

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS
OF SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT #3
OF THE RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

October 9, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

8805 Independence Way, Alamosa, CO 81101

And By Zoom/Teleconference

Present: LeRoy Salazar, President; Nathan Coombs, Vice-President/Secretary/Treasurer; Doug Bagwell, Manager; Warren Crowther, Manager; Ruben Sandoval, Manager; and, Elliott Salazar, Ex-Officio Member.

Absent: Sam Vance, Manager.

Staff and Consultants: Pete Ampe, Hill & Robbins, P.C; Cleave Simpson, General Manager; Amber Pacheco, Deputy General Manager; Angelo Bellah, Program Manager; Rose Vanderpool, Program Assistant; Chris Ivers, Program Manager; Crystal Benevidez, HCP Coordinator/Program Assistant; Linda Ramirez, Program Assistant; Wylie Keller, Water Resource Specialist; Kylie Gregg, Office Manager; Michael Carson, Database Administrator; Clinton Phillips, Davis Engineering; and, April Mondragon, Administrative Assistant.

Guests: Bryce Bechaver, Austin Miller, Michelle Lanzoni.

Meeting Called to Order

President Salazar called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. A quorum was present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Doug Bagwell led the opening prayer.

Approval of the Agenda

President Salazar added a discussion on the report from the PRT meeting to the agenda. He asked for any other amendments or a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made by Doug Bagwell to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Elliott Salazar and unanimously approved.

Public Comment

President Salazar asked for public comment. Bryce Bechaver asked to participate in the Alpha lot development discussion.

Review and Possible Action on Preliminary 2024 Budget

President Salazar asked for review and possible action on preliminary 2024 budget. Angelo Bellah presented the Subdistrict No. 3 2023 budget. He highlighted the anticipated balance to the end of year expenses, remaining balances and the total remaining funds for water management. Mr. Bellah presented the proposed budget for 2024. He reported on an increase to the admin fee, the total beginning fund balance, total proposed revenue for 2023 to collect in 2024 and the total proposed revenue. Mr. Bellah went over the proposed expenses for 2024 including a drop in service expenditures and the total professional expenditures. He highlighted the water management expenditures, proposed stream impact expenditures and the total ending fund balance. Amber Pacheco explained the remaining funds from the CWCB loan are shown as income to the Subdistrict. President Salazar asked about the increase to the legal and engineering expenditures. Pete Ampe reported on the plan to file a change case on the Alpha water rights late this year or early next year. Mr. Bellah provided the anticipated administrative fee and sustainability projected expenses for active and inactive wells. He also provided the groundwater withdrawal fee for active sprinkler, flood and other well categories.

A motion was made by Elliott Salazar to approve the Subdistrict No. 3 2024 budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Ruben Sandoval and unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Nathan Coombs to approve the Subdistrict No. 3 preliminary 2024 proposed fees using the five (5) year pumping average as presented. The motion was seconded by Doug Bagwell and unanimously approved.

Discussion on Alpha Large Lot Development

President Salazar asked for the discussion on Alpha large lot development. He reminded the Board one lot had been sold and asked for discussion on how to market the remaining lots. Angelo Bellah reminded the Board of the discussion on a minimum bid of \$2,000 per acre. Discussion was held on

marketing the lots through a real estate agency or on their own, the need to recoup costs, potential interest from the community and/or the County Commissioners. Bryce Bechaver expressed interest in purchasing the property, with the understanding no water rights would be included. President Salazar asked Nathan Coombs to reach out to the County Commissioners to see if there is any interest in the property, then seek bids for lots or the entire property. Clinton Phillips asked if the Board wanted to file a division of land. Elliott Salazar explained a January 31st deadline in connection with tax purposes and the highest bidder would be reasonable. Mr. Coombs commented in respects to Mr. Bechaver's request for the entire remaining property, and suggested the plat be registered with the county. Mr. Bellah reported he would be presenting on the sale of the property to the Board of Directors at their next meeting.

A motion was made by Doug Bagwell to get the sale of the property approved by the Board of Directors, move forward with seeking bids at a minimum of \$2,000 per acre and file the plat map. The motion was seconded by Elliott Salazar and unanimously approved.

Discuss Potential Measures to Achieve Aquifer Sustainability

President Salazar asked for discussion on potential measures to achieve aquifer sustainability. Clinton Phillips presented the long-term history report and graphs on monitoring wells CON1, CON2, P03, P07 and P12. President Salazar highlighted some of the measurements taken by other Subdistricts in connection with achieving aquifer sustainability. He described the decrease in the long term well pumping history on CON1 and CON2. Mr. Salazar explained the option of a mandatory cut back of groundwater pumping. He reported on the reliable well measurements, increase of sufficient farming and the decreased pumping over the last few years with a continued decline in the aquifer. President Salazar reported on a discussion BBA had with Dr. William Schreüder regarding storage. He explained his suggestions to maintain and create a sustainable aquifer (copy attached). Doug Bagwell commented on mother nature and the need to get back into a normal cycle. Warren Crowther stated a work session would be beneficial to discuss ideas. Nathan Coombs also liked the idea of holding a work session in order to begin to formalize plans. He reported being in favor of a program that would incentivize fallow crops. Elliott Salazar asked the Board to consider discontinuing pumping one (1) week to ten (10) days prior to the end of the season to see what kind of difference it would make. Discussion was held on when to hold a work session. Rose Vanderpool reminded the Board of the WaterSmart work session scheduled at the Ski Hi Complex. President Salazar directed staff to set up a work session with the inclusion of a notice on the possibility of mandatory pumping cutbacks and or allocations. Staff was also directed to invite the Subdistrict well owners. Cleave Simpson updated the Board on legislative matters and reported Wylie Keller was doing a good job managing the SB22-028 program.

Discuss How to Supplement SB228 Fund in Subdistrict No. 3

President Salazar asked for discussion on how to supplement SB22-028 funds in Subdistrict No. 3. Wylie Keller reported receiving applications from all of the Subdistricts except 3 and 5. He provided the dollar amount that has been allocated, the funds remaining, and he explained the guidelines for the first and second round programs.

Next Meeting

The next quarterly meeting was scheduled for December 7, 2023, at 8:00 a.m.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m.



President



Vice-President/Secretary/Treasurer

Maintaining and Creating a Sustainable Aquifer in SD3

Suggestions by LeRoy:

Incentive program by District

1. For wells with a 5 year pumping history:
 - a. Select a well or designated group of wells with a 5 year history.
 - b. Agree to reduce by 5% for next 5 years:
 - c. District pays \$100/ac ft for each acre foot of reduction below the 5 year average.
 - d. Penalty of \$150/ac-ft at the end of 5 years if conditions have not been met.
2. Mandatory cutback on all wells of 5% as an initial starting point, then 10% if the aquifer continues to decline.
3. District pays an additional incentive for wells that the current program ^{SB 228} buyout provides.
4. For example if the buyout now is for #3,000/ac-ft pumped based on a 5 year pumping average then the district would add \$1,000/ acre foot for that buyout.
5. *Raise fees to encourage conservation & provide for incentive payments*
6. *Buy more water & recharge it*