

**ALPINE SPRINGS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

Pursuant to notice given, the regular meeting of the Board of Directors, Alpine Springs County Water District, was held Friday, September 9, 2011, at 8:30 a.m., District Board Room, 270 Alpine Meadows Road.

1 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

2 Vice President Nungester called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

3 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

4 Those attending joined in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

5 **ROLL CALL**

6 Directors Present: Charles Nungester, Vice President; Janet S. Grant; Jon
7 Northrop; Virginia Quinan.

8 Directors Absent: Barbara Danz, President.

9 Staff Present: John Collins, General Manager; Buz Bancroft, Operations &
10 Maintenance; Mike Dobrowski, CPA (by telephone); Jancis Martin, Recording
11 Secretary.

12 Guest Present: Chief Whitelaw/NTFPD; Kent Hoopingartner/Alpine Meadows
13 resort

14 **The numbering of the following items matches the original order of the**
15 **scheduled items in the meeting agenda. However, to take best advantage**
16 **of meeting participants' time, the items were dealt with in a different order**
17 **during today's meeting, as seen below.**

18 **3. ITEMS FOR BOARD DISCUSSION & ACTION**

19 **A. Financial Reports:**

20 Mike Dobrowski, District CPA, participated in discussion of this agenda
21 item by telephone.

- 22 • Mike said the District had a very positive cash position -- \$800K more
23 than the prior year.
- 24 • The District's net income year-to-date is favorable to budget by \$35K,
25 which is behind last year by about \$6.5K.
- 26 • Mike finalized last year's financial reports, sent them to the auditors
27 and is now preparing for the visit of the auditors on September 26.
- 28 • Director Grant asked if the \$1.3M "Cash Reserved for Capital"
29 (reported in Mike's cover memo) included the cost of the capital
30 projects carried out in the prior fiscal year. Manager Collins said for
31 some reason the number is incremented upwards each year by the
32 approved budgeted amount but is never reduced to reflect capital
33 expenditures. It has been reported that way since before he started
34 working for the District and he does not know the reason.
- 35 • Chief Whitelaw asked what ASCWD had projected in property tax
36 revenues for budget purposes for the current fiscal year. Manager
37 Collins said it is \$520K, the same as for last year. Estimated
38 payments to NTFPD will be \$416,400.

39 i. **June Year-end Financial Statements:** Director Northrop made a
40 MOTION that the Board accept the June 30, 2011, year-end financial
41 reports. Director Quinan SECONDED the motion. Directors Grant,
42 Northrop and Quinan being in favor, the motion was APPROVED.

43 ii. **August Month-end Financial Statements:** Director Quinan made a
44 MOTION that the Board accept the August 31, 2011, month-end
45 financial reports. Director Northrop SECONDED the motion.
46 Directors Grant, Northrop and Quinan being in favor, the motion was
47 APPROVED.

48 iii. **August Expenses Paid & Payable:** The Directors reviewed the
49 monthly check register. Director Grant made a MOTION that the

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1 Board approve the Expenses Paid & Payable (the debits for payroll
2 and checks 25811 through 25863). Director Northrop SECONDED
3 the motion. In discussion, Director Quinan asked about the payment
4 to Black Dog Technology; Vice President Nungester said it was to set
5 up Buz's new computer. Director Grant asked if the District had
6 changed cleaners; Manager Collins said yes, because the previous
7 cleaners stopped coming. Vice President Nungester pointed out that
8 the check to ACC Business was because the District dropped Exwire -
9 for extremely poor service - and had to pay to switch over to AT&T for
10 internet services. Directors Grant, Northrop and Quinan being in
11 favor, the motion was APPROVED.

