

Moses Lake Irrigation and Rehabilitation District  
Regular Board Meeting  
August 10, 2021

### **CALL TO ORDER**

At 7:00 PM, President Bailey called the August 10, 2021 Regular Board Meeting of the Moses Lake Irrigation and Rehabilitation District to order. The record shows that President Bailey, Vice President Teals, Director Foster, and Director Dexter were present. Director Selmann and Legal Counsel Brian Iller attended via telephone. Also in attendance were USBR Field Office Manager, Marc Maynard and USBR Deputy Field Office Manager, Clyde Lay. The record indicates that this meeting was recorded. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

### **DISCUSSION OF AGENDA ITEM(S)**

President Bailey called on the board members and the audience for discussion on any agenda items, and nothing was brought forward.

### **DISCUSSION OF NON-AGENDA ITEM(S)**

President Bailey called on the board members and the audience for discussion on any non-agenda items, and nothing was brought forward.

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

President Bailey called on the board members to approve the agenda. Director Foster made a motion to approve the agenda. Vice President Teals seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

President Bailey called on the board members to approve the consent agenda. The consent agenda consisted of the meeting minutes from the 07/13/2021 Regular Meeting, the Bills/Checks (#18084-#18121), and Voucher #1000239 totaling \$189,557.08. Director Dexter made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Director Foster seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. President Bailey abstained from voting on anything related to Basin Property Management, Inc.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

United States Bureau of Reclamation – Ephrata Field Office Manager, Marc Maynard and Ephrata Deputy Field Office Manager, Clyde Lay

President Bailey introduced Marc Maynard, who works for the USBR and is the Ephrata Field Office Manager.

Marc Maynard introduced Clyde Lay, who also works for the USBR as the Deputy Field Office Manager.

President Bailey stated in years past, John O'Callahan with the USBR used to come to MLIRD Board Meetings at least once a year and let MLIRD know what was going and give MLIRD an update on how the system is doing and any challenges the USBR may be facing.

Marc Maynard stated the tough years for the USBR are the hot and dry years when the Irrigation Districts are using a lot of water early in the season and throughout, where they end up having to feed a lot of water through Moses Lake to the Potholes Reservoir for the South District. He believes the Rocky Coulee Wasteway has had a mid-range of 350,000 acre-feet pushed through Moses Lake, which is one of the biggest feed

years ever. The USBR is continuing to feed water through Moses Lake and will probably do so through the beginning of September. With all the high irrigation water usage, the USBR hasn't been able to catch up with the elevation curve this year. When the USBR gets to the bottom of their elevation curve, they try to leave October with approximately 200,000 acre-feet in Potholes Reservoir. The USBR has a couple of routes that they can feed water through to the Potholes Reservoir. These routes include Crab Creek, which comes down through Rocky Coulee, Lind Coulee, which is below Moses Lake, Frenchman Wasteway, and a route that started this year through the Scootney Wasteway below the O'Sullivan Dam. This year, the East Low Canal has been running max at full capacity for almost three months. Marc Maynard speculates that the duration of the flows through the Rocky Coulee Wasteway is one of the things benefitting the water quality of Moses Lake rather than the high flows early in the season and then the stop of flows.

Clyde Lay spoke on the speculations of the flows through the Rocky Coulee Wasteway and what it does to the water quality of Moses Lake. He stated a lot of it has to do with Moses Lakes water chemistry, how it turns over, when the sediments go anoxic, the internal loading, and much more. He stated he looked at the total phosphorus numbers of Moses Lake on the water quality charts that MLIRD provided, and the Total Phosphorus levels are low in his perception. He also stated the Total Nitrogen, and Total Phosphorus ratio is skewed in terms of what he thinks they should be for Moses Lake this year. Water chemistry wise, he believes the water flows coming in has stopped the internal loading from cycling and cautioned that the internal load is still there. He believes Moses Lake is a eutrophic lake, and years like this year should be counted as lucky with the water quality. Clyde Lay stated from his perspective the best thing MLIRD could be doing is educating the public that Moses Lake will never have the water quality like Lake Chelan.

