

Kern Water Bank Authority August 4, 2020

By Don A. Wright

The **Kern Water Bank Authority** held its board of directors remote meeting on Tuesday, August 4, 2020 from its Bakersfield headquarters. This was a Microsoft Teams meeting, after a brief amount of insipid, poor sound quality music the connect was good. It was audio only as the link showed up on a pdf and that didn't allow for a direct connection. General manager **Jon Parker** took roll and Chairman **Bill Phillimore** started the meeting on the dot at 3:00pm according my precise chronometer.

The minutes were approved and then **KWB** Controller **Danelle Lopez** gave the treasurer's report. Not having access to images or a board packet to follow all I can tell you is everything balanced and that was good enough for the directors to approve the report. The payment of the bills was also approved. Sometimes with the months starting on different days of the week meeting schedules can be arranged in such a way as to cause payments to come earlier, late and/or on time.

Phillimore, being the preternatural meeting chairman that he is asked for negative votes

knowing that most of the votes will be positive. That way the role call was reduced and the meeting went just a little smoother and quicker. This means whoever is owed money by KWB will get paid.

Parker reported recover today at 166,000 a/f and there will be more through August, although under 2,000 a/f total if I understood correctly. He said 2020 will not be as serious as other drought and dry years. The wells are shutting off and groundwater level are naturally expected to rise. So Cal Gas is conducting maintenance on a pipeline. The long-suffering bike path construction is scheduled to begin this month. The roundabouts are complete and the reviews are coming in; mostly positive. As Phillimore pointed this traffic control technology has been in place in Europe for centuries. I suspect they don't place them in the middle of nowhere like we like to do, but nonetheless off we go.

Construction on many projects are ramping up as the season's end is in sight. As one would expect wells on a water bank are very important. Fortunately there is a long season each year when water isn't being pumped. Right now there are wells in need of repairs or replacement. Some of the wells are decades old and there is one well in particular that would function much better if it was moved a bit. The consensus was to replace the well. Some wells would benefit from rehabilitation. Even after replacements there will still be six or seven 50 plus years old wells. Staff was instructed to do an inventory on well efficiency, which I think they already have, and present it next month so a replacement schedule can be developed.

The KWB Enhancement Project includes recharge basin construction that began a year ago. So far 11 of the 12 planned basins have been completed. So a little more than a month per basin. There is



a siphon on the bank that helps move Cross Valley Canal water onto the bank and this facility is shared with the Kern County Water Agency and work on it falls under the Enhancement Project if I understood correctly. There are plumping considerations about how to physically move the water by conveyance. I tend to look at this as being a different facet than the considerations that go into pumping the water. There is some grant money coming available from DWR to help pay for some of this. Cattle grazing has stayed pretty much the same since spring.

Committee reports were next and Parker said the Kern Fan Monitoring Committee didn't meet last month and the Kern Groundwater Authority GSA met to get its financial books in order. Director **Kim Brown** said the data collection for the sub basin is moving along in a cooperative manner.

Phillimore asked what the engineering committee is looking at and Parker said both Semitropic WSD and the Wonderful Company are looking at subsurface recharge by reverse tile drain. Not sure what that is exactly, but it costs around \$3,000 per acre for installation. Parker said there are some geo/physical techniques that could be used if there are particularly slow recharge rates.

There was no old or new business so the meeting went into closed session at 3:40pm and that was that.

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KERN WATER BANK AUTHORITY

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Board: William Phillimore-Chair Westside Mutual Water Company, William Taube-Vice Chair Wheeler Ridge Maricopa Water Storage District, Steve Jackson-Treasurer Dudley Ridge Water District, Dennis Atkinson Tejon Castac Water District, David Beard KCWA Improvement District 4, Wilmar Boschman Semitropic Water Storage District & Kim Brown Westside Mutual Water Company

Located on a large, undeveloped section of the Kern River's sandy alluvial fan, the Kern Water Bank covers nearly 30 square miles over California's southern San Joaquin Valley. Ideally situated, both for its unique geology and its proximity to water supply and delivery systems, the Kern Water Bank plays a dual role in California's economically vital agricultural heartland.