETING
Thursday, March 2, 2023
Idaho Falls City Council Chambers
Meeting Minutes

Present:

- Skyler Johns, August Christensen, Steve Adams, David Cottle, Marc Carroll, Tony Wise (Falls Water), Tracy Bono, Bob Turner, Alan Jackson, David Richards, Roger Warner, Keith Esplin, Dean Mortimer (via telephone).

Minutes:

- Mayor Carrol moved to approve February Board Meeting Minutes, Alan Jackson seconded, and the motion carried.

Financials:

- Amy McKoon services -- \$210.00
- Alan moved to approve payment of invoices as presented, David Richards seconded, and the motion carried.

Anheuser-Busch Money:

- Discussion on the use of AB funds for water projects in East Idaho:
- BJGWD is recipient of funds from AB; projects include a recharge well off the Butte Market Lake. Other projects are investment in software that is compatible with current pivot software that shows water usage on a real time basis. Combining this data with the Agrimet data helps reduce water usage through better management. Goal is to help improve reporting of water usage. There is also a pipeline proposed to run from Snake River to out west to convert ground water pumpers over to surface water, and a conservation project to work with district patrons to help them find acres to lay out or set aside to help meet reduction obligation to SWC.
- Skyler will research what the legal obligations for reporting expenditures such as the AB money to BJGWD to see what they have to do.
- EIWRC opted to retain 1% for administrative fees.
- Moved by Dean Mortimer to pass the funds to BJGWD \$123,750, seconded by Allen. This includes the 1% held back for administrative fees. If further admin costs arises, they will be assessed in further payments to BJGWD.

Water Supply:

- Supply increased slightly, but the reservoirs are low. Henry's Fork reservoirs may have less useable water than last year because AF has to fill first.
 - o Although AF is at 64% and is higher than Palisades and the other reservoirs, it is because AF has older water rights; (except for Walcott and Jackson) it must fill on paper before the other reservoirs with junior rights fill.
 - o There are also minimum flows that control how much water is in Jackson, with some Jackson water stored in Palisades.
- Not very likely that the system will fill, but there is still time and the forecast is cold and wet for the next several weeks.

- Bear River is 140%, so they are in good shape so far.

Hearing on the ESPA Moratorium

- There was some language that is relevant to municipalities
- It construed municipal water rights to be fully consumptive to the city, meaning that the city has no obligation to put wastewater back into the system nor do they get credit for it now. Many cities objected to this because it makes it hard to annex lands and bring water rights in because now they are 100% consumptive, so this has thrown a wrench in the works.
- This shows that the Department is incentivizing the wrong thing. A subdivision with a private septic could still be considered non-consumptive but the cities are considered consumptive.

IGWA SWC Negotiations:

- An offer has been presented to the Groundwater Districts, which they have taken to their patrons. Although the offer is better than previous offers, it still may be more than what some Districts are able to do. The agreement is also only a one-year deal, and the parties are discussing a Ground Water Management Plan being developed for the ESPA. The parties are still talking, but there may still need to be additional negotiations.

Klamath Basin Video:

- Issue there is they are trying to protect fish, but that is a loss of irrigation water for farmers in the basin.
- Endangered Species Act has essentially been permitted the usurp water rights. It is used to change uses in water to protect species.
- Discussion on water management through reservoirs. The need for long term solutions.
- Family Farm Alliance showed this video at the conference in Reno.
 - o FFA is great at bringing conservation coalitions together with agricultural groups to support the Farm Bill and other water related legislation.
- Discussed what type of narrative would benefit a ground water management area.

Ground Water Management Plan:

- Discussed a potential public relations campaign to support a good management plan
- Discussed other ways in which we could facilitate discussion from various interest holders
 - o Determine what is important, what is valuable, and where we feel the sideboards are.

Meeting Adjourned