

## Rim Trail Domestic Water Improvement District Board Meeting Minutes

Date: July 2, 2024

Location: Virtual (Zoom)

**DRAFT (until approved at next Board Meeting)**

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Will Regg
2. Roll was called – Chairman Will Regg - (WR), Vice Chairman JT Driscoll (JTD), Treasurer Secretary John Tanner (JT), Ray Tanner (RT), and a quorum was established. Parliamentarian Jeff Manly (JM) was not present.  
Dan Utz (DU), District Water Operator, and Steve Stevens (SS), District Manager were in attendance
3. Approval of minutes for board meetings on June 12 and June 21. With no comments from the Board, JTD motioned to accept the minutes from June 21 as presented. JTD seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously. JTD explained that the minutes from June 12 had been updated to reflect that no outdoor watering was permitted due to the restriction. JT motioned to approve the minutes. JTD seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
4. Reports:
  - Treasurer: RT stated that he would like to forgo the treasurer's report since he had just given one a week prior. He also deferred the time to the very full agenda and asked the DM and Operator to do the same.
  - District Manager:

**Well Report.** All wells were pumping at 11,800 gals today. SS assumed that they were doing the same today. A marked improvement over last month. Brandon from Central AZ Pump looked at the well on Tuesday the 18<sup>th</sup>. They ran the well for an hour and it never quit. Afterwards, he wrote, "I spoke to Mike Ploughe about today's well test and he speculates there was a plug that worked its way loose or the well was stressed from over-pumping and just needed rest. He would still like the pump pulled and the casing examined but we should wait until we have full reservoirs because the well might be down for 2 or 3 days.' SS had trouble using the sounder in Well 4 today, it was getting stuck in mud at 23Ft."

    - It is to be noted that well 4 has a steel casing going down 20' then a PVC casing continuing down to 120'. 23' would be about where the first section runs out.

DU interjected to correct SS's statement. DU spoke with Brandon from Central AZ Pump, not Mike Ploughe. SS said that Mike Ploughe had written the note above. DU stated that the quote is from his own notes and assured SS that Mike Ploughe and Brandon never spoke.

Automation. With your staff not living in Rim Trail we need to consider automation to turn off the wells when they become full. We don't want to waste water by overflow of the tanks. With your staff not living in Rim Trail we need to consider automation to turn off the wells when they become full. (it could happen!) We don't want to waste water by overflow of the tanks.

Well 4. As discussed above well #4 still needs to be inspected by pulling the pump and finding out what the problem is. We need to wait until the main tanks are full to shut down this well. The well saver is non-functional and a new one has been ordered.

Well 3. This well is servicing WTK and the main tanks. We are also looking at the well saver for this well too.

Well 2. This well is working fine.

**Water Treatment Plant.** I (SS) previously sent a report to the board from Mike Ploughe about the water treatment plant and his plans to get it operational again. In short, he wants to see if we can get it running without the Ketadyne filters and run at a low capacity. Part of Mike's plan is to do a back flush on the mixed media filters which will take about 3000 gals of water. Again we will wait till the main tanks are full to do this. My (SS) suggestion is do this back flush then fill the tanks again, then pull well 4.

Mike is willing to work with Dan to get this running. He is the best qualified hydrologist in the state and he consults with companies all over the southwest. His going rate is \$100/hr. I (SS) think it would be in our best interest to allocate some number of hours per week for him to help us on this project.

#### **Alternative Sources of Water**

Water Treatment Plant – Discussed above. Running at 5 gals per min. 7,200 gals/ day

Pine Creek Canyon DWID - \$30 / 1000 gals + hauling charges (same cost for PSWID and Pine)

Jim's Water Service has a 6500 gal tanker truck in Tempe 4 hours round trip at \$450/hr. Add water loading and unloading time

- 450 x 2 travel to Rim Trail (\$900)
- 450 x 2 to load and unload (\$900)
- 450 x 2 travel to Tempe (\$900\_
- Total = \$2700 for hauling 6500 gals (add cost of water)

JT inquired about an update regarding a water share agreement with Mark Pond's well. RT pointed out that it was an agenda item and the question was tabled.

#### 5. Agenda Items

- **Current Water Restriction.** WR restated that the water restriction was implemented on June 12 because we had a couple of weeks, a problem with well 4 and were experiencing very high use. A restriction is the last thing a Board would want but it was absolutely necessary. The Board received a lot of feedback in support of the restriction. The restriction has been very effective. The discussion is whether the Board should continue or lift the restriction. DU reported that the main reservoirs are at 46% and WTK at 72%. We were 93% full before the break on July 29 and

went as low as 21%. Raised to 46% in 3 days. WR suggested that with the Holiday pending and the fact that we would have to repair well 4 that we should not lift the restriction. RT agreed that we should wait until after the Holiday and that our restrictions are not onerous. WR stated that no vote was needed to continue the restriction. SS asked that we review the long term usage history that he had shared earlier that day. WR pointed out that he could not share the report because it contained personal usage. It was a report for the last week. A couple of people used more than 1000 gallons. A few residents have meters going backwards. One resident used 7,000 ga. WR asked if SS had contacted that extreme user. SS stated that he had just run the report and had not acted on it. WR requested that SS contact the highest user immediately to make them aware of the restriction. RT inquired about the meters running backward. SS stated that this means they do not have a backflow prevention valve. WR requested that SS contact all residents with meters going backward to make them aware that they must have a backflow valve. The meters running backward are also making the total water use reports be inaccurate. SS stated that the regulations state that the District will install the meter and charge the resident. SS suggested a strongly worded letter. RT pointed out that we don't know what is being drawn into our system. WR requested a plan and timeline for the operator and manager to contact everyone who does not have a backflow and shut-off valve. DU estimates that it will cost about \$400.

- **Plan of action to optimize well #4.** WR asked DU and SS for a plan and timing to pull the pump. SS suggested to wait for the holiday, fill the tank and then pull the pump. WR noted that we have had difficulty scheduling with a driller and asked SS to schedule a date when he estimates that they tanks will be full. RT asked DU if he would respond to the questions he had emailed DU earlier that week about well #4. SS was not aware of the questions. RT repeated them. 1. What is the anticipated cost to pull the pump, and determine the problem? SS spoke to Lavene Pump who estimated it would cost \$3000 to come up and pull the well but it was a long while ago and a new quote was needed. RT suggested Brandon who is local and would not require a trip charge. Brandon had also just been out to examine the well. RT's Question 2 – when could the work be done? Question 3: What is the best and worst-case cost estimate? Question 4 – would the driller be willing to join a Board meeting. SS had no answers to any of these questions. RT suggested that we could call Brandon and get the answers right now. SS stated that he has a problem with getting approval. He thinks that he has to manage by committee and that he does not have the authority because he has to get approval to hire a vendor. Tracy Clapham (resident) spoke up saying that she does not understand why SS would have a problem working for a Board. She stated that she had read emails stating that SS was going to bring up his lack of authority. TC stated that a board is needed. WR asked the public to stay on track and asked SS again to get a quote and stated that the Board has already given authority to choose a vendor and schedule the inspection. WR clarified that an expensive repair would require approval. RT stated that SS had a lot of authority as long as he stays within the budget. RT stated that Harry thinks everyone should have a slush fund. Harry is the biggest reason we have restrictions because of so many special assessments, tax assessments. WR asked to stay on topic

ad appreciated if we could stay away from conjecture and what has happened in the past. JTD stated that he wanted SS to leave with a clear expectation and the authority to act. He stated that had SS brought a proposal today, the Board would vote and we would be proceeding next week. JTD repeated WR's request for a proposal and a plan. SS stated that he had called a contractor and then realized he needed approval so he canceled the appointment. JTD inquired who SS had asked for approval. SS stated that he had called the Board. JTD stated that he had never heard about the request. SS said that RT turned his request down. RT pointed out that he had asked SS about a \$3,000 trip charge and SS had never responded. No request had actually been made. WR restated clearly that the plan was for SS to contact a well company and schedule a time after the holiday to get the well pulled. SS has full authority to take that action. JTD asked SS if he has the authority he needed to take this step. SS stated that he does not think he does nor that he ever did. He feels micromanaged in general. JTD redirected his question to just this current topic about well #4. SS announced his resignation effective immediately and stated that he would present his letter of resignation to the Board. He continued to begin to list his grievances about having too many priorities and not enough authority to get them done. JTD interrupted and told SS that the Board was not interested in hearing his resignation during the active Board meeting. JTD agreed that this resignation was a good decision. The Board needs to take responsibility but he feels that SS had failed to bring any actionable solutions to the Board. JTD stated that SS's presence was no longer needed in the meeting. WR agreed. SS disconnected. WR stated that the plan did not change other than that DU would schedule with the well company. DU stated that he would call Brandon right away.

