

Mission Jocko Joint Board
“Mission Jocko Irrigation Districts”
January 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes

1:00 PM Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

All commissioners for Mission and Jocko District were present.

Minutes: Meeting minutes were approved with no corrections. Tim Callahan moved and Gene Posivio seconded, motion passed.

Warrants: Lane Harriman moved to approve the warrants, Gene Posivio seconded, motion passed.

BIA Report: Report on Snopak, they are starting to gear up for Spring. Some question as to why Pablo Reservoir has lowered, probably due to the last bit of stock water at the end of October. FIP is getting equipment ready for maintenance, some discussion on the pumps.

Attorney Fees: Approved in warrants. Some discussion on appealing to the MT Supreme Court pending decisions in water court. Decision in water court has to be made by June.

First ½ O&M Assessment (Mission): Gene Posivio moved to approve the first half O&M assessments, Tim Callahan seconded, motion passed.

First ½ O&M Assessment (Jocko): Tracy Gardner moved to approve the first half O&M assessments, Lane Harriman seconded, motion passed.

Community Well/Mission: The responses so far are split, phone calls have been coming in with questions regarding the community well, it was suggested to wait another month to get more responses. Some discussion on how to make revenue off a potential well, and funding for the well. Any payment would come from Mission admin alone.

Water Court Update: Everything on the schedule was vacated in November. January 30th there is a case management conference, evidentiary hearings are starting in April, no later than May. Two bills are in the Montana legislature, one to withdraw from the Compact, another to take the language of the state bill and match it with the Federal language. It has been suggested to get a lobbyist to make it so BIA is required to form an entity to work with the Districts, and to quantify water amounts. The Flathead Irrigation District attorney is working on the money available to offset pumping costs.

Possibly Lobbyist for Legislature: John Metropolous has been suggested as a lobbyist, it would be \$65,000, which is still cheaper than taking this through the Supreme Court. A special meeting would need to be called for final approval if prior to the February meeting. Ray Swenson suggested approving a check for half of it today, sent as a retainer to John Metropolous, which would be sent back if those bills aren't introduced. Some discussion on how John Metropolous was chosen as a lobbyist, and getting an accounting of how the \$65,000 number was reached. Some discussion on John Metropolous' history with the Board. Tim Orr mentioned there were some trust issues during his time as the Board's lawyer and issues with financial accountability. Some discussion on effectiveness and the pros of using John. It was suggested to wait for now and possibly set up an executive session for the Board to talk with John and address some questions.

Resolution 2025-1: Renee Roragen summarized the resolution, which is in regards to giving the elections office authority to hold an election should it become necessary. Tim Callahan moved, Gene Posivio seconded, motion passed.

Office Computer: Renee Roragen summarized the conversation with Kelley Create and the tower needing to be updated. The representative at Kelley Create said the tower is too old at this point to be refurbished and would just need to be replaced. Renee will get a quote and find out the process for transferring files from the old computer to the new one.

Public Comment: Questions regarding FIP GPS tracking and what the policies and procedures will be to monitor and enforce it were raised, as well as the consequences for infractions. Another question on why there are four employees with no licenses being driven around by other employees was raised as well. Boone Cole brought up three things he

would want to see in the Compact should it prove unable to be halted; irrigators managing the project, per contract Kerr Project proceeds will liquidate O&M charges, quantifiable amounts of water. Some discussion on audit requests, water court proceedings, lobbyists and electric.

Adjourn: Gene Posivio moved, Boone Cole seconded, meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM.