**MEDFORD IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

**Regular Board Meeting Minutes**

**August 10th, 2022 @ 1:30 pm**

Present: Dennis O’Donoghue; Sean Naumes; Dave Urton; Henry Vaninetti; Angelo Grestoni-Via Zoom; Jack Friend-Manager/Secretary

1. **Call meeting to order:** Chairman O’Donoghue called the meeting to order at 1:34 pm.
2. **Minutes:** The minutes of the regular Board meeting on July 13th were reviewed. Chairman O’Donoghue asks if there are any comments or corrections to the minutes.

Motion: Chairman O’Donoghue called for a motion to approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes as presented for July 2022. Director Urton Motions to approve the July 2022 Minutes, Director Vaninetti seconds the motion, motion carries.

1. **Financials:** Manager Friend presents the July 2022 financial reports. The check register has a few large items, workers comp, Brewster’s, and SDAO. Any questions I can answer them.

Motion: Chairman O’Donoghue called for a motion to approve the Financials for July 2022. Director Naumes Motions to approve the July 2022 Financials, Director Urton seconds the motion, motion carries.

1. **Delinquent Accounts:** Manager Friend reports little movement on delinquent accounts last month.
2. **Transfers:** None
3. **Administrative:** We exhausted our southern allotment out of Emigrant Lake on August 1rst. This year was the lowest allotment on record for our district. We have been able to continue diverting streamflow at our Phoenix diversion but that has been limited to 20-25 cfs. We have failed to get water to every user in the district. The 100\*+ weather and the late start to the season made the limited supply even harder to work with. TID was dealing with the same issues and did not get water all the way through their system for weeks. We finally started to see some return flows from them three weeks after startup and it helped out but it was too little too late. Finally having water past Jacksonville and down Old Stage after everyone was so dry made for a chaotic few weeks.

The Northern supply in Fourmile and Fish Lake has held up fairly decent compared to last year yet still far below an average season. The hydromet instrumentation went down last week and we were able to get it back online 8/9/22. We have about a week or two left in the northern supply.

RRVID has put an update out that due to the supply they have in Agate Lake, they are shooting to run until September 9th. They will need 10 cfs at Bradshaw drop and that should be attainable by streamflow. They will fun as much of their system below Agate off of the lake and any streamflow they can get out of Bear creek. They will be calling on their senior right to that streamflow so we will have to cease diversions on our Phoenix once that happens. I anticipate that happening around the 19th. TID has indicated that will be when they will run out of water for the season. We plan on keeping everything running as is until then so that if there are any return flows on the tail end of TID’s canals, we are set to receive them and push them as far as we can through the system.

I have attached a graph showing data from the last 20 years in the Talent project. I have also attached a table showing what our allotment was during this time. It is important to look at the allotment we have in the southern supply as well as the supply TID had to work with. The Talent project was designed to reuse as much water as possible and the interconnections and return flows from TID have always been integral to operations on our lower end. 5 cfs makes a huge difference to the consistency needed for Patrons. There will be a lot of conversations moving forward about how to address these issues moving forward and we have started these with the field staff and plan to have valuable input for future Board meetings.

1. **New Business: None**
2. **Old Business:** The job application is still posted however the rates must be adjusted. We need to make this adjustment to the budget for the next year.

We also had a couple of legal counsel proposals to review. We can have them attend the next board meeting if you are interested in having an interview with them. Henry asked if there was any locally. We need to have a specific irrigation counsel. Could have two counsels as well. One for general questions and another for litigation purposes. The rates are pretty reasonable.

1. **RBWUC, Inc:** Bill is $138.34 for July 2022.

Motion: Chairman O’Donoghue calls for a motion to approve payment of $138.34 for the July 2022 RBWUC Billing. Director Naumes motions to approve the payment of $138.34 for the July 2022 RBWUC Billing, Director Urton seconds the motion, and the motion carries.

1. **Public Comment:**

Karlene Larson, Tom Madera, Cathy Fultineer, Joel Slaughter, Rod McLeod, Ron Pylkki.

