

NEVADA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

ENGINEERING COMMITTEE

SPECIAL MEETING

December 10, 2019

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Laura L. Peters, Director, Division IV
Nick Wilcox, Director, Division V

Committee Staff Members Present: Remleh Scherzinger, General Manager
Doug Roderick, Engineering Manager
Shannon Wood, Business Services Technician

Public Comment

Mike Pasner, Indian Springs Organic Farms:

- Would like the committee meetings to be recorded, either audio or video.

Minutes of the October 15, 2019, Engineering Committee

The Minutes were approved as submitted.

Mr. Roderick closed item one and moved to item two.

Table Meadow Road, Phase III - District Financed Waterline Extension (DFWLE)

Shannon Wood, Business Services Technician, presented an overview of the District Financed Waterline Extension program and explained what part of the process a project is in when presented to the Engineering Committee.

- Property owners sign a petition that they are interested in getting treated water.
- The petition is reviewed with Engineering to determine who can be served from a particular length of pipe, considering those who have signed the petition.
- The length of pipe, size of pipe, the number of fire hydrants that may be located off that pipe, and how many potential property owners can be served, regardless of who has signed the petition, is determined.
- The project is then brought to the Engineering Committee. At that point, the District is not looking at the financial aspects of the project; it is more conceptual, functional, and operational aspects that are reviewed.
- Once the project is put onto the priority list, it will wait for budget availability.
- When the budget becomes available, work will begin with the next group.

The current priority list includes:

- Iron Horse, which is currently in construction and is using 2018 budget funds.
- Table Meadow Phase II is currently encumbered with 2019 funds, funding agreements are being drafted at this time, and are expected to go to the Board for consideration in February of 2020.
- Loma Rica Drive and Maranatha Place have been recognized by the Engineering Committee and are waiting for budget availability.

The Table Meadow Road Phase III will be the final loop continuing from Phase II. The rest of the property owners are interested in getting treated water as well. Thirteen property owners have signed the petition and are referenced on the map provided. The project will consist of approximately 3,650 LF of 8" pipe and three fire hydrants, and has the potential to serve 21 parcels. The Petition meets the 50% threshold of interested property owners. This project, as proposed, will have approximately 19 mainline connections and two variance connections. There does not appear to be any vacant parcels.

At this point, there is no budgetary impact because the project is in its conceptual phase.

A conversation ensued regarding the concept of integrating the third phase with the second phase, which was previously considered but did not move forward due to budget constraints and the participation level of property owners.

Director Peters asked if the opportunity to bid Table Meadow III with Table Meadow II was lost.

Remleh Scherzinger, General Manager, discussed the potential for cost savings by combining the two phases.

Chip Close, Operations Manager, explained the problem with merging the two phases is that Table Meadow III is not next on the list, and two other projects would be pushed back.

Ms. Wood explained that Phase II participants have put down deposits and are engaged in the agreement process based on costs for their phase. Phase III is not at that point yet, as it is still in a conception phase.

Mr. Roderick commented that the additional construction could potentially affect the construction of the Combie Phase I pipeline installation that will utilize the route in that area.

A discussion ensued regarding the available budget if this concept were explored.

Director Wilcox stated he was not comfortable with anything that could jeopardize the Rough and Ready Pipeline project.

The determination was made not to pursue combining Phase II and Phase III because Phase III property owners have not committed to any funding agreements, there are not sufficient funds available in the budget to cover the additional amount of pipe, and the District is not willing to risk the loss of integrity by moving this project ahead of the two others that are waiting.

Director Wilcox and Director Peters approved putting this project on the list after Maranatha Place.

Mr. Roderick closed item two and moved to item three.

Ali Lane – District Financed Waterline Extension (DFWLE)

Ms. Wood presented the Ali Lane, DFWLE project for consideration by the Committee. The District received a petition signed by six property owners. This project is proposing approximately 1,210 LF of 8" pipe with the potential for two fire hydrants, serving eight parcels. Of the eight parcels, six would be mainline connections, and two would be variances. There appear to be no vacant parcels.

Director Wilcox and Director Peters approved putting this project on the list after Table Meadow III.

Mr. Roderick closed item three and moved to item four.

Water Loss Policy Update

Mr. Scherzinger provided an update of the Water Loss Policy, previously referred to as the Seepage or Leakage Policy. Mr. Scherzinger thanked those who participated in the workshop.

The District has determined that water loss was not only from the raw water systems but also from the treated water systems. Regulations are currently in place or are under development that address both raw and treated water losses. The District is aligning itself with the terminology and policy used by the State of California. The District will look at the current and proposed regulations imposed by the State, and will then inform the Committee with a policy that reflects our planning documents, the law, and the proposed regulations that are coming so that the District can, on a systematic basis, determine what is and is not acceptable in terms of losses.

Mr. Scherzinger explained that the District would be setting a policy target for the percentage of losses from a particular facility that the District will consider when prioritizing capital projects.

Director Wilcox asked if the District has the technical ability to look at canal segments and determine what the losses are in those segments.

Mr. Scherzinger replied the District could isolate the canal, let it sit, or flow water through it. With SB88 compliance and rough calculations, we can determine, within a standard deviation, what a segment of the canal is losing.

