

**ST. MARY RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2023**

The Annual General Meeting of St. Mary River Irrigation District was held at the Taber Legion Hall, commencing at 1:40 p.m. There were approximately 90-100 guests in attendance.

Welcoming and Opening Remarks

G. Lohues welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced himself and covered housekeeping rules. George commented that he was just back from Egypt. He had toured the Aswan Dam on the Nile River that was constructed in 1970. Recently they have been short of water, and this has resulted in a cut to rice production of 50%. The Ethiopia Grand Dam is also on the Nile. There is no agreement between Sudan and Egypt regarding the water. The Nile could be reduced to a trickle. There is stress in the world due to water. No one wants to cut water supply. Here we are in an expansion. George stressed how fortunate and lucky we are to be in this situation today.

Additions to Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

Cory Nelson moved, and Gary Franz seconded the approval of the agenda.

CARRIED

Minutes of the SMRID March 30, 2022, Annual Meeting

Motion to not read minutes out loud and accept last year's minutes, distributed to attendees. Due to the amalgamation a copy of the minutes from most recent Taber Irrigation District Annual General Meeting from March 23, 2022, are included as well.

Brian Ober moved, and Grant Henderson seconded adoption of the minutes March 30, 2022, as presented.

CARRIED

Minutes of the TID March 23, 2022, Annual Meeting

Dan Lievaart moved, and Jack Rop seconded adoption of the minutes March 23, 2022, and March 30, 2022, as presented.

CARRIED

Ellen Conrad commented that the TID minutes were not available on the website prior to the meeting.

Business Arising from the Minutes

No new business was raised from the AGM minutes.

Returning Officer's Report

David Westwood advised that we had Electoral Divisions 2, 5 and 7 open for nominations. Division 2 had Brian Ober acclaimed for another term. Division 5 had Cory Nelson acclaimed for another term. Division 7 had Gary Franz completing 4 terms with 14 years of service, replaced by Roland Kappel by acclamation. No election was held.

Board of Directors Chairman's Report – George Lohues, Chairman

George Lohues referred to his Chairman's Report printed on page 1 & 2 of the 2022 Annual Report. It was a dry year and water demand was early. In June we had good precipitation. We had good crops despite the severe heat. The board pursued the expansion plebiscite which was successful. The new acres will sell for an initial offering of \$4,000 per acre. George thinks this is a good start. There has been an announcement by McCain's for their expansion. Inflation has had a dramatic impact on all our costs. Selling power has worked in our favour. The good news is that Irrican is doing very well. This is going to help with the large expansion acres coming as the district will be paying 70% of the costs for the infrastructure to expand. There was 91% support for the plebiscite. Pursuing the AIM projects took courage and foresight. George thanked David Westwood for his work on this. This is going to be an exciting time. Our staff are second to none. We have been leading the way due to our staff. Jan Tamminga was an operations man for 26 years. He has recently retired. He ran the district with great efficiency. George Bohner will be taking over Jan's place. He has been training in the role for some time. George said farewell to Gary Franz and thanked him for his years of service to the district.

Gary got up and said a few words. He got involved on the board when we had a pipeline project and one farmer held it up. When he got involved with the board, he did not think he would serve 14 years. Gary said what he learned and took back to his farm was priceless. He served under four managers. Trevor is the only staff member left from that time. People make good careers at SMRID. Think about all the big projects that we have completed. The vision of the people built SMRID. He has been through two expansions. Gary feels that he is leaving things in a good situation. He has been proud of his role at SMRID.

George Lohues moved and Gary Franz seconded adoption of the Board of Director's Chairman's Report.

CARRIED.

General Manager's Report – David Westwood

Summarized report on page 3&4 of the 2022 Annual Report.

2022 was momentous, stupendous, and fantastic. We achieved significant milestones. On August 1st we completed the 14-month process to get amalgamated with TID. This is a move that we think is better for the irrigators. David wanted to say thank you to the TID directors for their direction. David feels very humbled and blessed to be a part of this organization.

We had a very successful plebiscite. We have increased from 504,200 acres to 584,200 acres. We are planning for having 15,000 acres sold for next year. The 2022 watering season was very successful. 2021 was dry but 2022 snowpack was great. We were able to raise allocation from 16" initially to 18". By 2022 we completed nine AIM projects out of a total of 30. We are well on our way. David is really pleased with the progress and how well the teams have worked together to make this happen. We are mostly on time and on budget.

David mentioned the scholarship program. TID traditionally gave out five scholarships. We have expanded the project across SMRID and this year awarded fifteen scholarships for a total of \$30,000.

Stacey Russel was hired as Land Manager in March of 2022. She is a great addition to our team. She has purchased land for the Horsefly Spillway projects. She will be heading up the land negotiations for the Chin Expansion. She has been doing a fantastic job.

David mentioned Jan Tamminga's retirement after 26 years with the district. Jan has been a truly dedicated and conscientious manager. He has left the group in good hands with George Bohner taking over. Dale Pickering is also retiring. He has been with the district for 41 years. There will be an open house celebration for Jan & Dale at the Broxburn shop on April 12th from 1-3 p.m. Please feel free to drop by.

