



**Durham Irrigation District Board of Directors  
Board Meeting  
October 17, 2023 - 5:30 PM  
MINUTES**

**Board of Directors:**

Matt Doyle, Chair  
Raymond Cooper, Director  
Kevin Phillips, Director

PRESENT  
PRESENT  
PRESENT

**District Staff:**

Mark Adams, District Engineer  
Amanda Uhrhammer, Legal Counsel  
Mike Butler, Water Operator  
Adam Daigle, Assistant Water Operator  
Nicole Johansson, Public Outreach Coord.  
Jacques DeBra, Consultant – Luhdorff,  
Scalmanini Consulting Engineers (LSCE)  
Jeannie Trizzino, Admin. Assistant

PRESENT  
PRESENT  
PRESENT  
PRESENT  
PRESENT  
PRESENT  
PRESENT

**1 CALL TO ORDER**

- 1.1 The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm by Chair Doyle.
- 1.2 Introduction of Guests – approximately 13 guests in attendance. Comments were received from Ms. Sandra Atteberry, Ms. Kathryn Azevedo, Mr. Patrick Button, Ms. Kathy Horne, and two additional unidentified participants.

**2 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Patrick Button asked whether the allotted 3-minute public comment time could be added to his comment time for Item 11.

Ms. Kathy Horn commented that she appreciated receiving the Boil Water notice doorhanger. It was timely and informative for her. She also asked whether meter installation under the grant-funded meter installation program can be deferred if she did not want the meter installed at this time.

A commenter who did not identify himself stated that he did not receive the Boil Water notice and asked why the District did not have a more robust notification system for emergencies. He also questioned why more connections in the District did not have backflow prevention devices installed, since he was aware that the high school had these devices installed.

Ms. Kathryn Azevedo commented that she was concerned that the District had not located its bylaws, making it impossible for the public to access them for review.

A commenter who did not identify herself asked whether the tests that are summarized in the annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) are the same as the ones needed to determine water safety for the Boil Water notice.

A customer asked for clarification on how attendees' questions are answered after the meeting when the item is not on the agenda. He would like to see an improvement in the notification system for the District. He would also like an explanation of whether the water was contaminated during the Boil Water notice and questioned why no instructions were given to customers to flush their water lines when the Boil Water notice was lifted.

Ms. Kathy Horn commented that she noticed PGE chalking the street in advance of the meter installation project.

Director Phillips explained the purpose of the Public Comment period is to address items not on the agenda and that comments during this period may be agendaized for board consideration at a subsequent board meeting.

### 3 PRESENTATIONS – see Item 11

### 4 CONSENT AGENDA

Action Requested: That the Board of Directors approve the following Consent Agenda items.

- 4.1 Monthly Financial Report for September 2023, including:
  - 4.1.1 \* Balance Sheet
  - 4.1.2 \* Profit & Loss Statement
  - 4.1.3 \* Previous Year Comparison
  - 4.1.4 \* General Ledger
  - 4.1.5 \* Board Recap, Water Sales and AR Aging Report
- 4.2 \* Approval of the Warrant Sheet from September 15, 2023 to October 10, 2023, including payments, deposits, and transaction adjustments.

**Motion:** *That the Board consider and approve the consent agenda.*

**Board Discussion:** *None.*

**Public Comment:** *None.*

**Action Taken:** *On a motion made by Phillips and seconded by Doyle, the Board approved the motion.*

**Vote results** *Ayes carried.*

**Ayes:** *Cooper, Doyle, Phillips*

**Noes:** *None*

**Abstained:** *None*

**Absent:** *None*

### 5 REGULAR AGENDA

- 5.1 Items Removed from Consent Agenda – NONE

### 6 CORRESPONDENCE

All Items Informational/Possible Action/Direction

- 6.1 NONE

### 7 GENERAL BUSINESS

- 7.1 District Activities and Status Report from District Engineer.  
(All Items Informational/Possible Action/Direction)

- 7.1.1 \* Update: USBR Grant-Funded Meter Replacement and Lead Service Laterals Assessment Project  
Requested: Status Report

**Discussion:** *District Engineer reported that the project includes advanced SCADA monitoring of well activity, meter installations on currently unmetered connections, and checking service laterals for lead/lead solder as required by federal law.*