Marc Maynard stated his projection is that next year may be similar to this year. If next year is predicted to be similar as this year, the USBR may manage the Potholes Reservoir a little differently by being more aggressive at the beginning of the season rather than letting it get away from them as this year did with the high demand for irrigation water. Director Foster asked if the demand was temperature based. Marc Maynard stated it depends on crop type and the temperatures that drive the demand. Clyde Lay said another reason for the high demand this year is the season started with low soil moisture, and the farmers couldn't catch up. He stated usually, there is a lot of drain water coming through all winter long, and this year the soil moisture isn't there.

Marc Maynard stated 2024 is the target year for a potential shift in how the USBR operates on the Odessa front. The East Columbia Basin Irrigation District is developing Odessa pumping plants. The first plant went online this year which is an additional 8,500 acres of irrigation. If things work out, they will have 2-3 come online in the year 2024. If this is the case, the USBR will end up using a lot more capacity throughout the East Low Canal for delivery. Ultimately, the USBR will have the flexibility to bring it up to 500 CFS in April-June in Crab Creek and possibly even more. This will change the structure of the water coming into Moses Lake. Once the Odessa pumping plants are all online, there will potentially be perennial flows through Crab Creek into Moses Lake, which will change the dynamic. This water will be coming through the natural system, so the USBR won't be able to speak for exactly what the water will look like; however, there will be water coming through the lake at times of the year when flows might not normally have been coming in. Marc Maynard stated he would like to position the USBR to be able to respond to whatever needs MLIRD might have when the Odessa pumping plants come online in 2024. President Bailey stated the Crab Creek route would make a phenomenal difference in the area. President Bailey said in his opinion

when the USBR started working at Billy Clap that eventually the Crab Creek will be an ideal situation regarding the continual moderate feed.

Director Foster asked if any of the USBR feed comes down Rocky Ford. Marc Maynard stated the USBR does not directly feed down Rocky Ford. When the Crab Creek route is operating, the USBR loses a fair amount of water in Adrian Sink into the ground and over to Rocky Ford. The USBR is currently working on a contract with the Troutlodge Fish Hatchery and WDFW for the construction of some mitigation drains in the Troutlodge Fish Hatchery area to make sure the flows do not affect the fish hatchery. President Bailey asked if the water coming out of the Adrian Sink into Rocky Ford was being measured. Clyde Lay stated the USBR hydrotechs go out and monitor certain areas such as Highway 17, Rocky Ford Creek, and other various locations. Once the Crab Creek route is flowing, the USBR will have more defined locations monitored. The USBR has locations where they do evaluations of the seepage gains and losses to get a handle on where the gaining and losing reaches are located. Vice President Teals stated, speaking for many people, this year's lake quality is excellent, and feeding the water through the Rocky Coulee Wasteway makes a huge difference for Moses Lake. Vice President Teals thanked the USBR for bringing as much water as they can down through the Rocky Coulee Wasteway.

President Bailey stated MLIRD has been gathering and collecting data from years past to present and putting the information together in charts so the data could be compared side by side. President Bailey added that if the USBR had any thoughts or ideas on any of the charts, the Board would like to hear about it. Marc Maynard stated it is good to be collecting the data on the water quality, and at the moment, it is hard to discern just how valuable it is. However, when you have a year like 2021 and a year that has the same amount of Rocky Coulee Wasteway flows and the water quality changes, you can get a better idea of other possible variables that might have caused the change and take targeted action at making a difference. Marc Maynard stated the USBR might be able to provide any past data, such as the Banks Lake Diversion chart.

Clyde Lay asked if MLIRD was familiar with the USBR's Hydromet website. He stated it is a tracking software that the regional office runs. There is a Teacup Diagram for the Grand Coulee, and the Potholes Reservoir is one of the reservoirs that is tracked, and you can see the shape of the curve from an average of previous years, last years data, and where the elevation is at today. He thinks it is a good indicator to gauge the feed demand. You can track in real-time as the chart updates every 15 minutes. President Bailey stated MLIRD is trying to compile as much information and correlate the charts with Gene Welch, Ph.D., UW Professor Emeritus and Harold Crose, the Chairman of the Moses Lake Watershed Council. Director Foster stated the fact that MLIRD is compiling all the data right now; in 10 years, the data will be meaningful for whoever sits on the Board.

