



PINE-STRAWBERRY WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Board Action Item

MEETING DATE:	3/23/2023
AGENDA ITEM:	6.f.
PRESENTER:	Raymond Headings
SUBJECT:	Chairman's Report

Board Update:

External Communication Updates:

A Study session was held today with Chris Kuzdas Ph. D Senior Water Program Manager with the Environmental Defense Fund in AZ to discuss current legislative bills, SB 1306 (Local Groundwater Stewardship Areas) & HB 2731 that impact AZ water. Our AZ communities have seen first-hand what happens when our groundwater supplies dwindle, our wells run dry and our drinking water and local food supply is put at risk. It was scheduled for 2/23/23 but had to be cancelled due to inclement weather.

RAGHT, Rural AZ Group Health Trust, (Employee Health Insurance) annual meeting was attended. A projected increase for 2023-2024 covered period of 4%. A Voluntary Term Life benefit was voted on and will be made available to employees effective 7/1/2023.

PSWID Insurance for 2023 has been acquired. A special thanks to Sharon for supplying all of the documents to receive the new policy. A meeting & tour of the District had to be cancelled twice now due to inclement weather. Will look for a new date.

Engineering Planning Meeting

Meetings were attended in February and March

Prebid meeting was attended on water line replacement projects. Three (3) bids were received & two selected to work on the projects which will commence in the next few months dependent on the weather and the contractor's schedules.

The McKnight property deep well project now known as SV3 bid opening was held on 1/5 and only one bid was received. KP Ventures from Cottonwood will be doing the drilling. Fingers crossed for a successful high producing well to assist with the Moratorium and the release of meters. At this time, KP Ventures is planning to commence drilling in 3rd quarter of this year, unless their drill schedule changes or we move up on their list.

We continue to explore locations for additional tank storage.

Bid has been received for the repair of the Tomahawk tank and has been placed on Southwest Tank & Steel (STS) of Camp Verde schedule.

Brushing & bailing took place at Milk Ranch #1 to address the sanding issue. A sample of the sand was retrieved and has been sent to the lab for analysis so that a filter may be purchased to reduce/eliminate the sand which is causing restricted flow.

A list of all wells being tracked and review for refurbishing, confirming current depths, and flow. It will be a priority to ensure that ALL district owned wells are operational to reduce the amount of water provided by well/water share agreements.

Training:

The staff continues to study & prepare for Water Distribution certifications. New hire Bud Meyers is commencing his Operator certification.

The Elephant in the Room..... The Drought & The Moratorium,,,,,,

How do you eat an Elephant? One bite at a time and that is exactly what the District has been doing these past two (2) years.

The bites:

The inception of the Moratorium on 3/25/21.

Water Conservation Communications (Sandwich boards & literature)

Notified Air BNBs to assist in the conservation of water

Leak Detection project- Asterra satellite fly-over

Increase pump performance, i.e., 18-25 gpm

\$8M loan/forgivable principal for water line replacements, tanks & rehabilitation of tanks

\$25M loan/grant water line replacements and deep well project

Purchase of McKnight well- (SV2)- 20+ gpm and Deep well location to 2,000ft

Contract to drill 2000' well in Strawberry (SV3)

Brushing and bailing of Milk Ranch wells to clear blockage of sand and to investigate some type of filtration system

Explore financial feasibility of CC Cragin reservoir, grants and infrastructure funding have been explored with no success. The District cannot pursue addition loan arrangements since we are maxed out on the \$33M loans presently in place. Possible solution would be a customer assessment of \$21,875.00 per customer to cover the cost of future water.

Have new metered customers use water provided by Portals 4 at a cost of \$25.00 /1,000 gallons down from the initial \$29.00/1000 gals quoted

The district currently pays well shares \$1.05/1,000 gals.

Water Modeling study- a study that looked at our entire water system; pipe size & types, pump size & tank storage

Annual water usage analysis to determine needs & the point at which the Moratorium can be eased with the release of meters.

Active in the State's legislative efforts and other State & Federal organizations

We have been vigil and proactive in our efforts to secure water during this ongoing water crisis and to manage, preserve & ensure that there is water for the current 3,200 PSWID customers. The entire southwest which includes the entire state of AZ and neighboring state with Lake Mead & Lake Powell being at their lowest levels in history and the possible loss of power generation and water restrictions to the state for agriculture.

Frankly as demonstrated at the last board meeting and numerous social media postings there is a group that is not looking to preserve and manage the water for all the current Pine & Strawberry residents but only looking out for themselves and the financial gain by placing a greater burden & stressing the present water delivery system for the communities.

The District's role here is not to stop the growth & development of Pine & Strawberry but to slow it so that the current customers have water and not stressing the system with additional connections risking the loss of water to the communities.

Our decisions, efforts and mission has & will continue to be to protect and provide water to Pine & Strawberry residents and at such time when new customers are issued "will-serve" letters to come onto the system once the source of water has been determined & maintained.