**Tom Madera** (Wells Fargo Rd): I have been in contact with Jack regarding the lack of water on our property along with numerous others. We share (11 other properties) our potion of water and find it hard to understand, there has to be equity in the way the water flows to different properties, were near the end. I drive up and down the canal as much as I can. I have seen numerous properties with varying access to watering more and longer. Some of the patrons' dam up the water for their property and is this the way the system operates? Are there no checks and balances? We all pay the same rates as everyone else. We have not had any water. The whole flow of the diversion lasted 3 days.

**O’Donoghue:** When I joined this board, I was stunned at the lack of tools available to enforce the reactions of the patrons. If we can pipe this system and put meters on it, we can control the system better.

**Tom Madera:** I agree with you that we need to pipe the system. It would give us 43lbs. of pressure. Not happening in this decade. In the interim, why isn’t there something in the bylaws some method of servicing x number of people and a better way that everyone benefits?

**O’Donoghue:** We asked some of the east side patrons to hold off the start of their water to help the people at the end. Some patrons said they would not use the water and we could have it. Enforcement is a hot issue here. There are gaps in the law, and I am talking at the state level. Some would say we are constrained to what we can do to enforce the rules. We have let this go for so long because we have had water these were not big issues now; they are coming to the surface and again we are a day late and a dollar short. It is not going to solve anyone’s problems here today. Absolutely not.

**Cathy Fultineer**: Did management not know we were going to have a drought and prepare a year ahead at least?

**O’Donoghue**: We did have a meeting in the fall about the next season, but we did not know that we would get little to no rain.

**Cathy Fultineer**: You plan ahead.

**O’Donoghue**: We do plan ahead.

**Cathy Fultineer**: That is what management is for.

**O’Donoghue**: The weather did not cooperate. There was just not a lot of water.

**Friend**: There was a big push to get a lot of players in the room and this spring there was a quarter of the number of people in here, but they were all folks that gave us data on what the soil was doing, what the needs of the crops were for hay to grapes. We took in as much of the information as we could with the decisions that we made early so that is why the lakes were not turned on in June and running the system or we would have been out in July. We were at the mercy of TID’s decision once we decided that running our water at the same time as their water would be the most efficient use. The return flows would help push it. They decided to start a little later. With what we were working with we had as much cooperation and input from local folks as we have had before. We still had a severe deficit when it came to storage, the worst storage on records. The biggest factor there was the water. Could things have been done better, yes. Can we learn from it, most likely yes.

**Bettencourt**: We have some full canals out there. There is a lack of water but water to be found right under our noses.

**Friend**: You are seeing the middle of Rogue River Valley Irrigation Districts canal system below all the users on Old Stage and they have the senior water right to fill Agate lake every year from January on. They can begin to fill Agate lake from stream flow that is always there even when we are in a down year and store it at the level of their canal. They have a re-regulation reservoir that saves them.

**Bettencourt**: One fire will take out this entire region, so we are not on our island if they got senior rights. The devastation of the vegetation is happening right now. Those people that have very green, clover-filled pastures, with that very full 4’ x 4’ canal that is within walking distance of me, literally a block from me, those people’s houses will burn as well. It cannot be their senior rights anymore. We will die together in this. We need to change the rules.

**O’Donoghue**: That is not a change in the rules that are changing the law.

**Bettencourt**: This is why this many people are showing up.

**Shavon:** (Watermaster for the OWRD): The method of prior appropriation is with the first in time first in right and that is the way that water is managed throughout the entire western United States. We do water use regulation all the time on all of these different streams all over the valley and it is the same story that the oldest gets priority in water rights over the junior water rights.

**Bettencourt**: Ok I know we can blow this up all the way to the federal level and that’s why things stop and stagnate. As a community people have to start breaking down some of that paradigm in our minds that they have the control or somebody out there had the control because the fire danger is very, very real. It is killing trees, it is devastating in some areas, and there are these other areas that have clover growing in their pastures. Why? It cannot be a hand-picked thing around because those people need to understand that it will devastate the whole valley. We already know this. Right through town now we have fire hazard rulings coming down. We need to take back our control. I cannot stand top down because top down is not working. It is time for us to rise up and were going to stop what is handed to us.

