

**EIWRC Board Meeting
Thursday, January 5, 2023,
Idaho Falls City Council Chambers**

Attendees: Skyler Johns, Mayor Casper, Dean Mortimer, Mayor Adams, Mayor Powell, Bob Turner, Alan Jackson, Tracy Bono, Roger Warner, Keith Esplin, Scott Bruce, Mayor Carroll, Jeff Raybould (Zoom), the Cottles (Zoom), Connie Christensen (Zoom).

Meeting conducted by Roger Warner

Administrative Business

November and December Meeting Minutes

- Reviewed November Meeting Minutes
- Reviewed December Meeting Minutes
- **Mayor Carroll moved to approve November Meeting Minutes; motion was seconded by Mayor Powell, and the motion carried.**
- **Dean Mortimer moved to approve the December Meeting Minutes; motion was seconded by Mayor Carroll, and the motion carried.**
- Election of Officers and appointment of Personnel during the December meeting was discussed as follows:
 - o Personnel:
 - Keith Esplin, Executive Director
 - Amy McKoon, bookkeeper
 - o Officers
 - Roger Warner, President
 - David Richards, Vice President
 - Alan Jackson, Treasurer,
 - Skyler Johns, Secretary
 - o Board of Directors
- Roger Warner, Rocky Mountain Environmental
- Mayor Marc Carroll, Blackfoot
- Mayor Steve Adams, Sugar City
- Mayor Donald Powell, St. Anthony
- Idaho Falls: Mayor Rebecca Casper or David Richards
- Fremont Madison: Aaron Dalling or Jeff Raybould
- Scott Bruce, Falls Water
- Bingham Groundwater District: Alan Jackson or Heather Rice
- Bob Turner, IGWA
- Bear Lake Water Watch: David or Claudia Cottle
- Skyler Johns, Taggart / Olsen
- Tracy Bono, Ammon
- Dean Mortimer, Comfort Construction
- Keith Davidson, Rexburg

- **Mayor Adams moved to affirm the election and personnel as voted upon during the December 2022 meeting; motion was seconded by Dean Mortimer, and the motion carried.**

Financials

- Keith Esplin invoices totaling \$2,730.78 were reviewed.
- **Mayor Adams moved to approve the financials as presented; the motion was seconded Mayor Powell, and the motion carried.**
- Bank balance Dec. 30 discussed,
 - o Balance appears high because the Anheuser- Busch money for water projects is still in the account.

Membership Dues

- Discussed membership dues
- Invitation has been extended to Aberdeen Springfield Canal to join; but they have not accepted yet. EIWRC will continue to reach out to them
 - o Also have included Snake River Valley Irrigation District & Bonneville Jefferson Groundwater District on invitation list.
- Discussed which canal companies are not members
 - o EIWRC welcomes new individuals and entities to participate, but most irrigators and irrigation companies on the Henry's Fork are already members through irrigation districts.

Updates and Developments

Water Supply Outlook

- Reservoirs are gradually filling but they need about 120% snowpack to fill reservoirs.
- Precipitation is 110%, but 128% of the snowpack, so probably close to 120%; but still need the snow to keep coming.
- Reports to date indicate we will continue to receive consistent precipitation closer to normal amounts.

Review of Special Water Forum

- Positive reviews all around
 - o Great attendance
 - o Diversity of opinion
 - o Both sides of the issue presented
- One of the best ever hosted EIWRC
- Google Drive link can be sent out that has a recording of the event
- Discussed IWUA Annual Meeting Agenda not addressing or following up on issues presented at EIWRC Special Water Forum
 - o Discussed how Coalition can be more proactive in addressing these issues
 - o Question of what crop decisions are being made right now was discussed:
 - Not many discussions yet, where the first forecast from IDWR comes in April
 - Discussed whether EIWRC should hold a follow-up forum around that time regarding the Special Forum. Issues discussed:

- Accountability report
 - Hold a Zoom meeting
 - How is Idaho Ag impacted by water shortage?
 - How are the cities affected?
 - Goals:
 - Follow-up meeting
 - Facilitate discussions
 - Don't want to lose momentum created during Special Water Forum
- Economic Impact Study
 - Bingham Ground Water District Commission Economic Impact Study of the impacts curtailment would have.
 - Alan: next couple of weeks, impact of irrigated ag.
 - Discussion on Family Farm Alliance Agenda
 - What effect does drought have on food supply?
 - Declines in production
 - Processors having to go outside the state

Discussion on non-municipal water organization issues

- Discussed issues these entities are facing
- Falls Water purchased ground water from farms; but they don't currently qualify for *municipal* status. Hence, Falls Water is exposed to water calls and are expected to reduce use rather than growing into their new intended use.
- Non-municipal water organizations have no safe harbor, except to the extent they are a member of a groundwater district.
 - Are treated as irrigators
 - But irrigators used a five-year average and then cut from that, but municipal providers have been growing as much as 40% since 2015, and expect to grow into that right. They can't.
 - Jenco Acres, for example, is smaller and doesn't have a clear solution moving forward.
 - They offered mitigation water to SWC and are proposing other issues.
 - Affects growth and limits right
 - Falls Water is performing a rate case (software creation and getting online will take about 8 months)
 - Need public utilities commission to allow them to be punitive to folks who are wasting water
 - Another issue arises in that it is unclear when water must be turned back on once you shut a user off.
 - Fines and tariff issues
 - Educating folks about conservation
 - These issues need to be on the Coalitions' radar so we can think of solutions. What needs to happen to work out this issue?

- Falls has considered presenting the idea of creating a coalition of non-municipal water organizations (subdivision, etc.) and present a mitigation plan to SWC and IDWR
 - This type of plan would help the groundwater districts because they would not have to provide mitigation for the non-municipal users and other industrial users.
- It is difficult to encourage domestic wells to be on a non-municipal system where there is no safe harbor from curtailment.

Joint Idaho Farm Bureau / Idaho Grain Producers / IWUA Water Conference Report

- Primarily discussed the Nez Pierce Agreement.
- Gave overview of its history.
- Discussed Swan Falls Agreement being tied into the Nez Pierce Agreement.
- Part of the discussion of the NPA was related to the concept of dam removal; if they have to remove the dams, does the agreement go away?
- Highlighted there are a lot other issues and it is complex to remove the agreement.

Keith will email a list of 2023 proposed goals that were not discussed for review.

Next Meeting will be in same location.

Adjourned