

RUBY RANCH WATER SUPPLY CORPORATION

Meeting Minutes for December 14, 2023

Attendees: Thomas Doebner
Marcus Krause
Raul Saldivar
Kevin Rodriquez
Dale Olmstead
Chris Whittenhall

Excused: Lynn Blackmore

Professional Consultants:
Tim Young (PGMS)

Public: Steven Selger, Al Gmitter

Meeting opened for business at 7pm, via Zoom Conference and Video Call

1. Raul Saldivar called the meeting to order and determined a quorum had been established.
2. The minutes for the October 19th, 2023 meeting were approved. A motion was made by Thomas Doebner and was seconded by Raul Saldivar. Vote was 6-0
3. Tim Young provided the Board with the Monthly Water System Operations and Pumping Report dated October and November 2023. RRWSC pumped 2,300,000 gallons in October and 1,690,000 gallons in November. Income and billing has come down with the reduced pumping.
5. Tim Young stated that 55 of 73 backflow certifications are in and letters to those that have failed to submit will go out in the November billing cycle to renew certifications. Direct phone calls were made, and those with bad numbers, were mailed a request. Those that aren't compliant, will be turned off.
6. Meter Replacement Project: None were replaced since last meeting, and they picked up more meters to continue the replacement. There are currently 45 at or above one million gallons. PGMS has meters in hand and will continue to proceed with replacements.
7. Tim Young indicated with the ongoing drought, elevated customer use and mandated pumping curtailments, RRWSC was not able to begin ASR injection as planned. Consequently Well #5 extraction continued until November 1st when it was ceased as concern about the size and integrity of our stored "bubble" was raised. Given some rain and cooler temperatures it was hoped we could begin the injection phase before the District declared an exceptional drought stage in hopes of somewhat replenishing our "bubble" as it was approaching the projected minimum size. Prior to beginning the injection phase water quality measurements were required. These measurements indicated increased levels of iron and detectable levels of arsenic. Multiple additional tests and flushing were done by the District, and the samples extracted had lower levels of both, but still higher than previously measured. The increased presence of arsenic in the samples will require the WSC to follow the predetermined special provisions set forth by BSEACD and TCEQ.

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8. Due to large ASR drawdown of Well #5, and the water testing results, the conclusion is that we are reaching the “bubbles” buffer zone. David Pine, a consultant used by the District, stated during previous meetings that we should expect some arsenic based on the level of dissolved oxygen which releases arsenic. There was an agreement to put 1,000,000 gallons back into the bubble, before January 1, 2024, which would put our remaining bubble at 23 million gallons.
9. Tim stated two metal signs were purchased and installed for Stage 3 critical drought status, with appropriate numbers to call for questions. Thomas Doebner stated that the wording of the sign at Plant #1 needs to be changed to show Stage 4 “exceptional,” and not emergency.
10. Pressure Plane Project: Tim Young and PGMS team have tested the pressure plane project, with all aspects working as they should. This continues with Well 5 being shut off, and Plant 1 has kept up with usage with Plant 2 assisting, as Well 4 was down due to a bad transducer not allowing it to pump. Keith Seibert made the changes and then repairs will be made to get it back on line.
11. TCEQ emergency preparedness plan approval is still waiting for final approval from TCEQ. This includes a timeline of when we will install the generator, switch gear, and items with Don Rauschuber has been emailed on next steps. Tim Young stated PGMS can draft a letter of purchase to keep this moving if RRWSC approves to proceed with a purchase order. We are still waiting on the specs for the generator and switches prior to being able to move forward according to Dale Olmstead. Thomas Doebner asked if Keith Seibert could assist with the final specs to keep this moving forward with the appropriate sizing of the generator of a 60Kw and model number.
12. Dale Olmstead made a motion to have Tim Young/PGMS move forward with the generator and switch purchase, and it was seconded by Thomas Doebner. Vote was taken and approved 6-0.
13. Raul Saldivar asked about the concrete pad, propane tank, connection between the tank and generator, and all parts have been determined.
14. Dale Olmstead made a motion to have Keith Seibert and his company move forward with all site preparation and installation, and it was seconded by Thomas Doebner. Vote was taken and approved 6-0. Tim Young stated that PGMS will keep progressing on this work.
15. Tim Young stated that PGMS removed the branches at Well #1, and Dale Olmstead stated that the dead tree next to the Plant 2 had the branches cut down by the nearby property owner. A neighbor/home owner next to the plant stated that she had the limbs cut, and would request that someone from the Board open the gate and that their arborist will remove the limbs from the plant.
16. PGMS stated that high user numbers are coming down, but the same homeowners are still repeat offenders. There have been discussions to develop a plan with Stage 4 pending, and how we can address their over usage. Tim Young suggests sending a letter showing what each homes’ annual allotment will be, thus teaching homeowners what their allotment will be, and what will happen up to and including turning customers off if future allocation abuse continues. Thomas Doebner asked how to determine how many people are in a household, and Tim Young stated that Hays County has a daily limit per household which would drop to 210 gallons per day.