**Rod McLoud**: I asked Jack who takes priority, and he said that agriculture does not take priority over residential homeowners. I have hiked from Old Military to the south end and wherever I can get on the ditch. It is horrible and obvious that MID did not have any intention to get water through the ditches because the maintenance has not been completed the entire way. It is completely choked, and you would need a flash flood to get any water through it. You told me it was cleaned out 2 years ago and do not think it has been cleaned out since Curt retired. That is the last time it was cleaned out.

We have not had water obviously, so if you go down the end of Old Military, the Hummingbird property is watering 24/7. Their pump is always going. I appreciate the comments about improvements, but it is not going to happen in my lifetime. You are talking billions of dollars and I want a solution for tomorrow and next year. The other thing that no one has mentioned is the poor timing of Howard Prairie and Hyatt. The water from there has never been filled back up again.

**Friend**: I do not have the numbers in front of me. There is some sort of myth of the Bureau of Reclamation came into the safety of the dam’s requirements. There has not been a large amount of water drawn down for those we were just going into some significant droughts the same we were to release water out of Emigrant all winter long. People out of the Howard Prairie canal will see water going out all winter long. The whole system works as one big reservoir. The design cue for the releases out of Howard Prairie is 55cfs. You cannot get 60K af from there to Emigrant Lake during the irrigation, so you do need to release it from the bottom reservoir which is Emigrant Lake. The lack of snowpack is playing a huge part in the water-filling Howard Prairie. Fish and Fourmile saw 2 extra feet of snow this year whereas Howard Prairie and Hyatt only saw 2 inches. They are not seeing the snowpack that they are seeing at Fish and Fourmile. Lost Creek is full because of the snowpack and melts that travel from Crater Lake. All our lakes are higher up. The snowpack also has to contain moisture as well to be effective. In the last 2 years, the snow melt that has historically happened in March is not starting until May and June.

**McLeod**: Bottom line is the appearance issue.

**Friend**: There is a lot more control in other parts of the district whereas a large portion of which is extremely difficult. You go through so many years of drought and as Ride 4 (Jacksonville) the people have always been accustomed to when you see it you use it. If you put them on a schedule and the water is not there on their turn, they are not going to get it.

**Karlene**: There has not been a schedule in ages.

Friend: There has not been because when it’s there they use it and you have to have a schedule and if it is not there when you promised it, then you have missed out on it. People have just been using it, so we get down this far and everyone gets their share of it, and you go farther down if you have a few weeks to do it, it seems to work. But it has not been working with the supply we do have. As far as the maintenance issue, we have never had a dry ditch up to July, so we have seen grass grow in places that we have never seen before. All of our excavators have been chasing leaks all over the District. There have not been this many leaks in all the years that I have worked here. It was a matter of not enough people and not enough machines and too many problems. The excavators have been skipping around to the hot spots that were needed right away. We do not have enough water and time to get them all fixed.

**Karlene**: Do you work with the Army Corps of Engineers? They are there to help you with storage, grants, and millions of dollars to help. They help with water storage. You store when you can. That is the key to help. You guys know that. They are with the OWRC as an asset to help in situations like this. You store water when you can. I was at a meeting with Cliff Bentz and asked if there is any help or education for MID and he said that it is a local thing and should get on the Board. You guys are on the board. You all have vineyards, and orchards and you all had water for your crops. We know some of the key people on Old Stage that got water. I have neighbors with goat’s cattle and other animals that have no water. I got 3 days of water. My place was straw. If this place goes, they’re all going. So, you give me goddam water, Jack. I told Dan and David that I will have Jack’s job. You guys have been here a while. I’m tired of 22 years dealing with you guys, no wonder Dan went to Rogue River. Rogue River has water. Maybe we should all go to RRVID, they have water. Their just across the street from us. We can dissolve MID. We can do that. The excavators, are they up to date? Where is the money going that you guys took extra last year? Salaries? Maybe we need to cut some of the extra money from those that aren’t producing. Get rid of them, get new, get new board members. I fight really hard to keep my place. I’m disabled but I will go out there and work at 2 o’clock in the morning, and 4 o’clock in the morning to make every water count. I feel for my neighbors, I have to give them hay so they can handle their livestock. I give the hay away to people who need it. Maybe it’s time for you guys to give extra and not get paid for it. The OWRC says that MID has to abide by providing water in an efficient manner to your water users. It's in your bylaws, I’ve read it in the state and OWRC, you pay them over 9K a year, do you go to the seminars?

