

# TOPAZ RANCH ESTATES GENERAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Address: 1490 Albite Road, Arden Square, Suite 8, (Topaz Ranch Estates) Wellington, Nevada, 89444 / Telephone: 775.266.3000

## MEETING MINUTES

### REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**DATE:** Wednesday, December 13, 2023  
**TIME:** 6:00 P.M.  
**LOCATION:** TOPAZ RANCH ESTATES COMMUNITY CENTER  
3939 Carter Drive, Wellington, NV 89444

Supporting material and the audio tape is available for public inspection at the TREGID office during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:00 a.m.), Monday through Friday, except legal holidays. Please make your request to the TRE GID office at the address and phone number above OR by email directed to: [TREGID2023@gmail.com](mailto:TREGID2023@gmail.com)

- 1) **CALL MEETING TO ORDER:** Led by Chairperson Sharon Becker **TIME: 6:05 PM**
- 2) **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Led by Chairperson Sharon Becker
- 3) **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dave Akola, Michael Tanner, Sharon Becker, Kaitlyn Insell
- 4) **STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**
- 5) **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** Mike Boney

- 6) **AGENDA APPROVAL:** For Possible Action: Board action to approve the **December 13, 2023**, Agenda.

**Public Comment before Board Action:** No Public comment.

Kaitlyn Insell made a motion to approve the Agenda for the December 13, 2023, Regular Meeting. Dave Akola seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

- 7) **MINUTES APPROVAL:** For Possible Action: Board action to approve the **November 8, 2023**, Meeting Minutes.

**Public Comment before Board Action:** No Public comment.

Kaitlyn Insell made a motion to approve the amended Minutes of the November 8, 2023, Regular Board Meeting. Mike Tanner seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

- 8) **PUBLIC COMMENT:**  
No Public Comment

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### CONSENT CALENDAR

#### **A. For Discussion Only: Bills to be Paid for: December 2023**

1. Water Bills: \$ 44,553
2. Road Bills: \$ 58,163
3. Bergkamp: \$ 2,122
4. Attorney Bills: \$ 2,577

### REPORTS

#### **9) REPORTS: For Discussion Only:**

- A. Treasurer's Report: Sharon Becker – BANKS & INVESTEMENT ACCTS restricted accounts \$295,518, unrestricted \$949,642, deposits \$293.418, debits \$98,622, CASH ACCTS water operations \$543,686, water projects account \$28,852, LOANS – DEBT SERVICE Bergkamp \$2,122, USDA bonds / loans \$14,831
- B. Water Operator's Report: Mike Boney – NOVEMBER 2023 water recorded through meter = 4,028,500 gallons, water recorded at well meters = 3,484,500, 8.9% water surplus which came from the water storage.
- C. Road Report: no report
- D. Attorney's Report: no report
- E. Engineer's Report: no report
- F. FEMA Report: Mike Tanner – state is still holding things up, all projects have been approved, reimbursement for the emergency repairs we did should be coming through at any time. It appears that FEMA will fund some mitigation work (75% on approved projects). TREGID has done its work, and at this point, the ball is in FEMA's court.

### ADMINISTRATIVE CALENDAR

#### **10) AGENDA**

##### **1. For Discussion Only:**

New property purchase-  
Where is the rezoning process currently?  
What needs to be done next?  
Who is responsible for following this item?

**SB**

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Sharon Becker – I am just asking where we are on this project. We need to have someone who is responsible for follow-up on this project.

Frank Flaherty – after the Board took this action, I attended the Board of County Commissioners meeting along with Brandon Taylor. I reported back to the Board, asking if the Board wanted me to be further involved in the process, and the Board, Brandon I think, indicated the Board would handle it.

Dave Akola – I would recommend that we don't do anything with it. I don't think that the board has the money to refurbish that property. It is my recommendation that we wait 5 years, then sell it and put a building over where the old office building is.

Sharon Becker – we bought this under the assumption that we would be using it, and rezoning may be an absolute necessity regardless of if we want to do it or not.

Frank Flaherty – I do recall that when the Board instructed me to write the letter, I looked at the statute, and wrote in the letter that the GID wanted to acquire the property to use it for a public purpose. I am unaware of a statute that allows the Board to sell it at a profit after five years.

Sharon Becker – I believe that this is why we will be required to rezone it because of how we presented the idea to the County (for public use).

Kaitlyn Insell – the original purpose of purchasing the property was to move the office building over there, to get us out of our current rental situation. The original purpose from what was spoken about was to NOT erect a structure for a garage but to utilize our current property and put a garage / workshop on that lot and put an office building on the Granite lot, which would only be running 8:00 am to 2:30 pm everyday Monday through Friday only. This was the original agreement.

Sharon Becker will take this project on and report back hopefully by the January 2024 meeting.

### 2. For Discussion Only:

Old maintenance building- has the ad been placed as the Board directed in June 2023. Who is responsible for following up on this item? **SB**

Sharon Becker – this was something that was directed to be put up for advertisement and sold, this is the current building that is in the yard.

Kaitlyn Insell will reach out to Brandon Taylor in regard to his interest in the office building and come back to the board with more information.

### 3. For Discussion Only:

Where are we with the Water study mentioned at the November Board meeting? Is it going forward? Who is responsible for following up on this item? **SB**

Sharon Becker – Lisa Sandbo had mentioned a water study last meeting (November 2023) does anyone have any information about it?

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Mike Tanner – there is a water study in a file in the office from RCAC.

Mike Boney – what is the water study for?

Mike Tanner – a water rate study.

Mike Boney – if RCAC doesn't want to pick this up, Nevada Rural Water can offer to do so, but again, only if RCAC takes a pass.

Dave Akola – I recommend we move the water study over to Nevada Rural Water.

Kaitlyn Insell to bring back on January 2024 agenda.

#### **4. For Discussion and Possible Action to approve, approve with modifications or conditions, or deny:**

A new system for taking credit cards and checking payments-

- Clover has no cost for set up. It accepts MasterCard, Visa, American Express and Discover as well as checks.
- Transactional fees are minimal- \$0.25 for credit cards and \$0.10 for checks. Over the phone payments can be taken for a small fee to be passed on to the customer- 1.25% plus \$0.25.
- Clover takes responsibility for bounced checks, which saves the TREGID several hundred dollars a year.
- It would also allow the TRE GID to eliminate the "analysis checking" monthly fee of \$275 - \$300 a month. Annual savings \$3,300 to \$3,600 annually. This will also allow TRE GID to move money into LGIP accounts and earn interest, furthering our available cash assets.

**SB**

Sharon Becker – we are moving our credit card reading system in the office from the current system to Clover. It will be an annual saving of \$3,000 to \$3,600 to the GID. The system is easier, we don't have to track the bounced checks through Clover, it manages credit card payments, the only thing that will change is if you pay over the phone there is a fee just like if you pay over the phone to other governmental entities (which would be explained by whomever is taking the payment before processing payment).

Open for Public Comment:

Sandy Fritch – will this eliminate the \$4 processing fee if you use a credit card?

Changed to discussion only by Sharon Becker

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### 5. For Discussion and Possible Action to approve, approve with modifications or conditions, or deny:

Rent increase on the current TREGID office building. Notice of increase of rent from \$563 to \$600 monthly. **SB**

Sharon Becker – we have a rent increase on our current building, a \$37 per month rent increase.

Open for Public Comment before board action: no public comment

Kaitlyn Insell made a motion to accept the increase from \$563 to \$600 per month for rental office space. Mike Tanner seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0

### 6. For Discussion and Possible Action to approve, approve with modifications or conditions, or deny:

D2 position- need to advertise to fill the D2 position. NWRA is currently acting as our D2 on a temporary basis. **SB**

Open for Public Comment before board action:

Donna Tanner – have we looked into utilizing any hiring companies (indeed.com, hiremenevada.com, etc.) they cost some money, but they turn out results.

Kaitlyn Insell – the D2 has to live within the District.

Sharon Becker – they have to have a 25-minute response time.

Mike Tanner will get the advertisement placed in the paper and on the internet.

Sharon Becker made a motion to put an advertisement out with a comprehensive / broader job description / area we can reach within the next week. Kaitlyn Insell seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0

### 7. For Discussion and Possible Action to approve, approve with modifications or conditions, or deny:

Upgrade the current water meter reading equipment.

The current meter reading equipment-model 5500, is no longer supported. If it malfunctions, there are no available repair parts, and it cannot be upgraded. This would mean meters could not be read in a timely fashion. The newer model 6590 can use Bluetooth to the TREGID field crew's phone. It is more accurate and will likely help eliminate current problems the community

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has with false readings. The cost for the newer model is \$2,300 plus tax, approximately \$2500.  
**SB**

Open for Public Comment before board action:

Renee Strong – will there be an upgrade charge on the customers end to upgrade our meters? How long before you are planning to upgrade to the smart meters?

Sharon Becker made a motion to purchase the 6590 model not to exceed \$2,500. Dave Akola seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0

### **8. For Discussion and Possible Action to approve, approve with modifications or conditions, or deny:**

Move payroll to Rippling Payroll. Cost is \$126/month for 4 employees and \$16/month for additional employees. Annual total \$1512 if paid monthly. If paid annually, \$1209.60, saving an additional \$302. Currently payroll exceeds \$1000/month. This service will save TREGID nearly \$10,000 annually. This system allows for tracking work orders between the water and road, as well as time spent on each work order. It shows closed out work orders so staff can stay current. This system also has features for payments, reporting, funding, and sending payments to agencies other than PERS. **SB**

Sharon Becker – the actual annual cost is \$1,896 per year, but we are paying \$12,000 per year now. Open for Public Comment before board action:

Dan Finley – how did we find this company; do we know what other entities they may represent?