- **Proposed Solution to Water Treatment Plant.** JT stated that Mike Ploughe had given a good report in the last Board meeting. DU and Paul Utz (PU) have spent some time at the plant. The plant only runs for a while and then shuts off. We will need a smaller pump for a slower flow rate to keep turbidity down to about 6 ga/min. MP also suggested we move and clean the intake line. Starting the plant will probably take a month or longer. RT referred to a report showing that the district had spent nearly \$250,000 on the plant. RT would like to see the work continue. Don Ascoli, Bruce Johnson, and RT in 2019 tried to get the Katadyn filter to work. RT thinks we need to focus on filtering virgin creek water first. After that we should focus on turbidity and iron. The problem with the iron might be a combination of the cold water and electricity from the plant. We might be able to get an exemption from ADEQ about iron and turbidity. Don Ascoli suggested a flocculation system in 2018 and Katadyn filters which would need to be replaced twice each day. WR summarized calling the plant an excellent asset in theory, but it has been a thorn in the side of the District. WR does not think we should invest more money into it at this time due to other priorities. RT agreed 100% but cautioned the Board to continue to work on the plant. The next step would be to obtain a variance from ADEQ for iron turbidity. RT will share a summary from an engineering company report from the past. JTD offered to help DU to find info about an ADEQ variance.
- **Alternative Water Sources.** WR stated that the water hauling sources presented by SS earlier were not cost-effective. RT suggested that Mark Ponds well might be the best solution. It's a

deep well – about 500 feet. RT had asked SS for details but SS failed to respond. Questions 1. What is the cost? 2. General terms of the agreement? 3. Who else shares the well? 4. Is the sub flow part of the E Verde River? JTD agreed with RT and stated that the communication from Mark Pond to his representative to SS to the Board had broken down and that he was in strong support of restarting communication. RT and DU pointed out that Mark Pond's well was already connected to the district's system. WR will take the lead in gathering this information by contacting Mark Pond directly so that DU can focus on well #4.

- **Replacement of Infrastructure near Rim Trail and Belluzi.** DU has had conversations with Hooter Haught and Joe Brown about replacing the main line running across Belluzi. This is the line that has leaked multiple times due to rusting galvanized pipes. Joe Brown and Paul Wirth are hesitant to give a quote because they don't know what the infrastructure looks like under the road. DU has asked for quotes to repair the main line that broke and then an hourly cost to fix whatever is found. JTD thanked Dan for his good work on this line this weekend. In a high-use weekend, while well 4 is not optimized, Dan had the patch on hand, enough water stored, and fixed the leak with no loss to any resident. DU will report to the Board as soon as he has quotes from two contractors. The County will have to blue-stake the Cragan line. The main line goes into PVC on both sides of the road but the galvanized lines need to be replaced. JTD inquired about needing to close Belluzi. DU stated that the operator would handle that for us. DU will have 2 or 3 quotes. JTD requested that RT and DU make sure that Hooter Haught gets paid quickly. The district has a reputation for not paying quickly. RT said that the only incident of slow pay was when the district was waiting for WIFI funds.
- **Water Conservation Committee.** JTD made a public call for volunteers and provided his mobile number for anyone who would like to join the Committee.
- **WIFA remaining funds and next application.** WR stated that, as determined earlier in the meeting, the plan is to use the remaining WIFA funds to repair infrastructure under Belluzi. RT inquired about paying for the 4 Master Meters that have not been installed. Paul Wirth has not been available. RT suggested that we find another plumber. DU will find another provider and get the meters installed quickly.
- DU brought up another issue with Tracy Clapham's properties. There are 2 properties with only 1 meter. The meter had been removed and DU wasn't sure if there should be a charge to replace it or for pack charges for water. Tracy Clapham has documentation for paying for 2 meters and claims that a past district operator had required them to remove one of them. For many years there has been a hose from 1 lot to another. Tracy wants to re-install a 2<sup>nd</sup> meter. Due to this very unusual situation, the district and Tracy agreed to split the cost of installing a new meter evenly. DU will contact a plumber to install a meter and check valve and backflow.

6. **Call to the Public:** Tiffany Pankow thanked the board members for all of the work to keep our water supply safe and available. She offered her help. Tom Moore expressed appreciation to the Board.
7. **Call to Staff and Board Members for non-agenda items, updates, and recommendations for future meetings.** There were no additional comments from the Board.
8. **Possible Executive Session:** not needed
9. **Schedule Next Board Meeting:** JTD suggested that the next meeting be in person. WR suggested that we wait to schedule until we have quotes to review to replace the infrastructure under Belluzi. JTD inquired if the fire station was available. WR will call the Chief to coordinate a meeting. JTD suggested that we tentatively schedule the next meeting pending quotes for Belluzi. The meeting was tentatively scheduled for Saturday, July 27<sup>th</sup> at Noon at the firehouse. That will give DU 3 ½ weeks to get a quote and for RT to get a response from WIFA.
10. **Adjournment:** RT motioned to adjourn at 7:59 PM. JT seconded. The motion was unanimously passed. RT thanked the Board and residents for their cooperation during the water crisis.