**Friend**: I’m on the board, yes.

**Karlene**: OK, then damnit learn! We know who you are, get it together, we’ve known you for years. What you say and your bylaws, you need to read your bylaws. You and the board are covered like steel-plated. We need some changes, and we need to get these people some water. I had it for 3 days. Your ditch riders know who has animals who are farmers and get them water. It’s time. Storage, did you guys store some this year?

**Friend**: We are set up to store whatever comes into the lakes.

**Karlene**: Talent Irrigation is supposed to provide you with 6% or 9% of their water, is that right?

**Friend**: 8K af. If it’s there.

**Karlene**: If it’s there? If they don’t store it, they are going to have to get you it later. They have to abide by the agreement.

**Friend**: They have been abiding by every agreement to the “T” this year.

**Karlene**: You guys need to learn how to store water. You better call the association that you are on the board of (OWRC) and get some monies. There are millions of dollars out there to help you.

**Friend**: We just got 5 Million dollars appropriated to our canal piping project this last session.

**Karlene**: That’s really going to help if you guys are saying it’s not going to happen now. Well, what about water storage, they will pay you millions of dollars to store it.

**Friend**: Shavon, if you want to answer the water storage issue. I don’t think there will be any type of storage project happening in the near future.

**Shavon**: It’s all a process. To store additional water that’s not under any current allocation for the district they would have to apply for new storage rights. To apply for a new storage right, part of the review process would be applying for a new water right that would require existing water rights to be met for storing more water. Currently in the basin in the winter months, there are water rights that are considered in-stream water rights so that water needs to stay in these creeks, streams, and rivers for fish population, and recreation, that water has to be there. Currently, those rights aren’t even met right now. It seems fairly irresponsible to issue additional water rights when current water rights are not actually met. The storage thing, those district projects Howard, Hyatt, Emigrant, all the diversions, the points where they take water from creeks and streams to go into the reservoirs are monitored and measured. That is what Jack was showing you historically you are seeing these monitoring stations diverting less and less water every single year. It’s not because the infrastructure is not there to collect it, it’s just not there to collect.

**Karlene**: Well, I beg to differ on some of that. I think you need to get together with the Army Corps of Engineers, and the US Bureau of Reclamation, figure out something that is going to be short-term, and get it done because everybody is going to have multiple storages, either a pond or create their storage. The canals are going to be empty by the time they get to the lower end of Old Stage. It’s like speeding down Old Stage, they speed because they can, the people steel the water, it’s because they can. The neighbor turned off his water so I could water. The new owner used it and there is no water until nighttime, and I don’t have time to play the water game. There are a few of us that are landlocked. Niedermeyer, myself, and others, have no access to runoff, the canal, whatever. But I tell you what, everybody is going to public domain thing go around the fences and tap in. Be prepared. It says in your by-laws that everybody is supposed to have a shutoff.

**Friend**: I think you're referring to the pump shut-off switch so which we cannot be responsible for if there is a discrepancy in the water delivery when water gets around and you don’t have a shut-off valve it will burn up your pumps.

**Unknown Patron**: Equity and communication. That is my complaint. Even the watermasters office doesn’t get back to us. Your credibility Jack is not really high.

**Friend**: I got your email. The hummingbird check is designed to back the water up for a foot valve, on one side of it, the other is not the water disappearing, whatever is going over the top of the check is what were seeing. We have a stream monitoring gauge there, west main and Jacksonville you can see the difference between historical flows, there are no full canals anywhere near Jacksonville this whole time. When the check backs the water up, whatever is going over the top is a reflection of what’s actually flowing down the ditch. While it’s been a struggle, we haven’t been able to get it down there. We haven’t seen the numbers necessary to have a full ditch. The day I responded to you guys, I let you know that the most water that you had that season was coming down. When it didn’t show up, I talked to your wife, and it was unfortunate that it didn’t happen the way we’d planned but nothing really did this year. But I was trying to give you guys as much of an update as possible. Everyone wants an update and if you’re trying to do something that hasn’t been done before it’s really hard to forecast when and if it’s going to get there. I apologize that I didn’t communicate better. It was all hands on deck.