Kaitlyn Insell made a motion to switch from the current payroll company to Rippling Payroll. Mike Tanner seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0

### **9. For Discussion and Possible Action to approve, approve with modifications or conditions, or deny:**

Discuss the pro-ration of overhead expenses for roads operations and water operations and adjust/modify the current proration between road expenses and water expenses. Tabled from October and November meetings. **DA**

Dave Akola – in the review I've done of the last couple of months of the bank statements, we don't have enough money to take care of our roads and the only way we can do that is if we change the proration of our overhead. I recommend that we change from the 40%/60% to 25%/75%, this will give us about \$100,000 to spend on the roads. We will have to raise the water rates to cover this expense.

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Sharon Becker – you needed to bring back information from the accountant about this.

Open for Public Comment before board action: no public comment

Sharon Becker – based on prior financial reports, it appears that appears that the actual accounting shows 64% water and 36% roads, which is pretty close to our current 60 – 40.

Frank Flaherty – I feel the need to repeat my recommendations from before, that we run this by the accountant.

Dave Akola made a motion to change from 40 road/60 water to 25 road/75 water. Kaitlyn Insell seconded the motion. Motion failed 1-3

### **10. For Discussion and Possible Action to approve, approve with modifications or conditions, or deny:**

Discuss the need to raise water rates and by how much. Raise the rates starting with the next water bill. Tabled from October and November meetings. **DA**

Sharon Becker – we have not raised rates for 8 years, but I think before we make any adjustments to the base rate, we need to have a rate study done.

Mike Tanner – like I stated last time, just throwing an arbitrary number out is not the way to do this, I feel like we are trying to clean this up and running it as smoothly as possible, yes, the cost of business has gone up, we do need to raise by at least 5 to 10 %, but we need a water rate study done.

Sharon Becker – we need to take a look at our bulk water consumption. I'd rather see a tiered system rather than an overall jump.

Sharon Becker – we need to determine how much more per month we need to see coming in and then we can take all these suggestions and decide.

Mike Boney – the Board can choose to raise rates, but that should be driven by the cost of water operations, not to cover other, non-water-related costs. Frank Flaherty asked Mr. Boney how long a rate study would take, and Mr. Boney said that assuming all the necessary information was readily available, 2 – 3 months.

Sharon Becker – we need more information, but I don't think we have to wait three months for the study to be completed.

Mike Tanner – our base rate needs to cover upcoming infrastructure improvements whereas our usage fees will cover electricity and salaries.

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Open for Public Comment before board action:

Shelly Gonzalez – you are giving away your bulk water. It is on an honor system; they fill up their tank and they fill in what they've taken and take it with them.

Dave Akola made a motion to increase base rate by \$5 then after water usage study work on a tiered system. No second. Motion failed 1-3

Kaitlyn Insell made a motion to table this agenda item until February 2024. Sharon Becker seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-1

### **11. For Discussion and Possible Action to approve, approve with modifications or conditions, or deny:**

Hire an Engineer to prepare plans, specifications and bid documents to construct headwalls at the drainage channel on Sandstone Drive where the roadway is failing in accordance with FEMA requirements. An alternative to us hiring an engineer is to request Douglas County to design and bid the project. **DA**

Dave Akola – I think it is very critical that we get headwalls built on the north end of the culvert going under Sandstone.

Mike Tanner – this is a high priority with FEMA, as mentioned earlier, we are allowed to include engineering costs.

Open for Public Comment before board action:

Donna Tanner – FEMA does have the headwalls in the mitigation projects plan; the problem is if we start digging and putting the stuff in, we will have to have environmental studies, and surveys on what the water is going to do once we put all this in.

Dave Akola made a motion to advertise for bids to build headwalls on Sandstone. Sharon Becker seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0

### **11) TRUSTEES' REPORTS:** none

### **12) PUBLIC COMMENT: Not for Board Action:**

Renee Strong – back in August 2023, Mica Court was brought up as a problem street, it was graded incorrectly years ago, and has never been corrected / addressed.



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**13)ADJOURNMENT:** Dave Akola made a motion to adjourn. Sharon Becker seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

**TIME: 8:20 pm**

Minutes submitted by Board Secretary Kaitlyn Insell

**A COMPLETE RECORDING OF THIS MEETINGS DISCUSSION CAN BE FOUND AT THE GID OFFICE**

DRAFT