

**ACTION MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
GEORGETOWN DIVIDE PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT**

6425 Main Street,
Georgetown, California 95634

**THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2024
2:00 P. M.**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mitch MacDonald, President

Donna Seaman, Vice President

Mike Thornbrough, Treasurer

Michael Saunders, Director

Robert Stovall, Director

PRESENTING STAFF

Nicholas Schneider, General Manager

Jessica Buckle, Office/Finance Manager

Adam Brown, Operations Manager

Alexis Elliott, Water Resource Manager

Frank Splendorio, Legal Counsel

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the purpose of the Georgetown Divide Public Utility District to:

- Provide reliable water supplies.
- Ensure high-quality drinking water.
- Promote stewardship to protect community resources, public health, and quality of life.
- Provide excellent and responsive customer services through dedicated and valued staff.
- Ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability are observed by balancing immediate and long-term needs.

A full record of this meeting is available on the District channel:

<https://youtu.be/oBtaVPQZ1c0>

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President MacDonald called the meeting to order at 2:38 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Saunders, Stovall, Seaman, Thornbrough, and MacDonald

Absent: None

Director Stovall led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The General Manager requested that item number 8. F. Adoption of Memorandum of Understanding International Union of Operating Engineers, Stationary Engineers with Local 39 proposed be pulled from the agenda until a later meeting and that the Board move item 6.A. sub-bullet Joint Powers of Insurance Authority (JPIA) Cyber Security Update Presentation to directly after the consent calendar in order to accommodate the presenter, placing it between items four and five.

Public Comment:

No comments were received.

Director Saunders motioned to adopt the agenda with the amendments proposed removing item 8. F. Adoption of Memorandum of Understanding International Union of Operating Engineers, Stationary Engineers with Local 39 and to move 6. A. sub-bullet Joint Powers of Insurance Authority (JPIA) Cyber Security Update Presentation to directly after the Consent Calendar. Director Stovall seconded the motion.

President MacDonald called for the vote:

Ayes: Saunders, Stovall, Thornbrough, Seaman, and MacDonald

Nays: None

The motion passed **unanimously**.

3. PUBLIC FORUM

Cherie Carlyon

Steven Dowd

Steven Proe

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approval of Minutes

- February 6, 2024 Special Meeting

B. Consider Adoption of Equipment Surplus List

C. Consider Adoption of Policy 4205 Board Agenda

D. Consider Adoption of Policy 4240 Minutes of the Board Meetings

E. Consider Adoption of Policy 2180 Low-Income Rate Assistance Program

Director Seaman requested that item 4. A. Approval of the Minutes be pulled from the Consent Calendar. Director Thornburgh requested 4.C. Adoption of Policy 4205 Board Agenda and item 4. D. Policy 4240 Minutes of the Board Meetings be pulled for discussion.

Public Comment:

Cherie Carlyon

Director Saunders motioned to approve the consent calendar items 4. B. adoption of the equipment surplus list. Director Stovall seconded the motion.

President MacDonald called for the vote:

Ayes: Saunders, Stovall, Thornbrough, Seaman, and MacDonald

Nays: None

The motion passed **unanimously**.

4. A. Approval of the Minutes

Director Seaman addressed that on page two of the minutes, it states, "President MacDonald called for the vote", at that time Vice President Seaman was leading the meeting and thus called for the vote. President MacDonald wasn't in the room as he arrived later. The correction requested was for Vice President Seaman to be the meeting lead calling for the vote.

Public Comment:

No comments

Director Saunders motioned to approve item 4. A. minutes of the February 6, 2024 meeting. Director Seaman seconded the motion.

President MacDonald called for the vote:

Ayes: Saunders, Stovall, Thornbrough, Seaman, and MacDonald

Nays: None

The motion passed **unanimously**.

4. C. Consider adoption of Policy 4205 Board Agenda

Director Thornbrough brought to attention that in section 4205.05 edits take out the fact that the District is maintaining a website, but then states the agenda be posted to the website. There is no reference to that being the District's website. The request was the insertion of the word District before website.

Public Comment:

Cherie Carlyon

Director Thornbrough motioned to adopt Policy 4205 Board Agenda with the amendment of the language to reference the District website. Director Seaman seconded the motion.

President MacDonald called for the vote:

Ayes: Saunders, Stovall, Thornbrough, Seaman, and MacDonald

Nays: None

The motion passed **unanimously**.

4. D. Consider Adoption of Policy 4240 Minutes of the Board Meetings

There was discussion of the policy language which states that meeting recordings only need to be held for 30 days. It was shared that this is the policy set forth by the State, but that a records retention policy was being worked on which will set a longer retention period for District adherence.