12 **B. Approval of Minutes of Regular Board Meeting Held on August 12,**
13 **2011:**

14 Director Northrop made a MOTION that the Board approve the minutes of
15 the August 12, 2011, Regular Board of Directors Meeting. Director
16 Quinan SECONDED the motion. In discussion, Manager Collins pointed
17 out that the August minutes accurately reflect the discussion and motion
18 regarding investments recommended by the Budget & Finance
19 Committee last month; however, in the section starting on page 3, line 47,
20 the figures had been calculated incorrectly for the CD investments. In
21 actuality, \$320K (not \$330K), was invested in the three CDs, with \$60K
22 (not \$70K – hence the “sic”) withdrawn from the money market account.
23 Directors Grant, Northrop and Quinan being in favor, the motion was
24 APPROVED.

25 **C. Fire Department Report:**

26 Chief Whitelaw from NTFPD was in attendance and reported the
27 following:

- 28 • August Dispatch Report: There were eight calls to dispatch. Vice
29 President Nungester questioned the usefulness of the dispatch report,
30 given that it does not always include address numbers, and
31 suggested that perhaps the Board did not need to receive it. Directors
32 Quinan and Grant said they preferred that the Board continue to be
33 provided with the report. Chief Whitelaw said he would research the
34 missing addresses and would prefer to keep supplying the report, as it
35 is easier for him to answer questions with the report in front of him,
36 than having to research the data himself each month.
- 37 • Alpine Station Staffing: Staffing is continuing on Fridays, Saturdays
38 and Sundays.
- 39 • Chipping: NTFPD is researching grants for hazardous fuels reduction
40 for the Valley. Chipping this year will continue until NTFPD runs out
41 of requests or the weather gets bad. Director Quinan said the next
42 scheduled chipping date in the Valley was October 4. Chief Whitelaw
43 said before the end of the season, NTFPD usually schedules one final
44 sweep through the Valley to make sure they have chipped all piles.
45 Director Grant asked what fuels reduction work NTFPD had done in
46 the Valley this season; Chief Whitelaw said the chipping program and
47 property inspections. Director Northrop asked if a specific slash pile
48 had been called in; Chief Whitelaw suggested he call the chipping hot
49 line.

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- State Responsibility Area Fee: Chief Whitelaw gave the Board an update on the current status of the proposed SRA fee (see the July 2011 Board meeting minutes for a full description of the fee). There have been threats of litigation by unhappy voters, due to the measure passing by majority (rather than supermajority) vote; the authors of the measure called it a fee, rather than a tax, to side-step the requirement for approval by a supermajority. It turns out the authors of the measure made a mistake in the language of the bill, such that even if the fee were to be imposed, local fire districts would get the funds rather than the State. The authors have changed the language of the measure and reduced the fee to \$90. Chief Whitelaw said the measure would not do a thing to help local fire protection, since the funds would go to CalFire. Fire districts and special districts have made political efforts to try to stop it. State Senator Ted Gaines and his wife State Assemblywoman Beth Gaines are working to qualify an initiative for the November ballot to repeal the fee. NTFPD has spoken with the Governor's staff, the legislative staff, and to the local legislators; across the State, similar conversations are taking place between local fire districts and their legislators.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Kent Hoopingarner shared his thoughts about the District's intention to accelerate the payoff of its debt to the ski area, with the goal of retiring the debt within the next few years. Kent said he used to attend District Board meetings with some regularity but has fallen out of touch in recent years. When the District's recent \$35,000 check arrived, the ski area cashed it, but Kent now wishes they had not. Kent reviewed the ski area's snowmaking contract with the District and when he realized the ski area would be paying a much higher rate for its water once the debt is paid off, he contacted Manager Collins, who suggested he attend the Board meeting.