**Bruce Macintyre**: I’m going to echo the others as far as equity and I don’t envy you in trying to equitably distribute water. The other thing I wanted to say is communication. If you can tell us when the water will be at our end would be helpful. We share a pipeline with a few others and if we know when you’re hoping to get water to us, we can split that up. The more information is given to us about what you are trying to do, and we know you can’t promise it but if we had an idea. If we were told it’s past Old Military, we can guestimate about when it will get to us. When the water is there, everyone turns on.

**Friend**: It’s not like I’m going to go to your house and tell you to turn off your pump because we need to get it farther. You haven’t had water this year and not knowing how long that water flows going to last was not enough to actually push it any farther and I can’t tell people that haven’t seen water more than 2 days in the last year to shut off right when the water shows up knowing it’s going to be gone. You’re going to make people unhappy either way.

**Bruce Macintyre**: If I knew it was going to be on for a week I would hold off.

**Friend**: Right and if I knew it was coming for a week, I would have let you know as well. It was the most challenging water season we’ve ever experienced. In the spring we knew it was coming. We developed the web app tool to try to get more of a picture of where the water was at different times. We’ve discussed upgrading the systems that are unable to be on the website to where their call-in station is to where we could put those on the website as well which would be Ross Lane. If you see water at Ross Lane, the water is closer to where you are, and you would know water is coming. That is something that is going to be for next year. Hopefully, with more water, it will be easier to communicate that it is in the area. Here are the gauges to look at, if you are below this address or above this address, we’re trying to push it to get everybody more engaged. For this season there were too many challenges at once to guarantee anything. It was very challenging, and I know that doesn’t suffice as much as getting water does but that’s the challenge we’re working with. It wasn’t a lack of trying; I certainly can communicate better. It is easier when I have the water to send through.

**Bruce Macintyre**: Most people will cooperate if they know what your goal is.

**Eilene Barnett**: I had water for a firebreak and the people below me could have had it. When they’re done there is still water in my ditch. How do I communicate with the ditch-rider or somebody to stop it from coming down my ditch to these people on the other side that is crying for it? How do I communicate that? I called Tammi and I told her all this stuff, but it doesn’t get to anyone.

**Friend**: I don’t know exactly what your situation is, but Tammi does a very good job conveying to the ditch rider. It’s possible the runoff is going to someone else. Are you above Sunnyvale? All those returns and runoffs from the 2-3 laterals in that area off of Old Stage, and it’s possible that he is running his water to other users below you. I’m not familiar with your setup.

**Eilene Barnett**: The diversion is right in front of my house, and I know where the water is going.

**Unknown Patron**: I’ve been coming to the last few board meetings, and I have been working with Jack and Dennis on ideas for the water and they have been communicative. The biggest thing of what everyone here has said today is my opinion if we got to go out and buy 500 to 1000 padlocks and give them to the ditch riders, and everybody is put on a schedule from the north fork and little butte to Dave’s house. That’s what’s going to have to happen because we’ve got challenges and these challenges aren’t going to end this year. It’s going to be here for quite some time. We are going to have to have some ditch riders with some assertion to keep things regulated.

**Ron Pylkki**: This is the old west. This water system is run like it’s the old west. The guy with the biggest gun can do it and the guy with the littlest gun cannot. In the last 3 years, I have only had 7 days of water. I’ve seen the ditch rider 3 times in 3 years. I’m told the ditch rider runs the water. Equity and communication and information.

**Teresa Bryant**: If you know that there is a full ditch and you know that some cleanup needs to be done, I don’t know why it’s not happening to help people get more water. Is there only one excavator?

**Friend**: No there are 2 excavators and they have moved around when there is an emergency.

**Teresa Bryant**: So, wouldn’t that be an emergency though?

**Friend**: There’s lots of them yes.

**Teresa Bryant**: Sounds like a lack of manpower.

**Friend**: We moved one of them on Ross Lane because the weeds were so choked.

**Teresa Bryant**: During the wintertime, isn’t that when all the maintenance should be happening anyway before the season starts? I don’t know why that’s not happening. If there is no water and no one is irrigating, what’s everybody doing at MID to get things prepared for the season? That ditch is not prepared at all. I called and talked to the ditch rider and got excuse after excuse. With no emergency and no water that should be a top priority. Yes, there are holes. And to speak for ag, doesn’t get priority? I’m ag and shouldn’t we be getting water first? My field is dead, even if I got water now it’s gone now. It’s not like I can get it back.

