

REDWOOD VALLEY COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
2370 Webb Ranch Road
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Redwood Valley, California 95470
(707) 485-0679

Minutes
Board of Directors
Special Meeting
Redwood Valley Grange Hall,
Wednesday, December 8, 2010

Directors Present: Donald Butow, Jeanette Hallman, Granville Pool, Merle Reuser

Directors Excused: Hal Voegel

Staff Present: Bill Koehler, General Manager
Linda Groth, Secretary Board of Directors

Others Present: Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL.

Granville Pool, Jeanette Hallman, Merle Reuser, Donald Butow

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF TOPIC.

Board President Butow welcomed those in attendance and provided an overview of the Districts efforts, for more than 13 years, in searching for a solution to the Districts limited water rights and lack of another water storage location. Since the RVCWD is a public entity, the Board of Directors needs direction from its customer base. A letter was mailed to all customers urging attendance at either this meeting or the meeting scheduled for next Wednesday, December 15th, for an open discussion between members of the public and the Board of Directors and Staff because an opportunity has arisen to purchase land located at a feasible site for access to the Districts transmission main.

General Manager Koehler was introduced. He stated that he has worked at RVCWD for the past 4 years and during that time he has expended many efforts to locate a pond site for RVCWD water storage, among other things. During that time he has identified properties as far away as Marina Drive, but nothing has developed to the point that the Board of Directors has something to bring the matter to a further public hearing. The State Water Board rules have changed several times throughout this journey, but now a local vineyard property on Road D is for sale and it is the most suitable location throughout the Valley to build a pit pond for District water storage. It consists of 75 acres and much of it is off-stream land. It is possible that we would have to condemn 3-4 adjacent properties to obtain off-stream land. We would comply with the Department of Dam Safety guidelines. The pit would hold 1700 – 2000 acre-feet of water and would have a 65' berm, which is pretty significant to the neighbors, and which could possibly invite a lawsuit against the District. It would cost approximately \$4 - \$5,000 per acre-foot to create, or approximately \$10 million, and it is unlikely that there is any free Federal money for this. We have 1350 domestic water customers and 200 agricultural water customers. Is the community willing to pay for this? Can the ag customers afford an additional annual cost of \$800 per acre-foot to be a part of this? It is environmentally doable, but is it fiscally doable?

Member of public asked about the cost of raising the Coyote Dam at Lake Mendocino. The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers estimates that the feasibility study could cost \$5 million with actual dam construction at least \$250 million. It's not likely that Congress will support this when they are having trouble finding funds to repair the existing dams that are identified as 'failing'.

Other comments from members of the public included:

Can we store water behind Coyote Dam?

The Corps of Engineers and Fish & Game are not happy with the increasing volume, as a huge storm could fill the lake quickly and threaten the downstream areas.

Can the lake be dredged?

Dredging the silt would run about \$10.00 per cubic yard and if the muck could be cleaned up, it would be about \$50-\$60 million. If mercury, etc., is found, it could be \$90 million.

What happened with the Pinecrest Drive well site at the School District Property?

The neighbors threatened lawsuits; felt their water source was threatened. The State wants the District to prove the source of the well is not underflow. The school district has put us on the back burner. Every time we turn a corner, something else pops up.

Director Reuser said he pushed the Board of Directors to have this public meeting to ask our customers if they are willing to commit to a \$10 million bond.

Director Hallman added that as we go along, the E.I.R.'s cost a little bit more - everything increases. She is concerned about our customers that are on fixed incomes.

Director Pool stated, The public told us, 'find land to purchase, and continue exploring other possibilities.' But for the District to purchase property, we have to do an Environmental Impact Report. This is costly.

Director Hallman reiterated, There are a lot of steps to go through before we can purchase a property. The bottom line is, Are the people willing to support this?

General Manager Koehler continued, The District buys surplus water from the Mendocino County Flood Control District and the Sonoma County Water Agency. The District has a Permit to pump its own water from November 1st to April 1st. This is a Permit, not a License. Until an agency proves it is using all that water, it cannot be Licensed. The only way to take advantage of the Permit is a significant "hole" in the ground.

The proposed changes to Decision 1610 have a potential of creating 25 cubic feet per second that the County of Sonoma can't sell downstream, and Redwood Valley is hoping to be able to purchase it.

As to Area of Origin Water Rights, Charlie Barra stated that 40-50 years ago when he and Ernie Butow and others were on the Board of Directors, Redwood Valley couldn't prove Beneficial Use; but he feels very strongly that Redwood Valley could prove Beneficial Use at this time.

Rudy Light agrees that pit ponds make sense. He suggested that perhaps RV could build half that size of a reservoir; it would cost less initially; perhaps a bond could be for a fraction of the \$10 million. Perhaps a Public/Private partnership. He also stated that the problem with Area of Origin Water Rights is that the inflow into Lake Mendocino comes from the Eel River diversion through Potter Valley.

It could possibly take 15 years for the Districts application to be processed. A pit pond of that size would require a water treatment plant upgrade costing about \$3-\$4 million to implement an advanced oxidation process. We must also understand that doing all this might not be enough to lift the court-ordered Moratorium.

After a great deal of discussion a member of the public stated, You want us to make an informed decision, but we only have what you are verbalizing. We need to be able to read a Position Paper showing the financing, construction, cost, and why.

The Board of Directors and General Manager agreed that a Position Paper will be developed after the next Grange Hall meeting scheduled for next week on December 15th. The Position Paper will be sent to all District customers in order to continue this matter.

Board President Butow thanked the customers for their cooperation in answering the previous Survey and also for attending this important meeting.

The Meeting ended at 7:45 p.m.

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday, December 16, 2010 at the Water District Office, 2370 Webb Ranch Road, Redwood Valley, California.

CORRECTION Page 1, Item 2, Paragraph 2, Line 7: Replace words: but not
With: and

Original sentence: It consists of 75 acres but not much of it is off-stream land.

Correct sentence: It consists of 75 acres and much of it is off-stream land.

APPROVED AS CORRECTED: Board of Directors

DATE APPROVED: December 16, 2010

SIGNED: Linda Groth
Secretary, Board of Directors