

**WILLOW COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**JUNE 14, 2021
6:30 P.M.**

Present: Mike Hildreth, Director
Ross LaRue, Director

Devin Gordon, Director
Gary Nevill, Director

Others Present: Jared Walker, GM
Liz Patton, Office Manager
Chris Watt, RRFC

Kate Barrett, Secretary
Beth Salomone, GM RRFC
Jake Morely, Guillou Inc.

Director Mike Hildreth called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Roll Call was taken...

Upon a motion made by Director Gordon, seconded by Director LaRue, the minutes for the Board Meeting of May 17, 2021 were approved. This motion was passed with a unanimous aye vote.

Bills for the month of May 2021 were reviewed. Upon a motion made by Director Gordon, and seconded by Director Nevill, this motion was passed with a unanimous aye vote, the bills were approved for payment.

The Financial Statements for May 2021 were approved.

Public Forum

- None.

Staff Report

a. General Manager

- i. GM, Walker reported that letters are going out to customers about conserving water. Staff is asking for a 25% reduction in water usage across the board.
- ii. GM, Walker reported that staff sent a comment letter to FERC regarding the temporary variance of flow requirements for reduced stream flows through the Potter Valley Project.
- iii. With stream flow reductions, there will approximately be 5,000 acre feet less in Lake Mendocino this year.
- iv. They want to heavily reduce the diversions from the east branch of the Russian River and not do any reductions to the Eel River.
- v. July 1, 2021 the state has the ability to reduce pre 1914 and Riparian water rights. The only good news is that it could allow for more storage in Lake Mendocino.

b. Office Manager

- i. None.

Old Business

a. Report on Water District Service Contracts

- i. GM Walker reported that two (2) office staff are going to be retiring this summer.
- ii. Staff is working on budgeting.
- iii. Redwood Valley has a leak in their ag line, which is isolated at the moment, but is going to take time to repair.

b. Report on JPA

- i. Director LaRue reported that UVBGSA is coming to URRWA saying that they need additional funding and it could be anywhere from \$135,000 - \$235,000 a year.

- ii. The GSA is giving three (3) different options on how to raise the money.
 - 1. Plan A: The individual districts can contribute directly
 - 2. Plan B: Well owner fees
 - 3. Plan C: Ballot measure
- iii. Director LaRue expressed concern that the GSA's proposition is unfair.
- iv. GM, Walker noted that there was also conversation about consolidation of the districts.
 - 1. Some of the districts have concerns about the timing of consolidation due to the drought and the state of their finances.

c. Report on PG&E Potter Valley Project

- i. GM, Walker reported that the diversions have been significantly reduced.
- ii. During a conversation with Janet Pauli, she didn't seem real positive about the outlook for the summer and where things are heading.

d. Update on Drought and Water Conservation

- i. GM, Walker noted that most of the meeting is about drought and water conservation.
- ii. GM, Walker reiterated Beth Salomone's earlier comment: Healdsburg sent letters out notifying customers of a voluntary 20% reduction, the next month water usage went up, so Healdsburg cracked down and made a mandatory 40% reduction.
- iii. Staff has a plan in place; everyone needs to do their part in conserving water otherwise staff will have to do something similar to Healdsburg.
- iv. Beth Salomone, RRFC, praised staff for the outreach that has been done, but recommends planning on doing additional mailings reminding people to conserve.

e. Consolidation Efforts of URRWA Districts

- i. The meeting was mostly based around contributions for the GSA.
- ii. This item will be brought back next month.

New Business

a. Consideration of Cost Sharing Agreement with Guillion Inc - Water Supply Verification for Bella Vista Project

- i. GM, Walker noted that the proposal from Guillion Inc. is included in the board packets.
- ii. Jake Morley, Guillion Inc. Project Manager, explained the project and how the cost sharing would work and how it will benefit the District.
- iii. Director Gordon noted that he has concerns about the projected operation loss in the 2021/2022 budget.
- iv. Director LaRue agreed that it is hard to allocate more funds when the District has to contribute money to the other projects that are going on.
- v. Director Hildreth commented that the project would be very beneficial to the District. However, knowing where we stand with the water supply is most important before considering any project.
- vi. This item will be brought back to the July 12, 2021 meeting.

b. UVBGSA Funding for the Next 5 Years

- i. GM, Walker noted that Director LaRue briefly mentioned this topic under the JPA report.
- ii. There are four (4) member agencies of the UVBGSA.
 - 1. URRWA
 - 2. Russian River Flood Control District
 - 3. City of Ukiah
 - 4. County of Mendocino
- iii. UVBGSA is asking for additional funding anywhere from \$135,000 - \$235,000 a year.
- iv. GM, Walker commented that he is on the fence about how to approach this. It is something we need to do, however Willow doesn't have groundwater wells.
- v. A large part of the Russian River Flood Control's board thought it might be worthwhile for them to back away from the GSA as a member because they manage stored water, not groundwater.

- vi. Director Gordon suggested that the District should start the conversation about considering a rate increase.
- vii. Staff suggested that the District get a rate study done by Hildebrand Consulting, the rate increase consultant for Redwood Valley County Water District.
- viii. Board directed staff to add rate increase study to the July 12, 2021 agenda.
- ix. GM RRFC, Beth Salomone, commented that the GSA had a meeting last week and discussed the feedback from the agencies regarding the funding.
 - 1. An ad hoc committee was formed to discuss the different options for funding.

c. 2021/2022 Budget

- i. The board directed staff to bring the 2021/2022 budget back to the July 12, 2021 meeting.

Closed Session

- None.

Adjourn

Director LaRue made a motion, seconded by Director Gordon, to adjourn. This motion was passed with a unanimous aye vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Date _____

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WILLOW COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

ATTEST _____

Date _____

SECRETARY TO THE BOARD
WILLOW COUNTY WATER DISTRICT