**Matt Bryant**: We live on the corner of Old Stage and Beall. We have 15 acres of hay. I’m going to speak to the masses here probably the diligent water users. There are a lot of people violating. I called my ditch rider which, I think they do a good job. I need a board pulled for McCaskey Creek. We cannot pull the board, but you can for now. I didn’t want to do that for it would anger my neighbors. We have people who are here for the fire which is valid and people for ag which is valid. The biggest problem in Oregon is we have poor forest management if you want to go from the top down, to where we have issues. Now, I watch the water and agree with Jack, the snowpack and it was snowpack on the other side of McLoughlin and the lakes are high and we not getting a lot of drainages. For us in here, we can vote but I don’t think voting the board off is a solution. You all can vote, you can go to the state level for people who help manage our forests, manage our water systems better. There are a lot of things that we can do there. Now going back to MID, the P&L and Balance Sheet looks pretty good. So, you could sub out contractors to dig that ditch up. I know when we flood irrigate, if we don’t clean our ditch, it takes twice as long to get our water than it needs to. If we clear our ditch, and our fields, it flows. We have 4 ft. tall stalks as big around as my pinky, the water is not going to flow to us, and there are a lot of people complaining and it is valid cause it is not there. That is just poor management on your side. You have enough money to hire me. There are things this board can do and as a community can do. I don’t know how to police the people that are abusing the system. It needs to be resolved. You have got to change it. Here are state regulations. There are ways around it like grants. Rogue River is piping a section that is a huge deal for them. Not only did it get ahead of pressure and got to a lot of people that were able to use less water and more frequently and beneficial. That might not be for all of us but still in your lifetime. We can all complain but we need solutions. I would like to see a temporary solution to these ditches. The biggest thing I see is violations of water rights users. The next thing is poor management of the ditches. So, when you say that you have a ton of holes to fill, that’s because of wildlife and there are cracks and other deficiencies. There has been deferred maintenance and it’s caught up to us. Those need to be done and you’ve got the money to be done. If you can’t handle it in-house, because you can’t hire the guys then farm it out and get it done. You have a service to the community that we all pay taxes for. That’s what we pay for. I pay to get my water. When I walk out and see everyone watering their beautiful lawns, some guy was watering his field. We had the fire at my project manager’s place. We went up there and he’s got his water hose, he’s watering the tips of the flames that are just about to reach his ponderosa pines. If I walk or drive the canal, the weeds are that high. Not only is it a fire hazard that needs to be taken care of, but the maintenance that is on patrons’ properties also needs to be addressed. Under this board, you need to address these issues and come up with a solution. If you can’t get the current crew to be like a sheriff, then you need to hire someone that can be to crack down on these violators. Then the ditch riders can do their job of monitoring the water.

**Joel Slaughter:** I’ve been 52 years on that ditch, and the earliest concrete ditch that goes through our property. We’ve watched all of this and in the last 5, 6, or 7 years it’s gone downhill. I’ve called and the secretaries are so tired of me saying I’ve got leaks in this ditch. When I started flooding my property and paying the yearly fee, I was told I was responsible for the downhill side of the ditch. It would flow over the top in those days, which would fill my well, in those days. I’m not into drinking water out of the ditch for my house. I’ve had to drain my well, treat it and go back and kill it and that would happen 4 or 5 times a year. We got that fixed. Now we’ve got this concrete that’s disintegrating but it’s on the uphill side so no one takes care of it. What happens is the water level in the ditch, I took the valves off because I fill the thing below the ditch just so the water would flow out of it. I follow that and I don’t leave it open. It used to be open and caused a fountain that would cross the road into the people’s driveway. I would open the gate and 2 or 3 hours later I had to shut the water off. That was 20 years ago, today, there’s no water. Upstream from my house, there are 2 big farms that have been irrigating for 3 months and we’ve had it for less than 2 weeks. It’s ridiculous.

