

Mendocino County

Russian River Flood Control & Water Conservation Improvement District

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APPROVED MINUTES

**Regular Meeting of
November 7, 2022**

IN COMPLIANCE WITH ASSEMBLY BILL 361, THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM.

1. Roll Call

President Watt called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

Trustees Present: Christopher Watt, President
Alfred White, Vice President (left at 7:02 PM)
Matthew Froneberger, Treasurer
Tyler Rodrigue, Trustee
John Reardan, Trustee

Staff: Elizabeth Salomone, General Manager

Other: John Bailey, Trustee term commencing December 2, 2022

2. Approval of Agenda

Vice President White moved to approve the agenda. Trustee Reardan seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: 5 (Reardan, Rodrigue, Froneberger, White, Watt)

3. Public Expression

Redwood Valley County Water District Board Member, Bree Klotter, thanked the Board for addressing surplus water issues with an agenda item during this meeting.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

4. Water Supply Conditions Update and District Response

GM Salomone presented the item, reviewing the staff report and noting all Russian River curtailments by the State Water Resources Control Board have been suspended and Sonoma Water Agency has filed a Temporary Urgency Change Petition to take effect when the current one expires.

5. District Surplus Water Policy Development Workshop

GM Salomone presented the item with a PowerPoint slideshow. Comments and questions were offered by Redwood Valley County Water District Board Members Bree Klotter and Adam Gaska, John Bailey, as well as Trustees. Adam Gaska noted the need for and supported improved communication. John Bailey suggested a 'best practices' guide for customers.

President Watt noted that in the not-so-distant past, "system surplus" was common and therefore "District Surplus" was more easily identified. Recent changes in Eel River diversions and precipitation patterns have decreased the amount of water available and when, while consumptive and instream flow demands have generally remained the same. This is not a situation the District has experienced before to this degree and there is no playbook. The level of precision in the beneficial and efficient use of water must improve. He commended GM Salomone in the work and noted this may be an adaptable process based on variables that continue to change.

(Continued...)

Board consensus to direct Staff and Legal Counsel to work on a policy and/or procedure, keeping the process adaptable to account for variables while not being overly cumbersome. A customer workshop for early 2023 was suggested.

6. Budgeting for Strategic Plan Implementation

GM Salomone presented the Staff Report. Comments and questions were offered by Trustees.

Trustee Rodrigue expressed concern over raising rates to increase revenue without clear indication of beneficial results in reliability and any assumption that the District not raising rates since 2009 indicates a need to increase them doesn't take into account the District's cost effective management.

President Watt noted agreement that Trustee Rodrigue's comments must be considered in the process of evaluating District revenue and potential rate increases. He further noted there are variables affecting the District's ability to sell water, some changing so slowly as to be almost imperceptible. The District has not taken responsive actions that yielded much in the way of results. While it remains an unknown if investing funds sooner and longer in working to preserve and improve water supply reliability would have improved the current situation, the Board must now look carefully at what can be done to make a difference in the water supply security and reliability as laid out in the Strategic Plan. The Board will need to consider the Strategic Plan implementation steps and costs being brought forward by GM Salomone, establishing what is necessary and identifying funds.

John Bailey noted that in his experience in private business, non-profit, and government agencies, contingency plans and adequate reserves must be built in to meet what situations might demand. While recognizing the consideration of not unduly raising rates, he pointed out the cost of living is escalating, and the District needs to consider 5-10 year planning projections setting suitable levels of revenue to meet challenges in unprecedented circumstances.

Trustee Rodrigue provided clarification on his comments, noting he has no issue with raising funds to make investments that will yield a return for constituents, with the need for disciplined scale and scope of these investments in representing constituents equitably.

Treasurer Froneberger stressed the need for additional support to the single employee of the District, particularly legal counsel, engineering, and project management if the District Board supports the implementation of Strategic Plan priorities.

Redwood Valley County Water District (RVCWD) Board Member Adam Gaska highlighted how RVCWD did not invest sufficiently to address contingencies being experienced currently and encouraged the District to prepare.

Treasurer Froneberger added that just to keep up means the District needs to chase the rate of inflation and the consumer price index. If the District wants to expand and enhance responses to conditions, the District must exceed.

Trustee Rodrigue suggested all the speakers are 'on the same page.' The point to consider is what is being invested in, measuring benefits and costs, justifying the return on investment and risk management that District constituents would expect of District leadership.

(Continued...)

President Watt appointed Tyler Rodrigue and himself to a Budgeting for Strategic Plan Implementation Ad Hoc Committee to consider a scope of work and establish annual costs to proposed actions.

Vice President White left the meeting at 7:02 PM.

REGULAR BUSINESS, INFORMATION, AND REPORT ITEMS

7. Consent Calendar

- a) Acceptance of the October 2022 Financial Report
- b) Approval of October 3, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes
- c) State of Emergency

GM Salomone noted reconciliations are now up to date. The Transactions Report shows two checks for \$3,708.00 each being issued to E. Salomone to correct payroll errors. The District's Accountant will review the payments and recommend any corrective action(s) needed.

Trustee Reardan moved to approve the Consent Calendar items a-c with direction to GM to provide a follow up report on the two checks noted above at the next Board meeting. Treasurer Froneberger seconded the motion. The motion was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: 4 (Reardan, Rodrigue, Froneberger, Watt)
Absent: 1 (White)

8. Trustee & Committee Reports

Trustee Reardan provided an update on the Mendocino County Inland Water & Power Commission (MCIWPC) efforts to establish a group to address outreach, education, and other activities related to the Commission. Legal Counsel advised MCIWPC to establish an Ad Hoc Committee of the Commission. He provided an update on the first meeting of this group.

Treasurer Froneberger provided a report from the Mendocino County Local Agency Formation Commission meeting.

9. General Manager Report & Correspondence

GM presented the written report, sharing additional information on the General Manager annual performance evaluation.

President Watt appointed Tyler Rodrigue and himself to GM Annual Performance Evaluation Ad Hoc Committee.

(Continued...)

10. Direction on Future Agenda Items

GM Salomone identified topics including but not limited to remote meetings, Ad Hoc Committee updates, presentation on FIRO, and other items from the Strategic Plan.

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Reardan moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 PM. Treasurer Froneberger seconded the motion. The motion was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: 4 (Reardan, Rodrigue, Froneberger, Watt)
Absent: 1 (White)

APPROVED by Board of Trustees on December 5, 2022



President of the Board of Trustees



Secretary of the Board of Trustees

President
Christopher Watt

Vice President
Alfred White

Treasurer
Matthew Froneberger

Trustee
Tyler Rodrigue

Trustee
John Reardan