

JAMES IRRIGATION DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

September 10, 2024

ATTENDANCE

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Riley Chaney, President
Robert Motte, Vice-President
(Arr.10:23 a.m.)
Robert Barcellos
Wm. Cory Carvalho
Andrew Groppetti

EXCUSED

None

ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Manny Amorelli, General Manager
Walter Flores-Barboza, Office Manager
Donna Hanneman, Secretary

PUBLIC

- RECLAMATION DISTRICT NO. 1606
Gerald W. Kinnunen, President
- LANDOWNERS / GROWERS
None
- McMULLIN AREA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
Matt Hurley, General Manager
Gerry Gragnani, Gragnani Farms et al
Donnie Gragnani, Gragnani Farms et al

CONSULTANTS

- LIGHTHOUSE PUBLIC RELATIONS / CLOSED SESSION
Andy Lynch (Zoom)

LEGAL COUNSEL

- YOUNG WOOLDRIDGE, LLP
Alan F. Doud, Esq. (Zoom)
Brett A. Stroud, Esq. (Zoom)
- BARTKIEWICZ KRONICK & SHANAHAN / CLOSED SESSION
Ryan S. Bezerra, Esq. (Zoom)

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of JAMES IRRIGATION DISTRICT ("District") was held Tuesday, September 10, 2024, in the District office located at 8749 Ninth Street, San Joaquin, California. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m., by President, Riley Chaney. A quorum was at all times present and acting.

2. ADDITIONS / CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions/corrections to the Agenda.

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3. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST [FPPC §87105]

Directors were given an opportunity to identify potential conflicts-of-interest with items appearing on the Agenda. None were reported.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Members of the public were given an opportunity to directly address the Board on any item of interest before or during consideration of the item; none were offered.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

a. A MOMENT OF SILENCE was observed to honor the passing of the following:

- i. MARIE H. CHANEY (1925-2024), landowner, mother of former Board member, Tom Chaney
- ii. AURELIO & JUANITA DELGADILLO, landowners/growers

6. MINUTES

a. ADJOURNED REGULAR MEETING: AUGUST 15, 2024

b. SPECIAL MEETING: AUGUST 28, 2024

M/S/C (A.GROPPETTI / W.CARVALHO), to APPROVE as presented by the following vote:

AYES: 4 (A.Groppetti, W.Carvalho, R.Barcellos, R.Chaney)

EXCUSED: 1 (R.Motte)

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

In accordance with Water Code §24273, Mr. Amorelli presented reports as follows:

FINANCIAL REPORTS

a. Interim Warrants: August 16-September 10, 2024 (Att.1)

b. Accounts Payable (Att.2)

Interim Warrants (bills paid) with supporting invoices and Accounts Payable invoices (unpaid bills) were presented for review/approval. M/S/C (A.GROPPETTI / R.BARCELLOS), to RATIFY/APPROVE Interim Warrants totaling \$2,444,347.29 and AUTHORIZE/APPROVE payment of Accounts Payable totaling \$257,817.92 by the following vote:

AYES: 4 (A.Groppetti, R.Barcellos, W.Carvalho, R.Chaney)

EXCUSED: 1 (R.Motte)

c. Payroll Certification: Pay Periods Ending August, 2024 (Att.3)

A listing of payroll checks totaling \$84,839.77 (net) issued to employees and members of the Board was reviewed and certified by the President, General Manager and Office Manager.

d. Income Statements (Budget-to-Actual): Period Ending August 31, 2024

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- e. Cash Position Report: August 31, 2024
- f. Accounts Receivable Activity Report: August 31, 2024

8. ASSESSMENTS

A sale for delinquent 2023-2024 assessments was conducted Wednesday, September 4, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., for the following properties:

APN	OWNER OF RECORD	DELINQUENT AMOUNT
030-170-01	Chaney, Marie H., Trustee	\$ 108.66
030-160-34	Chaney, Marie H., Trustee	\$ 59.99
033-020-73S	S3 Group, LLC, Navdep Singh Sran, Trs	\$ 207.26
033-020-74S	S3 Group, LLC, Navdep Singh Sran, Trs	\$ 2,040.68
033-160-18S	Chaney, Thomas W. / Elizabeth M.	\$ 82.75
	-Total Delinquent-	\$ 2,499.34

Notice was published in *The San Joaquin-Tranquillity West Side Advance* pursuant to Water Code §26105. Publication costs will be apportioned to each parcel and added to each of the delinquencies. Certificates of Sale will be recorded enabling the District to begin charging interest compounded daily on each parcel.

9. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Amorelli presented his verbal report encompassing operations, maintenance, projects and other District matters for the month of August, 2024, as follows:

OPERATIONS

- ▶ Water Deliveries: August, 2024 - Water deliveries for the month of August were 6,987 acre-feet which is 328 acre-feet less than was delivered during August, 2023. The fiscal year-to-date total deliveries are at 39,411 acre-feet which is 3,302 acre-feet more than was delivered at this time during the last fiscal year.
- ▶ Weekly TDS Readings: August 26, 2024
- ▶ Kings River Water Association (KRWA)
 - KRWA Storage Operations in Pine Flat Reservoir as of September 1, 2024, totaled 7,415 CFS-days.

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PROJECTS

- ▶ Monitoring Well - An onsite meeting was held with representatives from the California Department of Water Resources and Provost & Pritchard Consulting as well as a grower to discuss siting a new monitoring well. The project should be complete by fall, 2025.

AGENCIES

- ▶ Kings Basin Water Authority (KBWA) - Strategic Planning Workshop held to explore funding opportunities.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

- ▶ Workplace Violence Training was conducted with District staff on August 29th. California SB533 requires annual training.

10. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

As Mr. Mancini was attending continuing education classes, Mr. Amorelli reported on the following activities.

- ▶ Usual maintenance activities
- ▶ Applying copper sulfate for aquatic weed control
- ▶ Rathmann On-Farm Project - Discussed reinforcing banks. A headgate into the Main Canal may be installed this winter. Will evaluate scraping/leveling for a potential farm lease.

11. DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Directors were given an opportunity to inform the Board of meetings and/or conferences attended on behalf of the District. None were reported.

12. ACTION ITEMS

a. ASSESSMENTS (09/10/2024)

Discussed funding for the Main Canal Project infrastructure improvements. A project draft is anticipated by the end of the year. The Board was in agreement that assessments provide a stable funding stream as opposed to relying on fluctuating water sales for financial support of projects and/or District administration benefitting all landowners. Further discussion next meeting during Board of Equalization meeting.

13. REPORT ITEMS

a. BOARD OF EQUALIZATION MEETING (08/13/2024)

It was **NOTED FOR THE RECORD** that the Board of Equalization meeting originally scheduled for this date has been **RESCHEDULED** to October 8, 2024, from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. due to scheduling conflicts.

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- b. A.C.W.A. FALL CONFERENCE & EXPO: DECEMBER 3-5, 2024, PALM DESERT, CA (09/10/2024)
Registration is open for this annual event. Board members interested in attending may contact the office for assistance.

ADJOURNED TO CLOSED SESSION AT 10:26 A.M.

Directors Attending:

Riley Chaney, President
Robert Motte, Vice-President
Robert Barcellos, Director
Wm. Cory Carvalho, Director
Andrew Groppetti, Director

Staff Attending

Manny Amorelli, General Manager

Consultants:

- Lighthouse Public Relations
Andy Lynch (Zoom)

Legal Counsel

- Young Wooldridge, LLP
Alan F. Doud, Esq. (Zoom)
Brett A. Stroud, Esq. (Zoom)
- Bartkiewicz Kronick & Shanahan
Ryan S. Bezerra, Esq. (Zoom)

14. CLOSED SESSION: GOVERNMENT CODE §54957 - PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

- a. TITLE: DITCHTENDER / MAINTENANCE, PUMPTENDER, STAFF

15. CLOSED SESSION: GOVERNMENT CODE §54956.9 - CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-ANTICIPATED LITIGATION

- a. SIGNIFICANT EXPOSURE TO LITIGATION PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OR (3) OF SUBDIVISION (D):

4 CASES

16. CLOSED SESSION: GOVERNMENT CODE §54956.9 - CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-EXISTING LITIGATION

