**Hermiston Irrigation District**

**Board of Directors**

#### December 12, 2024

**Regular Board Meeting Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Findley called the November Regular Board Meeting of the Hermiston Irrigation District Board of Directors to order at 3:56 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Business Manager Nash recorded all in attendance. Present at the meeting were Directors Bryan Allstott, Jeremy Bolen, Ian Findley, and Bryon Zumwalt; District Manager Annette Kirkpatrick; Field Manager Wyatt Cleaver; Business Manager Sonia Nash; Water Rights Specialist/CSR Karra Van Fossen; Bureau of Reclamation Umatilla Field Office Manager Chet Sater; and Farmers Conservation Alliance (FCA) Representatives Kristin Alligood. Director Steve Wallace was not in attendance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**GUESTS:** Kristin Alligood from FCA- Moved down to Old Business.

**NEW AGENDA ITEMS TO CONSIDER:** None

**MINUTES:** The Board reviewed the November 14, 2024 Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Director Bolen moved to approve the minutes as presented. Director Zumwalt seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS & VOUCHERS:** The Board reviewed and approved the November 2024 Profit & Loss Report and Check Voucher Report. The Board reviewed and approved the accounts payable receipts and Bank Statements. Business Manager Nash gave a report of the District’s financial standing.

Business Manager Nash advised the Board that collection calls were not made and that there remains approximately $16,950.15 in outstanding account receivables, with $4,185.89 of that remaining from previous years.

**FIELD MANAGER’S REPORT:** Field Manager Cleaver reported to the Board that the field crew has been focusing their efforts on Feed Canal maintenance. There is approximately 4,240 af of water in Cold Springs Reservoir and HID is continuing to accrue exchange credits. He also stated that they will be placing a new electrical box at the L-line as a semi-truck ran over the box.

Field Manager Cleaver reported to the Board that Field Crew Members Diego Gonzalez and Victor Garcia have begun CDL training at Stateline Truck Driving School.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**RATIFY FCA AGREEMENT:** District Manager Kirkpatrick reported to the Board that she had previously emailed the Board in regards to the Irrigation Modernization Funding (IMF) Grant being written and approving HID to pay $10,000.00 to FCA.

Director Zumwalt moved to approve that District Manager Kirkpatrick has permission to enter into an agreement with FCA for $10,000.00 to write HID’s Irrigation Modernization Funding (IMF) Grant for the O-Line as presented. Director Bolen seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Water Rights Specialist Karra Van Fossen left at 4:09 p.m.

**IRRIGATION MODERNIZATION FUNDING:** Manager Kirkpatrick introduced Farmers Conservation Alliance Planning Lead Kristin Alligood who joined us to explain some of the funding sources and processes to the Board. HID had identified the B-, O-, M-, and ME-Lines as top priorities. This current suite of projects put forward for analysis in the Watershed Plan-Environmental Assessment (Plan-EA) has a total project cost of ~$40M. To best leverage the NRCS PL-566 federal cost share for an EA, the total project cost would ideally be $32-33M. FCA identified potential federal and match funding sources that could support implementation for each of the projects. The Plan-EA provides an opportunity to complete comprehensive NEPA on the District’s priority projects. Completing the Plan-EA will allow HID to more easily leverage other federal funds that require NEPA if PL-566 construction funding is unavailable.

To best leverage the NRCS PL-566 cost share, FCA recommends that the B-Line Piping Project is accelerated using other funding opportunities that may be a better fit for the project. The remaining priority projects would continue to move forward in the ongoing watershed plan. Because installing the B-Line pump station is not needed to complete the B-Line piping, FCA recommends pausing pursuing funding for the centralized pump station and instead considering other engineering options for pressurization.

FCA expects that the Watershed Plan-EA will be completed by Spring 2026.

The group discussed B-Line pressures, removing the B-Line Pump Station from the Priority Projects, piping laterals, installing SCADA, fund stacking, WaterSMART, and other opportunities, etc.