Public Comment:

Cherie Carlyon

Steven Proe

Director Thornbrough Motioned to adopt Policy 4240 Minutes of the Board Meetings. Director Saunders seconded the motion.

President MacDonald called for the vote:

Ayes: Saunders, Stovall, Thornbrough, Seaman, and MacDonald

Nays: None

The motion passed **unanimously**.

4. E. Consider Adoption of Policy 2180 Low-Income Rate Assistance Program

The request and agreement were to add language requiring an email response be sent to customers via WaterSmart confirming the District's receipt of submissions to applicants.

Director Saunders motioned to adopt Policy 2180 Low-Income Rate Assistance Program with the proposed amendment of sending email verifications of receipt of submissions to applicants. Director Seaman seconded the motion.

President MacDonald called for the vote:

Ayes: Saunders, Stovall, Seaman, and MacDonald

Nays: None

Absent: Thornbrough

The motion **passed**.

6. E. Joint Powers of Insurance Authority (JPIA) Cyber Security Update Presentation

Jennifer Jobe of ACWA/JPIA delivered the presentation and fielded Board and public inquiries. The vulnerabilities the service addresses and the coverage offered were discussed. Available training for the Board members and staff resources available were examined.

Public Comment:

Cherie Carlyon

Steve Dowd

Item 6.B. Vectis D.C. Federal Advocate Update Presentation

Don Polese Senior Partner/Managing Partner at Vectis D.C. delivered the update. He explained the appropriations process and the support the District has received from lawmakers in pushing the project forward. The future support process for projects with the Army Core of Engineers was explained. Mr. Polese addressed Board of Directors inquiries.

Public Comment:

No comments were received.

5. OFFICE/FINANCE MANAGER'S REPORT

Office Finance Manager Jessica Buckle fielded Board and public inquiries regarding the financial reports. General Manager Nicholas Schneider delivered the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Operating Budget proposal presentation and fielded Board and public inquiries.

Public Comment:

Cherie Carlyon

Steven Proe

6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Board Reports

Director Seaman shared that she had attended the CSDA legislator of the year awards ceremony recognizing Senator Alvarado-Gil and also participated in the Irrigation Committee meeting.

Director Saunders covered his report highlights. The Water Authority will meet and discuss the grants which will cover the District's area. CalPERS payment liability and how that shows negatively against audits was addressed with the solution of an investment trust to offset OPEB and CalPERS fluctuations, and deviations.

- **Legislative Liaison Report**

Director Saunders shared items with a request to establish District positions. The first was for the LIWAP bill which was sponsored by Senator Padilla and would permanently fund the program through grants as well as SB 1110 and SB 1072.

A consensus was reached with all Directors in favor of submitting a letter of support for the LIWAP program bill.

Senate Bill 1110

The bill changes water use efficiency regulations, allowing for variances in fines when out of compliance if programs are in place allowing investments for water conservation considerations in lieu of imposing fines. Support lends extra compliance options opportunities to meet compliance.

A consensus was reached with all Directors in favor of submitting a letter of support of SB 1110.

SB 1072 Remedies to Proposition 218

This bill provides for any excess amounts collected to be allocated to the local agency's CIP funds. It also allows for an agency to not reduce the cost and have a buffer to avoid increasing charges.

A consensus was reached with all Directors in favor of submitting a letter of support for the SB 1072.

Circle Liabilities Protections Act

ACWA has asked for agencies to send letters regarding the Circle Liabilities Protections Act which would remediate against contaminated sites and hold the parties that caused the contamination to be financially responsible for the clean-up. The polluter pays model as opposed to the community pays model.

B. Operation Manager's Report

Operations Manager Adam Brown delivered his report. Preparations for the approaching Irrigation season are underway. Regarding CIP projects the distribution tank coating is beginning with an inspection. There is an RFP in development to facilitate coating work this year. The CalFire grant equipment has been ordered. The FEMA reimbursement is ongoing. Regarding the USDA project, the preliminary engineering report is complete and accepted. The water resource report was reviewed which includes projections for the coming year. There is no foreseen restriction moving forward during this year's season. There may be less runoff later in this season than in previous years, given the current snowpack and predicted warmth throughout the approaching months.

C. Water Resources Manager's Report

Water Resource Manager Alexis Elliott reviewed her report. There is a prediction of a potential transition into an El Nina cycle which historically has delivered more snow during the November and December window with rain following in January and February. The Manager and her employee attended an Elgin geotextile sand filter system course. There is a potential use for this technology on unbuilt lots which at the moment would be prescribed for mound use.