David Westwood moved, and Mike Wind seconded adoption of the General Manager's Report.
CARRIED

Water Supply Situation/Maintenance Report – George Bohner

The start of the year was warm and dry. June rains dropped demand back. The rain also helped bring reservoir levels up. George recognized AEP for their work in managing the water. We are at good current water levels. We are a little below where we were at this time last year, but it is not concerning. We are presently at 88% of normal reservoir flows. Water flows started on April 14th last year for Chin and Stafford.

George showed the operations reports from West, Central and East.

The maintenance reports are available for review in the annual report on pages 16 through 23.

George Bohner moved, and Brian Ober seconded the adoption Water Supply and Maintenance Report.

CARRIED

2022 Auditors' Report MNP– Tanya Bell

Tanya Bell, MNP, presented the Auditor's opinion of the Auditor's Report and referenced the Financial Statements printed on pages 26-50 of the 2022 Annual Report. Tanya commented that there was a clean audit report. The change for 2022 was the amalgamation. This year, things had to combined from the SMRID and the TID financial statements. The October 31st year end was typical for SMRID. TID's prior year end was December 31st. The information has been reviewed and no issues were identified. The management and the board have responsibility in preparing the Financial Statements. The audit focussed on risk management and internal controls for both SMRID and TID. The statements were issued February 28, 2023.

2022 Financial Statement – Joyce Lam

J. Lam referred to the Consolidated Statement of Financial Position General Operations and Irrigation Works for the Year Ended October 31, 2022.

Joyce commented that the investments are viewed at year end as a moment in time. At year end they were down slightly, but as no investments were redeemed, no actual loss was incurred.

Joyce Lam moved, and Grant Henderson seconded the adoption of the Auditors Report and the financial Report.

CARRIED

District Engineer's AIM & IRP Report – Trevor Helwig

T. Helwig presented his 2021-2022 AIM and IRP reports printed on pages 7-15 of the 2022 Annual Report. Followed by a PowerPoint summarizing the projects going forward.

We have had a very busy year for construction. Trevor thanked his team for all that was accomplished. Several of the AIM projects have been completed. The timeline for all of the AIM projects to be completed stretches to the 2027/2028 construction season. With the amalgamation the IRP funding will be approximately \$5M per year. Seven construction projects are planned for next year.

Trevor Helwig moved, and John Braun seconded the adoption of the District Engineer's IRP Report.

CARRIED

Expansion Update – Stacey Russell

Stacey gave a brief update on where we are in the process for the expansion. The initial release is for 15,000 acres. She will be working through the process with her team of Linda Park and Kyla Ross. The maximum acres per application was 150 acres. The goal is for the acres to be served in the 2024 water season.

We had 360 applications for a total of 32,217 acres. Each application was assigned a number. The lottery process for the order of the applications is completed. The accounting firm did a randomized draw. As we go through the applications, we will contact people to obtain all the information needed to carry forward with the purchase of acres. Landowners will be contacted once the applications have been reviewed by the staff. We will be looking at capacity to serve the acres and other criteria. We will also be checking for compliance to see if parcels are over irrigating. We will make people buy compliance acres if they are found to be over irrigating. A 10% deposit will be required within 30 days of being contacted, and then the landowner will have one year to complete all the requirements to get the acres served. If for any reason your application cannot proceed, your deposit will be refunded.

Sustainable CAP Water Program Information – Marie Oxley – Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation.

Marie Oxley reported on the CAP Water Program. The old program has been replaced with the Sustainable Water CAP Program. It is a five-year program to help producers adopt better water management practices for water efficiency and energy efficiency. Systems eligible include low pressure pivots, drip irrigation systems and general upgrades. They allow for the replacement of old pumps. It covers replacement costs of 25% for up to \$15k with a minimum of 20 acres. It covers upgrade costs of 25% for up to \$5K with a minimum of 10 acres. The maximum is up to \$30K for large entities and only up to \$30K each year. This is not funds that have been carried forward, it is new funding for 2023. Information is available on the website and applications can be made at: irrigationefficiency@gov.ab.ca. The program does not fund soil probes. They have a healthy budget but have had lots of interest in the program.

New Business

Jack Rop had questions about Spill Agreements. He asked how they are set up and how they operated. Water spills to the river in certain areas of the district. If the landowner can make the case that they can use the spill water to irrigate we will consider an agreement for that situation if we feel enough water is available. These are annual agreements and there is no guaranteed water supply.

Mark Ross identified a culvert that is collapsed on the drain at 15-4. He said it has been a problem for ten years. He is wondering who will replace the culvert. George Lohues told Mark to bring the issue to the board. The staff will research it and come up with a plan.

John Bareman asked who is responsible for maintaining the system. Mike Wind said we work with the MD on these types of things. If the issues are individual, George Bohner said it is best to notify our staff (bring it to your Water Coordinator's attention) so that we can look at the issue. If necessary, the staff will inform the board and get help or direction on coming up with a plan.

There was a question about the lottery order. We need to follow the order of the lottery. We cannot jump ahead. We need to take it case by case as some applications may have implications for other applications. It is a tremendous amount of work. We will do our best to process these applications as efficiently as we can.

Door prize winner – Eddie of Lakeside Colony.

Adjournment

Brian Ober motioned to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned 3:56 p.m.