- Kent pointed out to the Board that when the loan is paid off, the rate the ski area will pay for its water will increase from about 25 cents per thousand gallons to \$5.61 per thousand gallons, which will be prohibitively expensive, considering the large quantity of water the ski area requires for snowmaking. Vice President Nungester reminded Kent that the District would continue to charge the current lower contracted rates until the loan is completely paid off.
- Vice President Nungester asked Kent if the ski area would prefer a separate rate for snowmaking; Kent said perhaps.
- Kent reminded the Board that at the time of year when public entities like the District supply water to ski areas, water demand is not high. He also said that the water used for snowmaking returns to nature and gets reused; the Directors later agreed that the snowmaking water was not available for reuse by the District.
- Kent said he preferred that the District pay down its debt at the previous slower rate, or negotiate a happy medium with the ski area. Director Grant reminded Kent that the debt repayment has taken a lot longer than the original plan of 7-10 years.
- Vice President Nungester suggested that Kent and Manager Collins begin to speak on the repayment of the debt and come up with a proposal to present to the Board. Kent, Manager Collins and the Directors agreed.

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- 1 • Manager Collins said when he asked HDR for a proposal for a rate study
2 (agenda item 3H), he did not ask them to scope out a new “large user” rate,
3 such as that being proposed for the ski area. He suggested the Board
4 approve the rate study proposal as presented today, but allow HDR to return
5 to the Board with an addendum for approval at next month’s meeting so
6 Manager Collins and Shawn Koorn can work together to determine a rate to
7 use for large users (like the ski area). The Directors agreed.

8 **3. D. General Manager’s Report:**

9 John Collins, General Manager, provided a written report on his activities
10 during the month of August, with discussion on the following topics:

- 11 • Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Grant: David Jaramillo started the
12 fuels reduction work in the Bear Creek area this past month. It is now
13 finished, which completes all thinning work associated with the grant.
14 Burning of remaining slash piles should take place this fall or next
15 spring, with environmental testing to follow. The District must file a
16 final report with SNC by next year.
- 17 • Alpine Meadows Bridge: Manager Collins met with Drake Haglan &
18 Associates, consultants to Placer County for the bridge replacement
19 project. He also met with Nichols Consulting, who was supposed to
20 provide to the Board this month its proposal to provide engineering
21 services to ASCWD. Nichols Consulting indicated urgency regarding
22 approval of its proposal but did not supply a cost estimate in time for
23 today’s meeting. Director Quinan asked if there was any chance of
24 ASCWD receiving federal or county assistance with the project;
25 Manager Collins said no. Director Northrop asked if the District’s
26 water line could be placed in the guts of the bridge, but with an access
27 cap that could be removed for repairs; Manager Collins said that was
28 one of the options being studied by the consultants.
- 29 • Alpine Sierra Subdivision: Manager Collins participated in a telephone
30 conference with the Alpine Sierra developer and legal counsel to
31 review the draft development agreement. Alpine Sierra will edit the
32 agreement and return it for comment. Chris Nelson, the developer,
33 has proposed a tour of the property after the October Board meeting
34 for any interested Directors.
- 35 • Marten Barry’s property: All paperwork has been submitted. Manager
36 Collins is awaiting comment from Placer County.
- 37 • State Taxes: The District received its consumer use tax account
38 number from the California State Board of Equalization. The State
39 has requested that the District file returns for 2009 and 2010.
40 Manager Collins met with Squaw Valley Public Service District
41 personnel to research what is involved with filing the returns, and has
42 started to review the 2009 data. He will provide Pam with a form to
43 use to track the data from now on.
- 44 • Audit: Manager Collins met with the auditors during their preliminary
45 visit.
- 46 • Dissolution of the ASCWD Financial Corporation: Manager Collins
47 continued to work on the dissolution of the ASCWD Financial
48 Corporation. He received instructions from the California Attorney
49 General’s office to submit prior years’ renewal applications. He