Director Foster stated there had been discussion on the lake level being brought down to low in the winter. Marc Maynard said he wasn't sure what the bottom threshold of the USBR's dam was. However, he said the USBR sets the winter elevation in agreement with MLIRD. He believes the winter elevation is set for the reason of freezing ice and the concern for docks. President Bailey asked if it was possible to adjust the level during the winter from time to time. Marc Maynard stated his understanding is the elevation and the co-management of the lake is set by an agreement and would need to be memorialized to find the differences. If MLIRD wanted an increase in the winter elevation, MLIRD would have to accept the liability associated with doing so. MLIRD's Moses Lake North Dam is lower than the USBR's Dam. Clyde Lay stated Todd Knittel, the USBR Ephrata Operations Engineer, and has been getting the question that it

seems like the lake is lower than usual in the winter. The still elevation on the USBR's Dam has not changed. Clyde Lay said Todd Knittel has checked survey points multiple times, and the lake has been at the same level in the wintertime for many years. MLIRD Staff Chris Wilson stated the elevation does not drop to the bottom of the MLIRD Dam. There is a point where the elevation of Moses Lake levels out with O'Sullivan.

Director Dexter added that he has seen how the lake is far nicer in clarity for the years that have more Columbia River water flows through Moses Lake and thanked the USBR for as much water flows as Moses Lake has received this year. Marc Maynard stated he is glad that when the USBR can feed more water, it helps with MLIRD's goals. He stated he couldn't take credit for the flows as it is dependent on the fate of the operational circumstances. Clyde Lay stated the internal loading along the shorelines and the nutrients coming in will always be there. Vice President Teals mentioned that MLIRD is not only looking at it from an irrigation district point of view. The Moses Lake Watershed Council is a major force. He stated MLIRD is not just sitting back and asking for more feed water. There are many programs and projects that are being looked into to clean up and take care of the water quality issues. Vice President Teals said MLIRD knows there are many factors involved; however, MLIRD appreciates the water feed coming through the Rocky Coulee Wasteway. Marc Maynard believes everything is positioned well as far as all the agencies getting involved with the Moses Lake Watershed Council and will be able to make good decisions for the future.

Marc Maynard asked what the Board thought would be a good idea for the USBR's attendance at MLIRD Board Meetings. President Bailey stated years ago he recalls the USBR would attend early in the irrigation season to discuss what the USBR had projected for the year and a recap of what happened the year prior. It was discussed the USBR would try to attend a MLIRD Board Meeting in April or May and then again in September or October.

President Bailey thanked the USBR for what they do and for sharing their information with the Board tonight.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Legal Counsel Brian Iller stated there was no need for an Executive Session tonight and will report when the court hearing will take place by the September Regular Board meeting.

### **MLIRD STAFF REPORTS**

President Bailey reported the following:

- Lake elevation was 1046.72' as of August 10, 2021.
- Dredge spoils are still being hauled away each week. MLIRD is loading trucks when it works with the MLIRD maintenance staff's schedule, and there are multiple trucks asking to be loaded.
- The 308 Excavator has been moved from Connelly Park to the shop, so all of the equipment discussed for surplus is in one location. President Bailey stated MLIRD has received proposals from auction companies, and they will be reviewed and have a recommendation at the September Regular Board Meeting.
- President Bailey has received phone calls from Kelly Stockton, a hydroplane racer that would like to test his hydroplane at Connelly Park. President Bailey has expressed to him he is no different than a fisherman. Kelly Stockton has agreed to get a Certificate of Liability Insurance naming MLIRD as additionally insured under the policy, and they will also coordinate with the Grant County Sheriff's Department. The testing will probably take place the week after

Labor Day. Legal Counsel Brian Iller agreed that it is good for MLIRD to have the insurance.

- MLIRD is buying a new copy machine with the addition of a service agreement through BIE as the current one is now 13 years old and is starting to have problems.
- President Bailey would like the Board of Directors to take the Water Quality charts created and review them. He found the information interesting and came up with many reasons why the lake is cleaner this year. MLIRD will continue to gather information and add it to the charts.

**WORKSHOP/DIRECTOR QUESTIONS and/or COMMENTS**

Vice President Teals asked if anyone had contacted the Grant County Noxious Weed Board regarding the Phragmites on the fill. President Bailey stated MLIRD Staff did contact the Grant County Noxious Weed Board, and they stated they would check it out and get back ahold of MLIRD if the need arises.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 PM.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Bailey, President

*Richard Teals*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Teals, Vice President

*Kris Dexter*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kris Dexter, Director

*Kaj Selmann*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kaj Selmann, Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Foster, Director

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary to the Board of Directors