

**March 3, 2025, Regular Directors Meeting**

The Directors of the Eastern Irrigation District held a regular meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March 2025. Those in attendance were:

Mr. Richard Hiebert	Director	[Division 1]	Mr. Ivan Friesen	General Manager
Mr. David Peltzer	Vice-Chair	[Division 2]	Mr. Marvin Koochin	Assist. GM – Legal & Corporate Services
Mr. Brad Deschamps	Director	[Division 3]	Mr. Ryan Gagley	Assist. GM – Engineering & Operations
[vacant]	Director	[Division 4]	Mrs. Wendy Enns	Executive Assistant
Mr. John Ketchmark	Director	[Division 5]		
Mr. Brent Schroeder	Director	[Division 6] [apologies]		
Mr. Tracy Hemsing	Chair	[Division 7]		
Mr. Brian Schmidt	Member			

The meeting was called to order at 9:08 a.m.

**1.0 Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was adopted as presented.

**2025-03-049 Moved by D. Peltzer that the Board adopt the Agenda as presented. Seconded by R. Hiebert. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**2.0 Business Arising**

No matters were raised from the February 25, 2025, Regular Directors Meeting.

**3.0 Engineering**

R. Gagley presented the Engineering Report.

**3.01 Patricia Rodeo Grounds**

A letter was received from the Patricia Rodeo Club requesting assistance with preparing a gravel pad beneath new grandstands which are to be installed in early July. Were it to be charged out, the estimated cost to prepare the site (level and pack), and to provide and haul gravel is \$20,000 + GST.

**2025-03-050 Moved by J. Ketchmark that the District complete in-kind work for the Patricia Rodeo Club by levelling, packing, and gravelling a new grandstand pad; subject to the Patricia Rodeo Club obtaining all regulatory permits and approvals required to perform the work. Seconded by B. Schmidt. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

[9:07 a.m. R. Summach and B. Kroschel entered the meeting.]

**3.02 Cost-Share – Pete & Barbara Nielsen – SW 29-16-13 W4M**

R. Summach advised that the 14-H West Bantry Canal is currently being converted to pipeline. Alignment changes in SW 29-16-13 W4M for Pete & Barbara Nielsen will result in the elimination of a Rural Water Use (RWU) delivery on the west boundary; however, water will continue to be

delivered to the quarter in the NE corner of the quarter. This delivery point is farther from the yard site than the RWU delivery. The landowners are requesting a District cost-share for a new domestic line. As per policy, the EID will cost-share 50%, up to \$15,000 District share. The project is estimated to cost \$37,339.

- 2025-03-051 Moved by R. Hiebert that the Board approve the Rural Water Use pipeline cost-share for Pete & Barbara Nielsen in SW 29-16-13 W4M, to be funded on a 50/50 cost-share basis up to a maximum District contribution of \$15,000. The cost of the project is estimated to be \$37,339; of which the landowners will pay \$22,339 + GST. Seconded by D. Peltzer. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **4.0 Operations**

B. Kroschel presented the Operations Report.

##### **4.01 Snowpack Report**

Snowpack levels for the Bow River basin have continued to average below normal ranges for this time of year. Typically, most of the snowpack is received in March and April which could allow levels to recover closer to average conditions.

##### **4.02 Set Water Delivery Date**

Water is expected to be available May 1<sup>st</sup> in some locations, with the entire system becoming fully operational by May 8<sup>th</sup>. Where maintenance issues arise, there could be further delays in the affected areas. It was advised that irrigators contact their Water Operator for availability in their area.

- 2025-03-052 Moved by B. Deschamps that the earliest date for Water Delivery to the farmers be set as May 1<sup>st</sup> – May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Seconded by R. Hiebert. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

[9:17 a.m. R. Summach and B. Kroschel exited the meeting; B. Doerksen and D. Buell entered.]

#### **5.0 Requests for Funding**

B. Doerksen presented the following Requests for Funding.

##### **5.01 Ag for Life – Know Your Food**

A letter was received from Ag for Life requesting operational funding in 2025 for the “Know Your Food” educational trailer. The program’s purpose is to educate Albertans about where their food comes from, the importance of agriculture to this province, to increase consumer confidence, and showcase ag related careers. The program provides a platform for ag and ag business and includes commodity specific and irrigated agriculture information.

- 2025-03-053 Moved by D. Peltzer that \$10,000 be contributed towards the operating costs of the Ag for Life “Know Your Food” mobile unit. Seconded by J. Ketchmark. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## 5.02 Southeast Alberta Chamber of Commerce

A letter was received from the Southeast Alberta Chamber of Commerce requesting sponsorship for hosting the 87<sup>th</sup> Alberta Chambers of Commerce Annual General Meeting and Plenary Session and their 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration for the Southeast Alberta Chamber of Commerce. The event will take place May 29-31, 2025. The EID has recently become a member of the SE AB Chamber of Commerce.