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- 1 completed and filed the back years' renewal applications along with
2 appropriate application fees (\$125). He is awaiting the Attorney
3 General's letter stating that the Financial Corporation has no assets.
4 • AME Well and Well R-1: Stantec conducted follow-up test pumping of
5 Well R-1. Manager Collins awaits their final report with
6 recommendations.
7 • Placer County Treasurer: Manager Collins verified the speed at which
8 the Placer County Treasurer is able to transfer requested funds (one
9 day). Then, in accordance with the Budget & Finance Committee's
10 recommendation, he invested additional funds with the Placer County
11 Treasurer.
12 • Rate Study: Manager Collins requested and received a proposal from
13 HDR Engineering regarding review and update of District rates.
14 • Meters: Manager Collins continued research on remote read meters
15 and the tools available to help customers detect leaks. National Meter
16 is scheduled to give a presentation to the Budget & Finance
17 Committee and to the Board at the October meetings. Director Grant
18 asked if the topic was moving from the bottom of the capital projects
19 list to the top of the list. Manager Collins said not at this point; he is
20 just gathering data.
21 • Dumpsters: The State of California says they have identified a bear
22 that stays within 200 yards of the District's dumpsters. They claim
23 that bear is causing all the problems in the Valley. The State says if
24 the District cannot do a better job of keeping bears out of its
25 dumpsters, they will recommend that the dumpsters be removed and
26 that Valley residents be required to use bear boxes. Manager Collins
27 said Staff will continue to take the usual measures to monitor and
28 clean up the dumpsters. He is formulating ideas to identify people
29 who unlatch the dumpsters. One idea is to install cameras to collect
30 license plate numbers from the offenders so they can be turned over
31 to the Department of Environmental Health, who can cite them. Buz
32 pointed out that people unlock the dumpsters on purpose to attract
33 and photograph bears. Director Northrop said he felt bear boxes were
34 a hazard to snow removal. Director Grant said she drove past the
35 District Office area at 12:30 a.m. and there were lots of lights and two
36 vehicles in the yard; she drove in to look around.

37 **E. Operations & Maintenance Department Report:**

- 38 Buz Bancroft presented a written report for the month of August that
39 included status updates on water, sewer, garbage and other services
40 provided by the District.
41 • Maintenance performed: Staff repaired a water leak discovered at a
42 service box on Trapper Place; maintained the Park; raised several
43 meters and meter boxes for easier access during the winter;
44 accompanied a State Health Department inspector on a water system
45 inspection (he seemed to like what he saw); completed the annual
46 valve maintenance program; and performed maintenance on the
47 Children's Playground (installed brackets on wood structures).
48 • Routine water samples and quarterly spring samples were absent
49 coliform bacteria.

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- 1 • Director Grant asked how long the Park would be open: Buz said as
- 2 long as the weather was nice. Staff usually closes it after the first or
- 3 second snow, or when temperatures approach freezing.
- 4 • Buz said the Fish & Game Department asked if the District could store
- 5 a 15- or 16-foot container for them, to hold a trailer-mounted bear
- 6 trap. Buz said he felt there was sufficient space. Director Grant said
- 7 the community would be happy if the District cooperated with Fish &
- 8 Game. Manager Collins agreed that the District should cooperate.
- 9 Vice President Nungester asked Manager Collins to make sure the
- 10 container could be removed if any problems arose.

11 **F. Bridge Project:**

12 The Board was supposed to review and vote to approve the contract with

13 Nichols Consulting Engineers to design the temporary relocation of the

14 District's water line and the new water line in the bridge. However, the

15 contract contained no cost figures, so Vice President Nungester said the

16 Board would take no action on the contract today.

17 **G. Redwood Storage Tank Repairs:**

18 The Board reviewed the contract with Resource Development Company

19 to repair the redwood storage tank. The Board already approved this

20 capital expenditure in the fiscal year 2011-2012 budget.

- 21 • Buz said last year the roof of the tank experienced nearly catastrophic
- 22 damage due to the snow load. Emergency repairs were carried out in
- 23 the fall and at the same time Resource Development inspected the
- 24 entire tank, identifying about 10 other rotten posts and beams.
- 25 Today's proposal would provide for all necessary repairs on beams
- 26 and posts to solidify the structural integrity of the tank. Some of the
- 27 work involves removing and replacing rotten wood, other work
- 28 involves the installation of support brackets.