**O’Donoghue:** What farms are those, Jack?

**Friend:** I’m not sure which ones.

**Joel Slaughter:** The blackberries are extremely overgrown and could fill this room. There are at least half a dozen dams from my house to Jacksonville that were never there. That changes the whole flow.

**Friend:** They are called check structures and there isn’t a regulation however it depends on the actual location, and it has to be removable. It has to be a removable check structure. It has to meet district approval for a removable and adjustable.

**O’Donoghue:** Are we tracking those Jack?

**Friend:** We respond to them. A pump station has to have above the foot valve a certain depth and check structures for that. The fact that we are seeing more and some that are not ever removable has been an issue this year. Those have to be removed. As long as they are removable and at the appropriate height, it’s never been an issue keeping water from someone else. If it does, we are able to pull it out.

**Matt Bryant:** What it does is it impedes flow and velocity which then we have a lot of weeds in the ditch that impedes more flow. We don’t have enough flow because it goes, pond and other hundred yards and pond another hundred yards a pond. You don’t have that. You can get everyone to get a shovel, dig down put a trough in level with the bottom of the deal, fill it with drain rock and set the pump down and that’s it. Don’t block the rest, when the ditch is dry, your out. Not only that, we are on a rotation. One week on and two weeks off. We were when we had water. That’s how every other neighbor should be all the way down. So, that’s how you get to those people who have pumps in the ditch pump all the time. I’m not saying that it is the ditch riders’ responsibility to turn it off, but it needs to be done.

**Nancy Vaughn:** The weeds are so bad you need to have a flash flood to get any water.

**Eilene Barnett:** You need to get it all together. What’s the use to have recreational water if all our houses burn down? What’s most important? I think most people would agree that saving your house and property over kids swimming in their yard. It all boils down to management.

**O’Donoghue:** Who’s the neighbor that is running 24/7? Jack, I would really like us to start tracking violators. We need to get with our lawyer.

**Ronald Avery:** Do you have a detailed version map that has all of your canals to show where we get our water from?

**Friend:** We do, it depends on how detailed you want it.

**Ronald Avery:** It shows a broad area. It shows the main canals and how they branch out.

**Friend:** Some of those private lines, we don’t have detail to it from the ditch down. From the ditch, it’s going to be high level as that one, but it will show detailed laterals and the district laterals. Down there those laterals are a private system.

**Ronald Avery:** We would like to have a meeting with our ditch rider to explain and show where we get our water from. So there can be more eyes and ears out to report back to MID if necessary. You have some smart people here that have a vested interest in and are helpful.

**Friend:** We have that data on our website that links to see the actual flows, it’s all getting pushed down the canal. For most of the canals we push as hard as we can and when there is moss, we clean out. It will drop it a foot, but it still has the same flow. Showing too much data on the site would be more of a problem than a solution. Companies making inquiries about a particular parcel may not call or check on the status of that parcel which could lead to many issues.

**Matt:** I know you cannot make water and you are trying to do the best you can with what water that you have available for us. We’ve had crops that we didn’t harvest last year and only 2 weeks of water for our crops this year. All the people in the room, today have voiced their concerns and issues are all in conflict with each other. This system has created an environment here that if we can change it so we can use water more efficiently, there is no way we are going to be able to fix everything that you all brought up. I’ve been with Harry & David for 23 years and the graphs that were shown signify a much-needed change and to keep the passion that you all have today going because there is a lot to do. Every time there is a drought, people get upset and something changes, it rains, and we stop. The passion needs to stay. This isn’t going away. If we started the WISE project years ago this would be a whole different conversation. I think everyone should be metered. You know how much water you get and when you’re done. If you flood irrigate your allotment isn’t going to be enough unless you try to use a better efficient system. TID had a horrible year last year and they had a room full of people just like this. They made changes and we will find out on the 23rd whether they did better or not. You’ve got some folks that have some great ideas, and you have a list to choose from. You guys can’t make water and you can’t think that they will make the water and the system. Just a full pathway of bureaucratic changes in water rights management and it is like you would have to hire a whole staff for the southern area to undo Oregon Revised Statutes. There is money to do that, but you have to have somebody who is organized and committed to doing that. I know these guys are trying hard. If it doesn’t rain this winter. Come back and keep going. Even if we got plenty of rain and snowpack you should be able to come in and still talk about this.

