

MINUTES OF THE TUSCAN WATER DISTRICT

Meeting of Wednesday, August 21, 2024; 9:00 a.m.

Chico State University Farm, 311 Nicholas C Schouten Lane, Room 104, Chico, CA 95928

MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m.

Roll Call:

- Board members present: Steve Koehnen, Craig Knight, Andrew Mendonca, Jim Paiva, Bill Chance
- Absent: Rich McGowan, Brian Mori, Todd Turley, Rayme Antonowich
- Public: Kamie Loeser, Jeff Carter, Danny Kerns, Emily Alma, Jenny Scheer, Joe Hughes, Tovey Giezentanner

Item 2 – Meeting Minutes for the TWD Board Meeting on July 17, 2024.

- Action requested: Review and take appropriate action.
- Board comment: Add Jenny Scheer to public attendees
- Public comment: None
- Approved 5-0: Knight motion, Mendonca second.

Item 3 – Financial Issues

- Action requested: Review invoices and take appropriate action
- Board discussion: None
- Public comment: None
- Approved 5-0. Chance motion, Knight second.

Item 4 – Prop 218 Issues for Consideration

- Actions requested:
 - Discuss TWD financial goals and take appropriate action
 - Discuss assessed parcels proposed assessment calculation and take appropriate action
- Staff provided an overview of the issue and explained the budgets included in the Agenda packet.
- Public input:
 - Alma: there is a lot of confusion among public about distinction between Vina GSA and TWD.
 - Loeser:
 - Fee Collection: The Butte County Assessor's Office offers a fee collection service at \$0.30 per parcel. This option should be evaluated for cost-effectiveness and efficiency in collecting future assessments.
 - Domestic Well Owner Participation: As part of the Vina Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) fee process, some domestic well owners have expressed interest in contributing financially to groundwater management efforts. This stems from their understanding of potential impacts on domestic wells from broader groundwater use. Implementing a nominal fee for these stakeholders could enhance their engagement in the decision-making process.
 - Professional Services Allocation: Consider a line item for professional engineering and consulting services. This would cover recurring tasks such as annual preparation of the assessor's roll and other technical needs that may arise.

- Budget Justification: Each budget item must be thoroughly justified. For reference, the GSA initially projected a per-acre cost of \$3.09 but ultimately charged \$1.54 per acre due to offsetting costs with Department of Water Resources grant funds.
 - Future Project Funding: To avoid the need for additional Proposition 218 proceedings in the near term, consider allocating funds for potential future projects. This proactive approach could facilitate timely implementation of projects identified as necessary within the next few years.
 - Board discussion:
 - Re: financial goals:
 - Chance
 - Office rent seems high – should be closer to \$.075 to \$1.00 per sf
 - How does budget work, if we exempt parcels?
 - The budget needs to be sensitive to the reality that fees are going up across the board for several different programs.
 - Paiva: Option 2. Chance: 2 or 3. Knight: 2 or 3. Koehnen: 1 or 2. Mendonca: 2 or 3.
 - **Board Consensus:**
 - **Option 2 (Year 1 budget of \$571,000) or Option 3 (Year 1 budget of \$633,600) are acceptable. Direct staff to work with engineer to generate a Draft Engineer’s Report with both options for a final decision by the Board.**
 - Re: potential exclusion of certain parcels from special benefit assessment:
 - Mendonca – should TWD consider a base fee for smaller parcels?
 - Engineer input – needs to be a proportional benefit per parcel
 - Paiva – preference is not to exclude parcels, even if it creates more administrative burden and cost. Fair is fair.
 - Knight – preference is not to exclude parcels, particularly if what Kamie says about domestic well users in the Vina GSA process is true.
 - Mendonca – don’t have a strong preference either way.
 - Chance – don’t have a strong preference either way.
 - Koehnen – don’t have a strong preference either way.
 - **Board Consensus:**
 - **All parcels should be subject to the special benefit assessment.**

Item 5 – Updates

- Staff provided an update on LAFCO Conditions:
 - LAFCO Condition 6b – TWD submitted an application to Butte County LAFCO to conduct a municipal service review (MSR) and determine the long-term sphere of influence. Done – Condition satisfied.
 - LAFCO Condition 9 – TWD adopted a resolution requesting the Board of Supervisors to establish electoral divisions based on equal size (acres). Done – Condition satisfied.
- TWD policies and future ethics/brown act training will be discussed at either the September or October Board meeting.

Item 6 – Board member requests for future agenda topics & announcements. None.

Item 7 – Public Comment. None.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.