- 29 • Director Quinan asked Buz if \$15,900 was a reasonable figure; Buz
- 30 said yes.

- 31 • Director Grant asked if Staff was content with the contract and the
- 32 work to be done; Buz said yes. Director Northrop said Resource
- 33 Development does good work.

34 Director Northrop made a MOTION that the Board approve the contract

35 with Resource Development Company to repair the redwood storage

36 tank, in the amount of approximately \$16,000. Director Quinan

37 SECONDED the motion. Directors Grant, Northrop and Quinan being in

38 favor, the motion was APPROVED.

39 **H. Rate Study:**

40 The Board reviewed the contract with HDR Engineering to perform a rate

41 study for the District.

- 42 • The contract will probably be modified, since the Board is considering
- 43 the implementation of a special rate for snowmaking. Manager
- 44 Collins recommended that the Board approve the contract now, due to
- 45 the relative urgency of the rate study, and entertain a future
- 46 addendum for the determination of a snowmaking rate.

- 47 • Manager Collins felt that today's conversation with Kent Hoopingartner
- 48 went well. He said the ski area's snowmaking usage could be broken
- 49 out from the rest of the ski area's water usage and charged at a

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1 separate rate. Director Grant pointed out that the District used to
2 have, but no longer has, a landscape or agricultural rate, that
3 snowmaking was essentially an agricultural usage (i.e., spreading
4 water on the ground for commercial purposes) and wanted to make
5 sure the Board was being consistent in re-implementing such a rate.
6 Manager Collins said he would approach the implementation of a
7 snowmaking rate from the point of view of cost to provide service, not
8 how the water would be used.

- 9 • Director Quinan asked why the District needed to pay for a study,
10 rather than having Staff determine new rates. Vice President
11 Nungester said hiring a consultant provides the District with credibility.
12 Manager Collins said he would not want to do it himself. He said the
13 situation was similar to hiring professionals to perform the annual
14 audit. He pointed out that HDR Engineering has done a rate study for
15 the District before and is familiar with its organization.
- 16 • Director Northrop asked if the cost of the contract was reasonable;
17 Manager Collins said it was very reasonable.
- 18 • Director Grant said the District had a fair amount of money in the bank
19 and said she felt perhaps a rate study was not necessary at this time.
20 Vice President Nungester said the previous rate study had run out
21 and the District would not be able to carry out its planned capital
22 projects without adequate financial support. He said the last time the
23 District implemented rate increases, they were sizeable; at that time,
24 HDR Engineering recommended that the District do smaller,
25 incremental increases in the future, rather than giant ones. Director
26 Grant felt the Board should take a conservative approach towards
27 increasing rates. Manager Collins said he and the auditors felt the
28 time was right for the rate study. Director Grant said she felt that, if
29 the District's reserves were too high and the District had no plans to
30 reduce the reserves, it might become vulnerable to the State, who
31 might consider making a raid on the District's assets. Manager
32 Collins reiterated that he felt the time was right. He said the reserves
33 looked like, but actually were not, a lot of cash and that it was more
34 typical for well-run districts to have 15-25% of their asset values in
35 cash reserves. ASCWD was not there yet. He said the rate study
36 would give the District guidance as to whether its reserves are okay, if
37 rates need to go up, or even if they need to go down. He pointed out
38 that District expenses are increasing, but rates are not.

39 Director Northrop made a MOTION that the Board approve the contract
40 with HDR Engineering to perform a rate study for the District in the
41 amount of approximately \$25,000, with an addendum to be supplied later
42 for a snowmaking rate. Director Quinan SECONDED the motion.
43 Directors Grant, Northrop, Nungester and Quinan being in favor, the
44 motion was APPROVED.

