

KEELER COMMUNITY SERVICE DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
April 20, 2021

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mike Gibson
Noah Bricker
Jim Macey

PUBLIC PRESENT

Patty Thorn Theona Wasson
Dan Dickman Robert Spry
Tammy Hursell Alice Robertson
Karen Riggs

1. Meeting was called to order at 5:37PM by acting Chairperson Noah Bricker.

2. Old Business:

- Review/Pass regular board meeting on March 16, 2021, minutes.
Noah made a motion to accept minutes. All board members in agreement.
- Customer's Report: All property owners have been billed. Many are keeping up or ahead of billing.
- Review/Approval of Financial Report:
Revenue: \$4,404.73
Expenses: \$12,092.97
Net amount in account: \$62,840.13 (from County as of April 6, 2021)
- Petty Cash: Cash on hand of \$300.00
- Jim made a motion to approve the financial report. All board members in agreement.
- Alice stated that she has a petition with over 30 signatures to stop selling water to the public, outside of Keeler residents/water users. Further discussion occurred to explain why selling water to outsiders is not okay with many Keeler residents. She stated she would send the petition to Noah right away. Jim responded that the KCSD board voted to sell water to outside users on a case-by-case basis and that no evidence exists to show that other organizations have damaged the water system or usage of it.

3. New Business:

- Jim discussed obtaining a certified water operator and has been working with Inyo County and CalRural Water to locate one. Kathe Barton mentioned having the county hire an operator and contracting the person out to assist special districts, but conversations with Matt Kingsley have determined that this motion is no longer in action. Costs for having an operator would potentially outweigh what the KCSD can afford. If the state were to take over, the state would provide its own administrator and an operator at their own cost. Manny Luna has shown interest in becoming the KCSD's water operator, but he has requested that the KCSD pay for his certification. Water

rates would have to be increased for all KCSD water users to help pay for a water operator. Jim stated that the KCSD should wait until the state takes over and provides its own administrator and water operator. Noah stated that working with Manny could be feasible and that water rates will still need to be increased whether the state takes over or if the KCSD hires its own water operator. Mike stated that the KCSD should wait until the state comes in but to also work on helping Manny pay for his certification. Mike stated that the KCSD should push the state to allow the KCSD to stay as self-reliant as possible.

- Mike discussed filling the two vacant board seats and the secretary position. Leigh stated that Inyo County has been notified of the vacancies and that postings have been made for the board seats and secretary job.
- Noah discussed that KCSD's Quickbooks subscription would be expiring in May. Karen stated that Streamline offers an online way for water users to pay their bills through the KCSD website.

4. Director's Reports:

- Noah Bricker: Did the first release of water at the monthly allotment for the grant of 60 gallons of water per household. Three people were still looking to obtain water at the time of this meeting. The board will need to approve the purchase of more water from Crystal Geyser because there are only two pallets left of water in the container. He mentioned that it might be beneficial for the state to see how much water the KCSD goes through so that they better understand Keeler's need for water.
- Mike Gibson: Need to make a move on buying the next truckload of water as soon as possible to keep ahead of stock. He stated that a truckload of water could fit into the container at the time of this meeting once parts inside the container were reorganized.
- Jim Macey: The KCSD board requested an opinion from Inyo County counsel in regard to selling water or charging for bottled water. The county agreed with the selling of water and to sell it at cost. The state is very strict about its requirement for each household, not per person, to receive a maximum of 60 gallons of water a month. He also stated that a former employee of the KCSD owes a debt to the district and that the notification of debt was sent to the employee in October 2016. The KCSD board reached out to Inyo County for counsel and was advised to send a certified letter to the person. If no response, the county suggested taking the person to small claims court or to file a police report. He stated that a certified letter would need to be sent. Noah responded that no board member has the time to go to small claims court. Mike responded that it might not be worth the time and effort to deal with and to leave this incident in the past. Jim responded that this board requested to have the incident taken care. The two board

members who resigned were involved in this action, so Jim wanted to bring this item to the directors and not take any action at this time.

5. Public Comment:

- Alice requested to know the amount of the former employee's debt. Jim responded that it was around \$300.00, to which Alice stated equals over a year's worth of water.
- Robert commented that any new people on the KCSD board need to be respectful of others. Previous board members who caused issues should not be allowed back on the board. He stated that there is TCP present in the water and that he concerned that no one was informed about it.
- Tammy stated that she does not think that holding the debt against the previous employee is a good precedent for the board to make. She also requested an update regarding the upcoming meeting with the state. Noah responded that the debt was probably the board's petty cash allotment, and the equipment was also not returned by the previous employee. The state would be discussing bringing on an administrator and a certified water operator, as well as bringing the KCSD into compliance. He mentioned that the KCSD has been working toward compliance and that it is currently closer to compliance than in prior years.
- Tammy asked if the state's involvement would be temporary, to which Noah responded that it seems to be but in talking with other districts in similar situations, the state remains involved indefinitely.
- Karen asked who would be paying for the administrator, to which Noah responded that paying for the administrator would be part of the upcoming state meeting's discussion but that the state should be covering its own costs.
- Mike commented that the state has the authority to take over non-compliant water systems. Keeler is a disadvantaged community and is unable to pay for this service. He encouraged everyone to log in for the state meeting, which would be held via Zoom on May 18, 2021.
- Karen asked if board members have access to the KCSD website to view e-mails that members of the public have sent. Noah responded that he has access and have viewed e-mails in the past. Karen would like to test the system because there is an option within the system that allows her to assign questions to board members. She would like a response if she sends these e-mails out to confirm that this option works. Noah stated that the website should also be updated on the back end so that previous board members do not have access to the website's administrative functions.
- Robert commented that a board member who recently left the board made an illegal contract to sell water, that the person uses water that he/she is not paying for, and that no favoritism should be shown to previous water board members.

6. Jim made a motion to adjourn at 6:20 PM, with a second made by Noah. All board members in agreement.

Minutes by Leigh McLendon, Secretary

Board Member Signature  Date 5/25/21.