D. General Manager's Report

The General Manager Nicholas Schnieder delivered his report reviewing highlights. Current work on the state and federal appropriations considerations and submissions is ongoing. This would include an ask for funding to install hydroelectric facilities on the Stumpy Meadows Reservoir dam.

Public Comment:

Steve Dowd
Cherie Carlyon

7. COMMITTEES

A. Irrigation Committee

Director Seaman delivered an update on the Irrigation Committee activities. Public outreach materials were reviewed as well as the continuous use requirement of the allotments for irrigation customers. The discussion highlighted the need for outreach to illustrate the need for this constant usage and demonstrate the impacts on the system and others.

B. Finance Committee

General Manager Nicholas Schneider shared that the committee participated in a preliminary budget review. Directors MacDonald and Stovall shared their appreciation of the committee members and their commitment and knowledge.

C. Ad-Hoc Committee for Policy Manual

Director Saunders shared the committee's coming projects which will include many policies that will be updated with small changes. There will be a records retention and environmental policies moving through the committee and coming before the Board soon.

D. Ad-Hoc Grant Writing Committee

There has not been a meeting since the last Board meeting on which to report.

E. AD-Hoc Labor Negotiations Committee

Public Comment:

Steve Dowd

8. ACTION ITEMS

A. Consider Authorizing a Professional Services Agreement with EMCOR for Pump Station Installations not to Exceed an Amount of \$140,000.

General Manager Nicholas Schneider delivered the report. This project is funded through state appropriations funding which was awarded. The installation of these emergency backup generators will ensure that residents maintain water supply during PG&E, PSPS events. The General Manager and Operations Manager fielded Board and public inquiries.

Public Comment:

Steve Dowd

Cherie Carlyon

Director Stovall motioned to authorize the General Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement with EMCOR for design and installation of emergency generators at pump stations. Director Thornbrough seconded the motion.

President MacDonald called for the vote:

Ayes: Saunders, Stovall, Thornbrough, Seaman, and MacDonald

Nays: None

The motion passed **unanimously**.

B. Consider Approval of Dump Truck Purchase not to Exceed \$120,000

General Manager Nicholas Schneider and Operations Manager Adam Brown delivered the report and fielded inquiries. This would utilize funds from the surplus account. Additional fiscal impact would come from CIP funding. This would involve an amendment to the CIP. Potential impacts to the access roads with the weight of the new proposed equipment were examined. This vehicle would be utilized to deliver material as opposed to heavy access road usage. The purchase would also save on material delivery fees. It was shared that previously towing put the District's dump truck at its mechanical limits

which is a safety concern and contributed to the past truck wearing out. This purchase would assist with the change of operational models at the District utilizing the staff to work on infrastructure improvements producing long-term savings. Moving forward this would open opportunities to complete larger projects in-house. The trucks generally have 250,000-mile engine warranties.

Public Comment:

Steve Dowd
Cherie Carlyon

Director Saunders motioned to approve the purchase of a dump truck and approve the CIP amendment as staff recommended utilizing surplus and CIP funds in an amount not to exceed \$120,000 before tax. Director Seaman seconded the motion.

President MacDonald called for the vote:

Ayes: Saunders, Stovall, Thornbrough, Seaman, and MacDonald

Nays: None

The motion passed **unanimously**.

C. Consider Selection of Water Resource Economics for Cost of Services and Rate Study

General Manager Nicholas Schneider introduced the item. Sanjay Gaur of Water Resource Economics reported on the proposal, articulated the value of providing the analysis service, and fielded inquiries.

Board Discussion:

The previous rate study will not be heavily utilized, it will mostly serve as an example for analysis and reference. Request that the Board receive the data request lists and staff responses. The need for in-person workshops was emphasized. Mr. Guar has assisted in writing the standards for conducting these surveys, which is a benefit. Assignations of designated voters in the community were examined clarifying processes for when vote cards will be received at residences. It was explained that this process was congruent with state law. The rule is that one protest is counted per parcel which may be submitted by the property owner or tenant who is liable for the water usage billing per account.

Public Comment:

Cherie Carlyon
Steve Dowd
Steven Proe

Director Stovall motioned to approve authorizing a contract with Water Resource Economics to conduct a cost of services analysis and authorize the General Manager to execute a professional services contract in an amount not to exceed \$105,000. Director Saunders seconded the motion.

President MacDonald called for the vote:

Ayes: Saunders, Stovall, Thornbrough, Seaman, and MacDonald

Nays: None

The motion passed **unanimously**.

D. Consider Nomination of General Manager Nicholas Schneider to the California Special District's Association (CSDA) Board of Directors-Seat A

General Manager Nicholas Schneider requested the Board nominate him to seek a seat on the CSDA Board. This would bring benefits and value back to the District.