AS DEFENDANT: 3 CASES

- a. NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL, ET AL, V HAALAND, ET AL
U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California
Case No. 1:5-CV-01207LJO-GSA
- b. CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, RESTORE THE DELTA AND PLANNING & CONSERVATION LEAGUE V UNITED STATES BUREAU OF RECLAMATION ET AL (06/08/2021)
United States District Court, Eastern District of California
Case No. 1:20-CV-00706 DAD-EPG

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- c. MCMULLIN AREA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY V JAMES IRRIGATION DISTRICT
Fresno County Superior Court Case No. 24CECG03049 (08/13/2024)

AS PLAINTIFF: 2 CASES

- d. KINGS RIVER WATER ASSOCIATION ET AL V. JAMES VERBOON ET AL
Kings County Superior Court, Case No. 15 C0304

- e. JAMES IRRIGATION DISTRICT V. MCMULLIN AREA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
Santa Clara County Superior Court, Case No. 23CV417565

AS INTERVENOR: 1 CASE

- f. CITY OF FRESNO, ET AL V. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
United States Court of Federal Claims, Case No. 1:16-CV-01276-MCW

17. CLOSED SESSION: GOVERNMENT CODE §54956.8 - CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATOR

- a. JAMES & TRANQUILLITY NEGOTIATIONS

Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee

Tranquillity Irrigation District: Danny Wade

Kings River Lower River Units: Scott Sills

Under Negotiation: Price, terms & conditions of possible real property and/or water supply transactions

- b. SOUTHWEST GROUNDWATER RECHARGE PROJECT (11/13/2012)

Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee

Fresno Irrigation District: Bill Stretch

Under Negotiation: Price, terms and conditions of possible real property and/or water supply transactions, operations & maintenance.

- c. WATER BANKING & TRANSFERS (04/19/2018)

Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee

To Be Determined

Under Negotiation: Price, terms and conditions of possible water supply transactions.

- d. WATER BANKING & TRANSFERS: MCMULLIN AREA GSA (06/22/2021)

Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee

McMullin GSA: Matthew Hurley, General Manager

Under Negotiation: Price, terms and conditions of possible water supply transactions.

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RECONVENED IN OPEN SESSION AT 11:26 A.M.

18. REPORT ON ACTIONS TAKEN DURING CLOSED SESSION Gov. Code 54957.1

Following Closed Session deliberation, Open Session discussion/actions were taken on the following matters:

CLOSED SESSION: GOVERNMENT CODE §54957 - PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

- ▶ M/S (R.CHANEY / A.GROPPETTI) to set the District's BASE STARTING WAGE AT \$18.00/HOUR EFFECTIVE WITH NEW HIRES; MOTION FAILED by the following vote:
 - AYES: 2 (R.Chaney, A.Groppetti)
 - NAYS: 3 (R.Barcellos, W.Carvalho, R.Motte)

- ▶ M/S/C (W.CARVALHO / R.BARCELLOS):
 - (1) EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 16, 2024, set the District's BASE STARTING WAGE AT \$18.50/HOUR for new hires.
 - (2) EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 16, 2024, INCREASE WAGES TO \$18.50/HOUR for the following:
 - (a) VICTOR RAMIREZ-BERBER
 - (b) JOSE BERBER-SOLIS
 - AYES: 4 (W.Carvalho, R.Barcellos, A.Groppetti, R.Motte)
 - NAYS: 1 (R.Chaney)

- ▶ M/S/C (R.MOTTE / R.CHANEY) INCREASE ERIC GROPPETTI to \$26.00/HOUR EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 16, 2024.
 - AYES: 4 (R.Motte, R.Chaney, R.Barcellos, W.Carvalho)
 - ABSTAIN: 1 (A.Groppetti)

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19. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, M/S/C (W.CARVALHO/A.GROPPETTI), to ADJOURN the meeting at 11:37 a.m., until the next Special Meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 12, 2024, by the following vote:

AYES: 5 (W.Carvalho, A.Groppetti, R.Barcellos, R.Motte, R.Chaney)

RECORDED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Donna Y. Hanneman, Secretary

Riley Chaney, President

Manny Amorelli, General Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Interim Warrants: August 16-September 10, 2024, \$2,444,347.29
2. Accounts Payable: \$257,817.92
3. Payroll Certification: Pay Periods Ending August, 2024, \$84,839.77 (net)