



# Meeting Minutes - August 16, 2023

The meeting of the commission was called to order by Chairman Lew Pence at 1:00 pm.

Present:

## **Commissioners**

Brent Reinke – Twin Falls County  
Ron Buhler – Gooding County  
Nathan Schutte – Lincoln County

## **Commission Members**

Lew Pence – Chair - Gooding  
Gale Kleincopf – Vice Chair – Twin Falls  
Bethany Muffley – Acting Ex Director  
Duane Turner – TF P&Z  
Dan Suhr - Jerome  
Kerry McMurray - Cassia

## **Agency**

Nicholas Howell – DEQ – Twin Falls  
Steve Hines – UI Extension - Jerome  
Garth Taylor – UI Extension - Retired  
Curtis Cooper – DEQ – State Office - Virtual

## **Prospective Member**

Jason Parker – Tri Counties Nox Weed Dept

Lew Pence began the meeting at 1pm and asked if there were any changes or corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes were approved with a motion made by Gale Kleincopf and seconded by Duane Turner.

Lew asked Bethany Muffley for the bills since the last meeting. Bethany indicated that bills include her compensation of \$550.00 and milage along with mileage reimbursements for members who are present. Bethany also requested reimbursement for Garth Taylor's airfare to attend the meeting today (\$288.00) and website migration work completed by Marne Curtis (\$150.00). A motion was made by Kerry McMurray and seconded by Dan Suhr to approve.

Lew asked if there had been any correspondence since the previous meeting and Bethany relayed interactions with Mitch Vermeer who indicated that he could make himself available in September or October to speak with us in relation to CAFO operations. Mitch requested that we come up with specific topics we would like him to cover. Lew suggested getting information on any new legislation coming down the pipe. Additional correspondence occurred with Deanna Lenker at the Gooding County Clerk's office in relation to past due assessments as well as the overpayment made by Lincoln County. Assessments were accidentally applied to the noxious weed budget, so they transferred them back over to our account. Deanna also indicated that she would be writing/sending a check for the reimbursement amount to go back to Lincoln County for \$1,392.00. This leaves our current account balance at \$27,642.69. Lew suggested to the group that we should all be brainstorming on good ways to use those funds and also revisited some of the outreach topics discussed in past meetings. Nathan Schutte mentioned a Soil and Water Conservation event presenting to 5<sup>th</sup> graders in Lincoln County in October and mentioned the possibility of setting up a booth in relation to water quality. Nathan indicated that he would send contact information about the event and suggested that events like these may be a great way to get our information out to reach a younger audience. He acknowledged that we may not have time to put a booth together with such short notice but that this may be something to think more about

in the future. He also suggested that if we do get some kind of a booth setup, it may be something we can begin taking to events in different counties to get the word out.

Correspondence was also received from Will Whelan with Magic Valley Land Trust who offered to get together to share information on their group as well as learn a little about ours. Bethany will arrange this meeting later in the fall. Dan Schaffner also reached out and indicated that Minidoka County plans to act as a public presence for this upcoming year and that the county will look into joining in the following. This led into the topic of plan printing. The new plan will be printed in binder form so that if minor changes need to be made (adding Minidoka back into the plan) the entire plan would not need to be reprinted, only the individual sheets to be replaced. Bethany visited the printers this morning and plans should be available for distribution by next our next meeting. She also showed the group the new website layout and relayed that the plan is on the website and available to everyone right now.

Lew introduced our guest speaker Garth Taylor who is a recently retired extension specialist in the Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology Department at the University of Idaho. Garth delivered a presentation relating to agricultural economics data along with water use trends for the region. The information was powerful, comprehensive, and sparked inciteful discussion. To much would be lost in trying to summarize the information Garth provided so please visit <https://youtu.be/cjPrssG6rCw> to review a recording of the full presentation.

Lew asked for new business. Brent Reinke reported that in the last three weeks, the piece of legislation written by Paul Arrington in relation to domestic wells will be split into a water use piece and a land use piece. He also indicated that the Idaho Association of Counties will be working with Idaho Water Users Association on the land use aspects of domestic wells. Brent also asked if anyone had been able to attend the Governor Water Summit and let the group know that all presentations delivered are available on the Water Board website for later viewing ([https://youtu.be/LC13XHAClsc?si=CHZVg\\_uGldH6wzfH](https://youtu.be/LC13XHAClsc?si=CHZVg_uGldH6wzfH)). Bethany indicated that she would get these links sent out in an email to all members and advisory partners. Both Brent and Garth attended the meeting and relayed the importance of the topics discussed. Brent also mentioned that the Lt. Governor was in attendance for the entire meeting suggesting how important this subject is to the State of Idaho. The consensus expressed by Brent and Garth was that the Magic Valley has cause for concern in terms of water quantity and quality impacts in relation to water use in eastern Idaho.

Bethany gave an update on the website and explained some of the visibility issues that are currently being addressed and relayed that she would need some time to fix them. A motion was made to cancel September's meeting by Duane with a second from Jason Parker to give her that time to catchup.

Lew asked for any other business, hearing none, Duane gave the motion to adjourn, and Kerry seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 2:35pm.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bethany Muffley', written in a cursive style.

Bethany Muffley, Executive Director (Acting)