Public Comment:

Cherie Carlyon

Director Thornbrough motioned to nominate General Manager Nicholas Schneider to the CSDA Board of Directors Seat-A. Director Seaman seconded the motion.

President MacDonald called for the vote:

Ayes: Saunders, Stovall, Thornbrough, Seaman, and MacDonald

Nays: None

The motion passed **unanimously**.

E. Consider Adoption of Policy 2330 Inclement Weather

General Manager Nicholas Schneider delivered the report explaining the District's need for this policy while navigating inclement weather situations. This will offer transparency regarding the need for District closures for the public and staff.

Public Comment:

Cherie Carlyon

Director Thornbrough motioned to adopt Policy 2330 Inclement Weather. Director Seaman seconded the motion.

President MacDonald called for the vote:

Ayes: Saunders, Stovall, Thornbrough, Seaman, and MacDonald

Nays: None

The motion passed **unanimously**.

9. PUBLIC HEARING-CONSIDER DISTRICT IMPLEMENTATION OF SERVICE CHARGES

President MacDonald opened the public hearing at 6:28 pm

General Manager Nicholas Schneider read the title of the resolution.

Public Comment:

Cherie Carlyon contested the proposed meter read fee.

President MacDonald closed the public hearing at 6:33 p.m.

Discussion involved clarification that this opens a window for public comment submission. It was shared that this was submitted with the collected data realizations to establish the actual cost of providing services. This would be inclusive of irrigation service. Director Saunders gave staff direction to remove the 90-day data download. The activation and deactivation charges will also be removed.

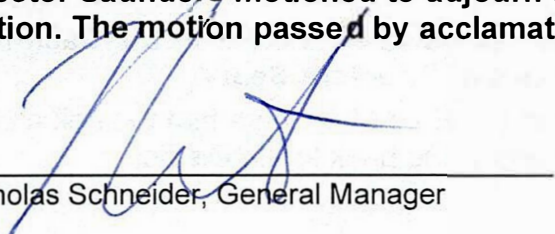
10. BOARD MEMBER REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONS TO FUTURE MEETING AGENDAS

Directors Seaman and Thornbrough requested an RFP be developed for lab charges.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

- A. The next Regular Meeting will be April 4, 2024, at 2:00 PM., at the Georgetown Divide Public Utility District, 6425 Main Street, Georgetown, California 95634.

Director Saunders motioned to adjourn the meeting. Director Seaman seconded the motion. The motion passed by acclamation. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.



Nicholas Schneider, General Manager



Date

Attachment:
Public Comment

Public comments by Cherie Carlyon
GDPUD Board Meeting
March 7, 2024 2:00pm

Recently my water meter was replaced because it was defective. It recorded 1,700% increase in water use in a one month period. How many of these meters are failing? I was under the understanding that the batteries could be changed by the District, but I guess that isn't the case. These meters were supposed to last 20 years. How long is the warranty period? I think the board needs to put the meter issue on a meeting agenda to discuss the failure rate and the additional costs to the district and the customers.

The second meeting packet has "Draft" written on some of the pages.

4C

The agendas should be posted on the District's Facebook page. Section 4205.04 Where does a public member sign up to have meeting information mailed to them? It was taken off the website a year ago. Board member requests: This change looks like you are going back to operating like the previous board did. Don't you remember how hard it was for a director to get something put on the agenda?

4D

Destroying meeting recordings after only 30 days is not being very transparent. They should be kept for a minimum of a year. They need to be added to the meeting date on the website, which stopped in August 2023. Why isn't there a youtube policy? I see that the policy now states "Summary of public comments". Is that going to be implemented, instead of just the public members name?

4E

When a customer mails or delivers an application, why do they not get an email acknowledgment that their application has been accepted. The application contains their email address.

8C--RFP for the Rate Study.

Why wasn't the RFP put on a previous meeting agenda for a board and public discussion? Why only give the companies 22 days to get their bids in? Why isn't the bid documents included in the meeting packet for today? They cannot be retrieved off of the "Bidnet Direct" web page without signing up for a paid account. We should be able to see both of the bids submitted. This bid is \$35,000 over budget.

8F

What is the \$3,000 college expenses

Why is there such a difference in the pay increases for the different classes? The Field Superintendent will go from a \$105,000 salary in 2023 to a \$135,000 salary in 2026. A Canal Operator will only go from \$55,000 to \$67,000. Upper management always get the major increases.

So, Local 39 employees will get 4 new holidays, 100% health care, 5 days new days bereavement. Where are the job descriptions?