The Board expressed that it is their preference to apply for grant funding and to not have to borrow funds, if possible. They agree with the recommendation to remove the B-Line Pump Station out of the Watershed Plan-EA, but keep the B-Line piping in the Plan. The M-Line failed three times at the beginning of the 2024 irrigation season. Director Bolen recommended that HID focus on their failing infrastructure, being the M-Line and O-Line. After this discussion, the M-Line is being moved up in priority in the Plan.

Water Rights Specialist Karra Van Fossen came back at 4:29 p.m.

Business Manager Sonia Nash left at 5:05 p.m.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Nothing new to bring to the Board.

**NON-ACTION ITEMS**

**DRAFT 2025 BUDGET WITH WAGE PROPOSAL & EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK:** District Manager Kirkpatrick stated that we would be bringing back the Budget for approval at the Organizational Board Meeting along with the Employee Handbook.

District Manager Kirkpatrick stated that she would have Business Manager Nash make the transfers prior to end of year that were approved in the 2024 Budget to be placed in Reserves.

**M-LINE REPAIRS:** Director Bolen questioned Field Manager Cleaver as to what the plans are for the M-Line as it blew out 3 times during the 2024 season.

**WATERSHED PLAN-EA NRCS/FCA WORK:** District Manager Kirkpatrick reported to the Board that HID has submitted a revised version of the 2024 Agricultural Water Management Conservation Plan (WMCP) to OWRD. We are hopeful that it will be approved by January 15, 2025.

The HID management team met with Julie O’Shea, Kristin Alligood and members of the FCA team while we were in Hood River for the OWRC Annual Conference. FCA is currently working on an Irrigation Modernization Funding (IMF) grant application hosted by OWRD that is due by January 15, 2025. These funds from the State will be used as matching funds for PL-566.

**THE FRESHWATER TRUST:** District Manager Kirkpatrick reported to the Board that along with our work with FCA, HID is working with The Freshwater Trust (TFT) and NRCS for on-farm improvement funding to complement our Modernization Projects. We are holding monthly meetings, working to identify all of the acres within HID’s boundary that qualify for on-farm assistance and coordinating with FCA’s efforts. Water Rights Specialist Karra Van Fossen is working on the GIS data to identify the flood lands.

**OWRC ANNUAL CONFERENCE:** District Manager Kirkpatrick reported to the Board that Field Manager Cleaver, Business Manager Nash and Water Rights Specialist Van Fossen along with herself attended the OWRC Annual Conference in Hood River. Topics included: GIS to improve water management, natural resources updates, state and federal activities and perspectives, cybersecurity, OWRC membership board meeting and SDAO best practices. The team also had meetings with FCA and the Bureau of Reclamation Regional Director about HID’s upcoming modernization projects.

**GATE TOWER BRIDGE**: District Manager Kirkpatrick reported to the Board that in 2022 the BOR solicited applications for extraordinary maintenance (XM) projects. HID applied for funding to refurbish the Gate Tower Bridge at Cold Springs Reservoir. HID’s application was granted in 2023 for a $703,000 low interest 30-year loan. Management will be meeting with BOR staff to kick-off planning on this project on December 13, 2024.

**PERSONNEL:** District Manager Kirkpatrick and Field Manager Cleaver attended pesticide continuing education courses. The crew is scheduled to attend the same course on December 12, 2024. District Manager Kirkpatrick and Field Manager Cleaver are attending mandatory BOR Dam Operator Training in Bend on December 10-11, 2024.

**COPY MACHINE:** District Manager Kirkpatrick reported to the Board that HID purchased a refurbished copy machine from Abadan. HID has also engaged Streamline to upgrade and secure the District’s website and switch us to HermistonID.gov. Streamline is an affiliate of SDAO.

**MANAGER’S REPORT:** District Manager Kirkpatrick went through the calendar of events with the Board as listed on the agenda.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, Director Bolen moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:17 p.m. Director Zumwalt seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

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Ian Findley Sonia Nash

Director Recording Secretary