



Kings River Water District January 23, 2020

By Don A. Wright

The **Kings River Water District** met in an old farmhouse somewhere in a foggy orchard south of Minkler on Thursday, January 23, 2020. The **KRWD** used to meet in Centerville so I was just late enough to miss the usual housekeeping; the minutes were approved, potential conflicts of interest examined and found clean, public comment, additions to the agenda – there were none and call to order of course which was accomplished by Chairman **Jack Paxton** at about 8:00am. The districts two boots on the ground employees: **Ken Domoto** and **Mike Sullivan** were pulling out when I showed up so I missed their reports.

The meeting was in closed session for one item when I arrived; *James Irrigation District versus Kings River Water Association*. JID is a member of KRWA if I recall, so who knows what's up? I've attended more than one meeting where you wait outside the door while closed session takes place and can hear pretty well. If anyone from KRWD reads this you might keep that in mind. There was one place in Kern County the doors were hollow core or something and you could hear as much of the closed session as you wanted. I make it a policy to not listen in but when extra loud peels of laughter come from the room it's hard not to notice. On or about 8:40 am the meeting returned to regular session with no reportable action.



Engineer/General Manager **Nick Keller** gave the financial report and the board approved it and the paying of the bills. Paxton told a story about an old cowboy who used to sit on the board. He went home after a meeting and wasn't feeling well. He took out his checkbook and wrote a check to everyone he owed money to and then died of a heart attack. That is an illustration of integrity.

The board then voted to continue meeting at the Rio Vista Avenue location. Paxton gave is President's report which started with the Kings River Water Association. He said there was an unusual closed session. He said the interesting part of the meeting was a presentation by Stantec Engineering's Bill Swanson. Swanson talked about a proposal to raise Pine Flat Dam by seven to 15 feet in height. The resulting enlargement of the lake would provide 200,000 a/f more storage and would cost \$1 billion. Some quick math showed the cost at \$5,000 an a/f. But another problem beside how costly that would be is on average that extra yield would only occur once every five to nine years. Speaking of Pine Flat there is currently 564,000 a/f of storage, more than the amount of Millerton Lake when full but far short of the Pine Flat's capacity. We need more snow and rain. Just in case we get some there are four NASA Airborne Snow Observatory flights scheduled for the Kings River watershed. Good deal.

While talking about raising Pine Flat there was some speculation about power and as the conversation meandered the subject came around to the state government taking over PG&E. I can tell

you nobody in the room felt the state could somehow do a better job managing the utility. In my humble opinion our boys and girls in Sacramento get two major things wrong – the confuse the created with the Creator and try to force government in a role it’s unsuited for. Government has a sphere it works well in but isn’t fit to manage things outside of that sphere.

In other news it was reported the Kings River East GSA has officially adopted its GSP. DWR has two-years starting a week from this Friday to decide if it likes the GSP or not. While talking about the GSP Keller got a question about wells. Maybe most of you already know this but Fresno County requires a domestic well to be sealed for the first 25 feet. Keller said Tulare County requires 50 feet. He believes the seal on the casing for a drinking water well should be 100 feet. Here’s what I didn’t realize; the vast majority of the dreaded nitrogen in groundwater is less than 10 feet from the surface and that’s why the he likes the deeper seal. I wonder how many wells impacted by nitrogen could benefit from a deeper seal. He also talked about compression casing that allow a well pipes to expand and contract in height due to say, subsidence.

I wasn’t the only one late. CPA **Kent Jensen** of M. Green & Company was out wandering around in the fog looking for the location too. He showed up and gave the auditor’s report. I’m not a big fan of auditor’s reports because for all their skills with the complexity of accounting and number crunching most accountants evidently flunked public speaking. They can rattle on and on delighting in each detail of minutia. I’m happy to report Mr. Jensen included me with a handout and proceeded to give a cogent, succinct report on the KRWD’s audit. They passed with flying colors. Then and only then did the meeting adjourn.

DISCLAIMER OF RESPONSIBILITY; Don A. Wright strives to provide his clients with the most complete, up-to-date, and accurate information available. Nevertheless, DAW does not serve as a guarantor of the accuracy or completeness of the information provided, and specifically disclaims any and all responsibility for information that is not accurate, up-to-date, or complete. DAW’s clients therefore rely on the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of information from DAW entirely at their own risk. The opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and do not represent any advertisers or third parties.



ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Copyright © 2020 by Don A. Wright

Kings River Water District

The Kings River Water District meets at 8:00am on the third Thursday of the month at the Gerawan Farms Offices on Smith Avenue in Centerville California. KRWD is a member of the East Kings GSA and receives supplies from the Kings River. President Jack Paxton, Curtis Taylor, Danny Van Ruiten, Steve Boos & Mike Hacker. General Manager/Engineer Nick Keller, Attorney Loraine Layne, Superintendent Mike Sullivan, Ditch Tender Ken Domoto. KRWD has about 19,000 acres of tree fruit, grapes and nuts along the Kings River bottom land on the east side of the San Joaquin Valley.