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17. Thomas Doebner stated the RRWSC needs to send out letters to alert customers of the change in usage allowances and rate increases that a Stage 4 Exceptional drought declaration by the District will require. The letters need to be stricter to alert customers to what is different with Stage 4 and that this has a major impact to all customers. The Stage 4 effective date will be December 14, 2024, with the implementation date starting on paper 30 days post the effective dates. RRWSC will alert users that the rate increase will go into effect after Jan 15th.

18. Thomas Doebner informed the Board that the District stated that we are doing better than expected, as they weren't reporting wells 2 and 3 which challenged their readings moving from existing to new meters. The District and the new Board might start enforcing fines partly because of Stage 4 drought, and changes of Board members, and the ASR project. The fines could be deferred with a year end payment, and then a petition could be made to spend the fine amount to upgrade systems to support proper water usage.

19. Thomas Doebner stated that Joe Vickers has been using David Pine to assess our ASR bubble. David Pine charges \$250/hr, and it would be 4 hours of work to be done to evaluate our wells. Thomas Doebner made a motion to go through Joe Vickers and have him reach out to David Pine, voted to reimburse him for his time for up to 10 hours. This was seconded by Dale Olmstead and the Board vote was 6-0 approval.

20. Thomas Doebner stated that if we were to stay in Stage 4 for years, our ASR bubble will be depleted, with no ability to build it back up. There is an additional challenge with the blending of Edwards and Trinity needs, along with other challenges at Well 5 with iron content. Recently the District has drilled to the lower Trinity where the water has been better quality and can be used without blending. Thomas stated that Joe Vickers is pricing out the drilling cost to drill a small test hole to test the lower Trinity from our Well #5 to check the water quality. Based on this we could determine if we could case off the middle Trinity and drill down to the lower Trinity to secure water from Well #5, then we would not have to use Edwards water to blend with Well #5.

21. Dale Olmstead asked about the iron bonding capacity of the chemical used to treat the water for iron. Tim Young stated that the polyphosphate could sequester some of the iron but needs to determine the proper rates to account for any well water changes. Dale Olmstead asked about blocking the middle Trinity water, to which Thomas Doebner stated that we could account for the uncased hole with casing it off to get down to the lower Trinity. The current Trinity permit is 20 million gallons which is much more than we could use based on current blending requirements.

22. Thomas Doebner made a motion to send out the Annual Meeting Notice, and that the next meeting needs to be on Thursday, Feb 22nd with an Annual meeting on April 4th, so that it can all get sent out via notices. This was seconded by Dale Olmstead and the vote approved 6-0.

23. Dale Olmstead asked for PGMS to present to the Board their estimates of the large expenditures regarding infrastructure replacements. This is for evaluation and prioritization of funding needing to support these items. This will be addressed at the next meeting.

24. Tim Young stated that he has not been able to address the user manual, and will continue progress as time allows.

25. If the District approves, ASR injection of 1,000,000 gallons will occur if it can be completed prior to January 1, 2024 stage 4 enforcement.

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26. It was determined to have the next RRWSC Zoom Meeting on Thursday February 22, 2024 at 7:00 PM.

27. Thomas Doebner quickly reviewed the financials and ASR usage, with no questions from the Board.

28. The Zoom Meeting motion to adjourn from Thomas Doebner, and seconded by Chris Whittenhall, and meeting adjourned at 8:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcus Krause, Secretary