**Unknown Patron**:This whole thing seems to be out of MID’s control. The other districts seemed to be getting a little bit more of a handle on it. What is Jackson County doing? Jackson county has lots of money. They talked about water parks and ugly art downtown. I’m sure if you quit today, you would be a lot healthier. I appreciate what you are trying to do, it’s just there is stuff from all sides. You are not getting the support you need. There is a canal just a few steps away from me that’s full and where is that water going? This is a fire hazard, and we all have all this vegetation. The water is going down to the ones that would have a senior right. The fire will hit all of us. The lack of equity that is in our homes and they would be assets there dying. We cannot work in these vacuums. It has to be spread out where we have a percentage and it’s working well with us. As far as the well water metered, absolutely not. I will not allow myself well to be metered. We need Jackson County involved in this. Funds have to flow. This whole valley is in danger here. Communication is the main thing for us. Don’t you get frustrated when there is water in the ditches, and they cannot get it to the people who need it?

**Jack**: My hands are tied. That is not my water, and I cannot take Rogue River’s water and put it in our system.

**O’Donoghue:** That’s the Jackson County solution. I don’t know why there are three or four water districts, it should be one district, the Rogue Valley Water District.

**Matt Bryant:** It is at the state level. Look at who starts a lot of these fires, the homeless. I’m in the building industry. We burn more of our lumber than we harvest in this state. When things are good and the water is great, we don’t care. Our neighbor takes more water than me, but we still get our share. We are at a stage where we can make a difference. There are a lot of crazy things happening in our state that can be adjusted by people just speaking up for themselves.

 Jackson County is where to start. Despite what we think about Salem, we are going to have to go to Salem.

**Dave:** I want to stick up for Jack and the staff a little bit. I think it’s the perfect storm. Matt from Harry & David touched on a little bit, we can’t make water. The ditch has some issues. As far as management they have a very difficult situation to deal with here. You got 900af to start with when we normally have 8,000af in a normal year. Combined storage, in the better years, is 100K+af. With this year only about 23Kaf. I know what you all are dealing with for I am the end user. It spills from my property to Rogue River Valley. Discussions will be had during the fall. Changes will have to be made if this is our future as far as what we have available. Changes will have to be made or we won’t have a district, or we will have half a district. What those same things are yet, I don’t know. I don’t know if we have the answers here today. There will be something. MID has the water rights. How we utilize those when they are available, and how they are available this year they have nearly a tenth of what we normally would have available to us. There has been a decline in the past 7 years. There have been other droughts and memories fade when we have a good winter. The point is, the staff is trying very hard. We will assemble and if this is our future, again changes will have to be made. We will do our best to figure this out.

**Ron Pylkki:** Are you going to defer fees this year?

**Friend:** As far as fees, being on the board of the OWRC, we’ve been actively working to get drought relief funding that would be in the form of a credit that we could apply to an account. How that’s going to work and if it’s going to happen is undetermined. People were successful with-it last year. It just didn’t get approved until after assessments went out for most districts. So, this year it’s crucial that they get it done sooner than later so before assessments go out there will be a credit on their account. If that happens, wonderful. I hate to bring it up and have it not work out because of some legislative issue or political issue. That is something that is out there that we are working on. That is where OWRC comes in handy, they advocate for issues that we have and they have their own lobbyist. They help lobby for things that need to be fixed and that’s one of them. I know you want the water more than the money.

**Henry:** I appreciate you guys all coming. I listened to everything everybody had to say here. I don’t have a problem with that. We do a better job of communication and this board, and the management is doing the best job and will be working harder for better changes.

**O’Donoghue:** We hear you; we have a lot to work on, and we appreciate it. Hope to see you in the future.

**XI. Adjourn:** Chairman O’Donoghue adjourned the Regular Board meeting at 3:34 p.m.

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Dennis O’Donoghue – Chairman Jack Friend – District Manager/Secretary