**Public Comment:** *Ms. Horn asked again whether accounts selected for meter conversion could defer meter installation. The District Engineer replied that meter conversion cannot be deferred.*

7.2 Development Projects. Review status of development projects' activities.

7.2.1 Creekside Estates (aka Keeney Development)

**Discussion:** *District Engineer reported that the service agreement for this project is in progress.*

**Public Comment:** *None.*

7.2.2 Butte County Farm Bureau – 9412 Jones Avenue

**Discussion:** *District Engineer reported that the County development department approved rezoning this project and reported that the District has the capacity to provide water for the intended use, but that fireflow pressure is limited and that the developer would need to coordinate with the County for approval to proceed under this condition. If the County did not approve the project, then the developer would need to come back to the District for further discussion/approval.*

**Public Comment:** *None.*

7.2.3 Catomerisios – 9206 Holland Avenue lot split

**Discussion:** *District Engineer has not heard back from developer or developer's engineer.*

**Public Comment:** *None.*

## 8 WATER OPERATIONS BUSINESS

8.1 \* Review of Water Operator Log for September 2023 (Operator Mike Butler)

**Discussion:** *Director Phillips summarized the events of the Boil Water notice that started on September 29, 2023. He noted that these events, by their nature, always happen at a bad or inconvenient time. He noted that Durham Irrigation District is small, with a limited budget and staff, and that it always attempts to operate in such a way to keep rates low and to keep the District under local control. He noted that the Boil Water notice was issued under an abundance of caution and at the Direction of state regulators. He noted that it takes three days for the required test results to be conducted. He additionally noted that not all District connections have backflow devices installed; if all connections had backflow prevention devices installed, the District would not have had to issue the Boil Water notice.*

*The District's usual backup generator systems did not function as usual after the power outages during the unusual rain and lightning event on September 28, 2023, which resulted in the system losing pressure for a short time while the District's Water Operator manually engaged the backup generator system. The District and Water Operator are looking into the reasons for this failure, but they appear to be due in part to the outdated nature of the backup system, which dates to roughly the 1990s. Director Phillips explained that this issue directly relates to the Capital Improvement Program review that the District is currently undertaking (see Agenda Item 11).*

*Director Phillips noted that the test results, when they were finally received, showed that the water supply had never been compromised and that the Boil Water notice was indeed undertaken out of an abundance of caution.*

**Public Comment:** *An attendee asked whether the weather-related power outage could be considered an "act of God" and whether a claim could be made to either PGE or the District's insurance.*

*See also the public comments under Agenda Item 2.*

- 8.2 \* Monthly Work Order Status Report through October 11, 2023

## 9 ATTORNEY REPORT

- 9.1 Easement Agreement between DID and DUSD for connections along east side of Durham Dayton Highway.

- 9.2 Other updates from Legal Counsel not discussed under other Agenda Items

**Discussion:** *Counsel reported that she is preparing to contact DUSD to discuss the District's easement. She further reports that she will provide District staff with a revised agenda and minute template to streamline Board discussion.*

**Public Comment:** *None.*

## 10 VINA GSA

(All Items Informational/Possible Action/Direction)

See Vina GSA Calendar online here: <https://www.vinagsa.org/calendar>

- 10.1 Vina GSA SHAC Meetings  
10.2 Vina GSA Board Meetings  
10.3 Vina GSA/RCRD GSA Board Meetings\

**Discussion:** *Director Cooper reported that the fee study was implemented, and the County added Vina GSA fees to property tax bills. He further reported that Vina GSA planned to conduct a second fee study in 2024 that would likely result in changed rates.*

**Public Comment:** *Mr. Button commented that Durham Irrigation District should not be a member of the Vina GSA and that the county should be responsible for the District's groundwater interests.*

## 11 \* CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND FUNDING STRATEGY WORKSHOP

- 11.1 Review Capital Improvement Program (CIP) project list – Mark Adams, NorthStar  
11.2 Review Funding Strategy Options – Jacques DeBra, LSCE