45 **I. TTSA Report:**

46 There was no meeting last month. The next TTSA Board meeting is
47 scheduled for September 14.

48 **J. Committee Reports:**

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- 1 i. **Budget & Finance Committee:** Vice President Nungester presented
2 a written report of the September 8, Committee meeting.
3 a. **Non-standard Transactions:** None.
4 b. **Investments/cash:**
5 • Vice President Nungester reminded the Board that the
6 Treasurer’s report was correct, even though it was in conflict
7 with the August Board meeting minutes.
8 • Per the Committee’s recommendation, Director Northrop made
9 a MOTION that Manager Collins move \$200,000 out of
10 checking to the Placer County Treasurer, to take advantage of
11 the higher interest rate. Director Quinan **SECONDED** the
12 motion. Directors Grant, Northrop and Quinan being in favor,
13 the motion was **APPROVED**.
14 c. **Requests from Customers for Adjustments to their Bills:** Five
15 customers submitted letters asking for relief from penalties. All
16 were denied. One of the customers, Rob Matthew, attended the
17 meeting and spoke at length with the Committee. He declined to
18 attend the Board meeting, but asked Vice President Nungester to
19 make his protest to the Board and to consider the following
20 changes to the current policy: 1) increase the float time on the bill
21 from 45 days to 90 days and 2) emphasize to the customers the
22 fact that the District has a payment plan. Rob admitted that he
23 does not read the District newsletter, and he did not call the Office
24 to ask about a payment plan. The Committee asked Mike
25 Dobrowski to look into how he could emphasize on the annual bills
26 in red or bold type something along the following lines: “The
27 District has a payment plan. For details, please call xxx-xxx-xxxx”.
28 Manager Collins said Staff will continue to mention the payment
29 plan in the newsletters and on the website. The Committee will
30 report back to the Board regarding Mike’s research. Pam says
31 this year she has had to deal with more anger and accusations
32 from customers than ever before. Vice President Nungester said
33 the Committee thanked Rob for his civility during the meeting.
34 d. **Requests for Unbudgeted Expenses:** None.
35 e. **Next meeting:** Not yet scheduled.
36 ii. **Administration & Personnel Committee:** There was no meeting.
37 iii. **Park, Recreation & Greenbelt Committee:** There was no meeting.
38 iv. **Long Range Planning Committee:** There was no meeting.

- 39 I. **Open Items:** None.
40 J. **Correspondence to the Board:** None.

41 **4. DIRECTORS’ COMMENTS**

- 42 • Director Northrop said he felt that interest rates were so low that nobody was
43 getting any return on their investments. He felt the economy was responsible
44 for customers’ expressed anger. Director Grant said she felt the District was
45 doing well, thanks to the actions of Manager Collins and Staff. Director
46 Northrop said he thought the Board was doing well, too, thanks especially to
47 the guidance of President Danz and Vice President Nungester.

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- 1 • Director Quinan pointed out that rates jumped last time due to the dissolution
- 2 of the District's volunteer fire department and having to use property tax
- 3 revenues to pay for fire protection services.
- 4 • On behalf of President Danz, Manager Collins said he had received an email
- 5 from the Gold Country Regional Special Districts Association regarding a
- 6 meeting scheduled for September 29, at 10:00 a.m., in El Dorado Hills. The
- 7 meeting covers information pertinent to special districts and is usually a
- 8 worthwhile meeting. President Danz said she could probably attend.
- 9 Manager Collins said he would probably attend as well, and said other
- 10 Directors were welcome to attend.
- 11 • The October Board meeting is scheduled for its normal time: Friday, October
- 12 14, at 8:30 a.m.

13 **5. CLOSED SESSION**

14 None.

15 **6. ADJOURNMENT**

16 There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at

17 10:20 a.m.

18

19 Respectfully Submitted,

approved as submitted 10/14/11

20

21

22

23 Jancis Martin

24 Recording Secretary