The State Water Board is working with UC Davis to develop the models necessary to essentially “plug and chug” water losses into a system. Staff will plug numbers into the model, and it will calculate what is acceptable or not. For example, the floor for treated water losses is set to 20 gallons per connection, per day, which is not a lot of water.

Director Wilcox commented that the Raw Water Master Plan had estimated canal losses. Mr. Scherzinger added that the Ag-Water Management Plan set the overall system loss at 10%. Newtown came in at 13%, and the Raw Water Master Plan was 15% for the system overall.

Mr. Scherzinger stated the numbers would be determined as the District moves forward in developing a policy for both the treated and raw water systems.

The District needs to get its gallons per capita per day down and needs to control the Municipal and Industrial (M & I) of the six various major water systems. He stated that raw water regulations are following the treated water regulations.

Once the policy is established, and the percentage of water losses are determined, the District will apply the policy when determining which Capital projects to pursue remedial action.

When it comes to non-revenue water loss, the policy will provide the District an opportunity to accept a certain amount of loss as a benefit. The District can then quantify it not as non-revenue water, but as an environmental gift.

Director Peters commented that the whole concept is evolving. Scientists are finding there is a great benefit to keeping water within fractured rock systems. Director Peters believes that the District’s treated water system should be the priority.

Mr. Scherzinger stated he believes the greater volume of losses is from the raw water system. The water the District is putting in the ground, not just in the canals, supports the District’s efforts in providing subsidies to the ag-lands in the area. The work the District is doing along the foothills and in the recharge zones in the fractured rock areas, by percentage, is more than what is happening in the canals. The District is providing an additional benefit to the community. As the District moves into strategic and master planning events, we want to make sure to protect the 31,000 acres that the District services and that we continue to provide a benefit and security and recognize those systems are critical.

Public Comment:

John Norton, NID customer:

- Commented on the cost-benefit of piping raw water

Mr. Scherzinger stated the goal is to get direction from the Board to determine what is acceptable, then find the bad outliers and decide what to do about them, and then start to repair them to demonstrate to the State that we have a policy, a program, a budget, and we have executed projects.

Mr. Norton asked if the State is considering the off-canal benefits. Mr. Scherzinger replied they are not. The State Water Board needs to recognize the additional benefit of having the canals in an open condition or a watering condition.

The District is currently in discussions with UC Davis and the Water Board regarding the assumptions used in the Water Use Efficiency (WUE) modeling.

A discussion ensued regarding prioritizing capital projects based on the acceptable limits of losses established by District policy and compliance with state regulations.

Mike Pasner, Indian Springs Organic Farms:

- Commented that this is a fascinating conversation and an example of what should be recorded at the meetings.
- Stated he hopes the District's policy will consider the environmental impacts of encasing canals, not just water loss or other economic factors.

Mr. Close commented that the District's water rights determine how the District utilizes its water. Environmental flow is not a classified use for our water rights. As far as the State of California is concerned, the District's water rights are for consumptive purposes and hydroelectric generation, not for environmental purposes.

Mr. Roderick closed item four and moved to item five.

Centennial Water Supply Project Update

Mr. Roderick presented the quarterly update of the Centennial project. The information was included in the Staff Report for the Committee's review.

- The Non-Disclosure agreement with the Nevada City Rancheria has since been received, and the District is now able to release the Cultural Resource Report for the Tribe's review. The District will meet with representatives of the Tribe sometime in January to review the report with them.

Director Wilcox asked what the implications are for not following the Non-Disclosure Agreement.

Mr. Scherzinger replied that the District could sue the non-complying Tribe, the District would withdraw the document, and would step out of the AB52 process. It would be considered closed.

Mr. Scherzinger described the process of AB52:

- The District performs the initial survey that is shared with the Tribes.
- The Tribe then reviews and adds to the report if they want, and requests additional studies if necessary. This process builds a picture of Tribal resources in the area.
- The District then negotiates any mitigation measures the Tribe's would like.

If the Tribe breaches the Non-Disclosure agreement, the District will take mitigating measures only on the resources identified in the initial survey.

Mr. Roderick explained that AB52 does not require that an agreement be reached with the Tribe. If an agreement is not reached, the District's proposed mitigating measures become part of the CEQA document, and the Tribes can respond to the document through the usual process.

Director Peters asked about the budget expenses for property management. Mr. Roderick clarified the difference in project expenses from property management expenses.

Director Peters asked what alternatives the District is looking into, in addition to raising the level in Rollins Lake.

Mr. Roderick explained that the Raw Water Master Plan is the focus at this time. Twenty-two alternatives were identified that are in various stages of determining the feasibility; some of the alternatives were easily ruled out. Mr. Roderick identified a few of the alternatives that the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will address:

- Canal Encasements
- Groundwater storage
- Conservation, in addition to the drought contingency plan
- Sediment removal to increase the capacity in reservoirs
- Raising the level of Rollins or other reservoirs
- Combining alternatives that the District is already working on

Discussion ensued regarding the data-sets for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Public Comment:

Mike Pasner, Indian Springs Organic Farms:

- Believes the District should abandon the Centennial project, and the project should not be funded at any level and that it will not solve any problems.

Mr. Roderick closed item six and moved to item seven.

Project Status Update

Mr. Roderick provided the Engineering Committee with an update of the status of projects currently in process.

JP