**Discussion:** *District Engineer noted that the District's current Capital Improvement Program builds off the 2008 System Evaluation prepared for CalWater by West Yost Consulting Engineers. That report evaluated the District's infrastructure and made recommendations for repair, replacement, or upgrades to the District's infrastructure, noting that some of the District's infrastructure dates back to when the District was formed in 1947-1948. The District Engineer noted that the newer parts of town were served by a mix of 6" and 8" service lines, but that the older parts of town were served by smaller diameter pipes. Some of the service lines on Holland Avenue are 2" diameter. The north end of Durham is served by a 4" diameter line. Some connections along Midway are served by an easement running along the alley. Overall, this mix of pipe diameters and the piping design makes it difficult to keep water pressure consistent and stable, requiring constant monitoring of production levels at each of the three wells that serve the District. This type of monitoring has built-in inefficiencies and added expense to maintain. Additionally, there is insufficient valving in the system, which makes it difficult to isolate shutoffs when repairs or replacements are needed. Customers may*

*have noticed this when large areas of town are notified that their water may be shut off for system maintenance.*

*The Brown Faber service line runs along the alley and is one of the older major service lines in the District and is likely leaking.*

*Because of all these issues, one of the priorities of the CIP is to move district service lines out of easements, make 8" service lines the standard in the District, and replace pipes with industry standard PVC pipes.*

*Director Phillips notes that a lot of District expenditures have been due to deferred maintenance that results in urgent, costly, and inconvenient repairs and shut offs. These expenses have eaten up the District's CIP fund, making it impossible to undertake the major repairs and improvements described by the District Engineer and listed in the Capital Improvement Program. He further notes that the District is not a great candidate for many grant programs because Durham is does not qualify as a disadvantaged community (DAC).*

*Jacques DeBra describes the financial position of the District. As a small system, the District does not have a lot of customers to spread the costs of repairs and replacement across. Additionally, he notes that because of the age of the District's infrastructure and the amount of deferred maintenance, a major system failure is imminent. The CIP improvements serve to reduce the risk of catastrophic failure and to ensure a healthy community with healthy drinking water for the long-term.*

*Mr. DeBra calculated the impact of a \$4.1 million, 30-year, 0% interest CIP program would be ~\$25/month per customer, based on the current number of connections (468). Funding options that are possibilities for the District to pursue are low-interest public works loan programs through the EPA, California Infrastructure iBank (30 yrs at ~4%), and the State Revolving Fund (SRF) for Drinking Water (30 yrs at ~2%). Under some programs, loan payments start one year after construction is completed and after a rate increase is implemented.*

*Director Phillips notes that the public works loan programs assess community buy-in and support for the CIP costs in the form of a rate increase, known as the Proposition 218 process in which ratepayers vote on a proposed rate increase. A rate increase demonstrates to the lenders that the District will be able to pay back the loan. The District went through this process earlier this year in March.*

*As a Director, Director Phillips feels that it is time to make substantive improvements and build a reliable, safe water system for the customers of the District and to stop the inefficient pattern of band-aid fixes. He welcomes feedback from the community.*

*Chair Doyle commented that the Board will bring forward a rate increase in the best interests of the community the District serves and that the ratepayers can determine for themselves whether to oppose it. The consultant will bring forward an action plan and recommendation for District CIP funding.*

**Public Comment:**

*Mr. Button commented that the District cannot burden property owners to provide improvements for fireflow per a position the District took in 2011, at which time the District took the position that the rate increase should only apply to new connections. He suggests that a separate fireflow fee be applied to those customers with fire protection systems.*

*Mr. Button comments that the District does not need larger pipes.*

*Ms. Atteberry commented she noticed her lines appeared corroded when they were uncovered during an effort to locate District service lines on her property. She would like to know where the water in her back lot is going to/coming from.*

## 12 DIRECTORS' COMMENTS

Director Phillips noted that he found the District's new PayStation billing options to be straightforward and easy to use – customers can sign up for a range of online billing services from email notifications that their bill is ready to scheduling automatic payment on a specific date. Director Phillips thanked everyone for attending this meeting and looks forward to their participation in the meetings and discussion to come.

## 13 ADJOURNMENT

**The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.**

Adjourn to the next Regular Board Meeting, November 16, 2023 at Durham Memorial Hall.