

**STERLING COUNTY UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

August 12, 2024

Members present: Vice Chairman Kade Hodges, Wes Glass, Cliff Caldwell, Ross McCrea, General Manager; Diana Thomas and Technician; Ashley Masters.

Visitors present: Karen Hodges, accountant.

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 P.M. by Kade Hodges, Vice Chairman of the Board.

Wes Glass moved to accept the minutes of the previous meeting. Cliff Caldwell seconded the motion and it carried.

Accountant, Karen Hodges, presented the regular bills to the Board. After reviewing the bills as presented, Wes Glass moved to transfer \$6,000 from the MMDA to the checking account, and to pay all bills. Bills were standard in addition to a consultation with legal counsel. Ross McCrea seconded, and the motion passed.

The Manager's report included: WTWMA in San Angelo, Streamline cybersecurity webinar, TWDB at Dove Creek, and TAGD virtual Executive Committee meeting. WTWMA had 3 operations in June, totaling 12 operations so far in the 2024 season. The outlook remains hot and dry with triple digit temperatures expected. The cybersecurity webinar reinforced recommendations from previous cybersecurity training. The TWDB installed transducers for streamflow and water depth measurements at Dove Creek Springs and Diana joined in the cool-water field work! The TAGD Executive Committee discussed next year's budget and hotel meeting contracts.

Well surveillance included water well level measurements for 37 monitor wells throughout the county, with 5 wells not measured. The rain gauge network was downloaded and presented to the Board. Staff believes aging infrastructure has contributed to errors and omissions in the data and are currently assessing options for replacement or restructuring of the network.

A Notice of Intent to Drill was received for a livestock well for G. Burleson, an irrigation well for the Sterling County nursing home, and a livestock well for L. Foster.

The well camera was operated for a well in Irion County. A water screening was performed for S. Katsaros.

Diana Thomas presented business account options and interest rates currently offered at Pinnacle Bank. Discussion included current bank comparison, how to maximize interest while maintaining enough funds in current accounts to fund district activities through tax collection, and potentially better rates at another banking institution. Wes Glass moved to open a new interest-bearing bank account with check writing availability at the institution offering the highest interest rate. In conjunction, the Sonora CD will not be auto renewed to allow for an assessment of CD terms and interest rates and to potentially provide additional funds to maximize interest on the new banking account. Cliff Caldwell seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Diana Thomas reviewed the personnel evaluations presented last month. Following discussion Cliff Caldwell moved to award a 3% cost of living salary increase for the next fiscal year and award \$4,000 in merit pay in this fiscal year each for the District Manager and Technician. Wes Glass seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The budget workshop included an estimation of total operating expenses by the end of the current fiscal year and implications for the next fiscal year. Notice on increasing insurance rates, increases in payroll, and expected hydrologist review of management to the DFC were all factored into proposed expenses. Various tax rates were assessed with needed cash reserve transfers compared to pass a balanced budget.

Cliff Caldwell moved to propose a FY 2024-2025 Budget of 173,250 in total operating expenses, as recommended by the General Manager and amended at the direction of the Board. This proposed budget reflects \$10,250 of additional expenses over the previously adopted budget. Wes Glass seconded, and the motion passed.

Cliff Caldwell moved to propose a 2024 tax rate of \$0.01415 which is the No New Revenue tax rate. The proposed tax rate is estimated to raise \$151,585 in funds for the District at a 99% collection rate. Ross McCrea seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business Wes Glass moved and Ross McCrea seconded to adjourn at 2:24 PM.



Attesting Signature



Presiding Officer

Date: 9-8-2024