**2025-03-054 Moved by B. Deschamps that \$1,000 be donated to the Southeast Alberta Chamber of Commerce in support of hosting the 87<sup>th</sup> Alberta Chambers of Commerce AGM and Plenary Session. Seconded by J. Ketchmark. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

[9:27 a.m. B. Doerksen exited the meeting.]

## 6.0 Lands

### 6.01 Habitat, Wildlife & Access

D. Buell presented the Habitat, Wildlife & Access Report.

#### 6.01.1 2024 Access, Habitat & Wildlife Summary

A detailed 2024 Access, Habitat & Wildlife Summary was presented as follows:

- Public Access:
  - 831 individuals received hunting permission; this is estimated to be two thirds of all hunters utilizing EID lands; 3 individuals received permission to trap on EID lands
    - 35.5% of hunters are local, 61.5% are from other parts of Alberta, 1.8% from other provinces, and 1.2% from the U.S.A.
  - local ads will again be run to notify the public of the required permission; it is hoped the District's on-line authorization system will be operational in 2025
  - hunter activity was average in early fall and much lower in late fall; highest use areas for hunting continue to be Duchess, Rosemary and Gem (Finnegan Field) Grazing Associations, then Newell (Scandia Ranch) and Patricia (Princess) GA's
  - 8 warnings/information tickets were issued; 6 for being off trail/designated route, 1 for random camping, and 1 for entering an area with restricted public access
  - day use around Lake Newell, Rolling Hills, and Crawling Valley reservoirs was normal, although an increase in paddleboard and kayak users was seen in some locations
  - random camping problems around reservoirs were minimal, as was off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, with only Eyremore Grazing seeing semi-regular activity
  - the AIS Prevention Program resulted in 26 warnings issued by EID staff and 3 issued by CPO staff, for failure to participate in the program or launching watercraft where prohibited; at least 23 of these were at Lake Newell Reservoir
  - the EID pays for approximately 25 hours/month of County Peace Officers (CPO) time to patrol EID lands and enforce EID access rules; this is very beneficial to the EID as a marked enforcement presence is more effective at ensuring public compliance with access rules; they focus their patrolling for the EID:
    - at District campgrounds and around reservoirs maintaining traffic enforcement and aiding in camper evictions; at locations with OHV, vandalism, dumping, or fire ban concerns; and providing assistance and an official presence to educate, issue warnings and respond as backup with the AIS Prevention Program

- during the hunting season in high use areas, in winter on lands with late elk seasons, and on reservoirs with high ice fishing activity
  - on 3 PGLs experiencing groups of trespassers
- Provincial Conservation Officers spend a reduced amount of time patrolling EID lands adjacent to Dinosaur Provincial Park and Kinbrook Island Provincial Park
- Fish & Wildlife Officers' jurisdiction is the whole County, so they patrol the entire EID
- Brooks RCMP monitor central and eastern portions of the EID; this year dealing with a stolen and abandoned truck left in a Community Grazing Lease and fish poaching on a Private Grazing Lease
- Research Access:
  - Alberta Conservation Association, Calgary Zoo/Wilder Institute, Government of Alberta, Royal Tyrrell Museum, United States Fish & Wildlife Service, and the University of Alberta conducted research on EID lands in 2024; focus of activities included:
    - Pronghorn Antelope winter survival and migration, Burrowing Owl research and population enhancement program, Northern Leopard Frog monitoring, Prairie Rattlesnakes and hibernacula research, access to excavation sites within Dinosaur Provincial Park, duck banding program, and vegetation surveys
- Ducks Unlimited:
  - a total of 25,778 acre-feet of water was conveyed for DU projects, approximately 83% of their 31,122 acre-feet license
  - GIS mapping is being developed of irrigation turnouts for all DU projects in the EID
- Wildlife:
  - the Fisheries & Wildlife Management Information System data has been filtered down to relevant species and locations on EID lands; ground truthing will occur in 2025

#### 6.01.2 2024 Partners in Habitat Development (PHD) – Program Summary

The Partners in Habitat Development Program Summary was presented and discussed, outlined as follows:

- 2024 PHD Program:
  - 7,145 trees & shrubs were planted on 7 new sites; 4 sites received a total of 1,900 m of fencing materials to prevent livestock access
  - 2,249 replacements were planted on three 2023 sites to replace winterkill seedlings
  - mowing and weeding maintenance was performed on 10 sites
  - 1 large site, some watering issues, and poor survival of Caragana seedlings affected overall seedling survival after planting to be below average at 64%; long term average is 73%
  - 4 summer students were hired, and the County of Newell partnered at different times with 2 of their summer students totaling approximately 250 man-hours
  - drive-by and satellite imagery site inspection preliminary data indicates that 218 of the approximate 258 PHD tree planting sites are still in existence, of these 140 are in good to excellent condition and 78 are in poor to fair condition
  - snowpack in the EID in January and February 2024 was insufficient to complete any winter upland gamebird surveys
  - Sharp-tailed Grouse lek surveys indicated an average of 17.5 grouse/lek; 20-year average is 18.4 grouse/lek
  - incidental observations of Pheasants and Partridge showed 2024 being another good year

- 2025 PHD Program:
  - 9 new planting sites have been selected, near Bantry, Brooks, Rainier, Rolling Hills, Rosemary, and Tilley
  - 4 Seasonal Habitat Aides will be hired for the full May – August PHD season
  - 10,750 seedlings were ordered (approximately 8,000 going to new habitat and approximately 2,750 for 2024 replacements); mulch, landscape staples, and fencing materials will be ordered
- 2025 Budget:
  - \$165,000 is allotted for staffing and supplies: \$115,000 core funding from the EID, approximately \$25,000 from the Agroforestry Woodlot Extension Society, and \$10,000 from the County of Newell as well as some in-kind labour assistance
- Partnership:
  - the County of Newell will continue its summer student labour support and funding as a long-term soil erosion prevention strategy
- Advertising:
  - enough sites have been secured for the program to run at capacity until 2028; advertising in 2025 will take place to secure additional sites
- Long Term Plans:
  - if the pattern of preventable poor survival of seedlings continues, an increase to the landowner deposit amount will be considered
  - as a potential cost-savings, contract growing options for seedlings will be investigated
  - PHD site data and mapping overlays will continue to be developed
  - additional fundraising opportunities will be explored

[9:50 a.m. D. Buell exited the meeting; R. Volek entered.]

## 6.02 Grazing

R. Volek presented the following Grazing Report.

### 6.02.1 Approval of Tender – PGL #7077

In follow up to the January 28, 2025, meeting, Private Grazing Lease #7077 in N ½ 30 & SW 31-14-12 W4M and E ½ 36-14-13 W4M was tendered for a 4 year term at 160 AUM, with no community grazing lease deduction and no 640 acre or 1 parcel limitation, due to the potential for irrigation development. This lease will expire at the same time as adjacent short term PGL's 7078 and 7048.

PGL #7077 4 Year 788 acres 160 AUM				
Bidder	Amount	\$/AUM	GST	Total/Year
Greg & Linnea Andrew	\$15,210.00	\$95.06	\$760.50	\$15,970.50
Joel Kropf	\$8,000.00	\$50.00	\$400.00	\$8,400.00

**2025-03-055 Moved by J. Ketchmark that as high bidder, and by meeting land and residency requirements, a 4 year agreement for PGL #7077 be awarded to Greg & Linnea Andrew. Seconded by B. Schmidt. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**6.02.2 Set Turn-Out Dates**

Due to dry conditions and below average carryover grass from 2023, the maximum number of cattle per member was reduced in 2024 from 65 to 60 head. With normal spring precipitation in 2024, combined with lower cattle numbers, the EID pastures showed significant improvement. Heading into the 2025 grazing season, there is an increase in reserve grass and soil moisture conditions are good. Pasture conditions will be discussed at the upcoming GAC Meeting to see if there is a consensus to increase the maximum listing per member or to leave it as is.

**2025-03-056 Moved by D. Peltzer that the Cattle Grazing Turn-Out Date for regrass/tame pasture be May 3, 2025, and for native pasture be May 15, 2025. Seconded by J. Ketchmark. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

The grazing associations can place cattle after the set dates and will only be charged for pasture fees for the time spent on pasture.

[9:57 a.m. – 10:02 a.m. Short break. R. Volek exited the meeting; N. Fontaine entered.]

**2025-03-057 Moved by J. Ketchmark that the Board resolve into the Committee of the Whole. Seconded by D. Peltzer. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**6.03 Lands, Oil & Gas****6.03.1 Private Boat Docks****7.0 Silver Sage Ag Society – Pt NW 20-18-14 W4M**

[10:52 a.m. N. Fontaine exited the meeting.]

**8.0 591155 Alberta Ltd (Doerksen) Irrigation Development Application****9.0 Annual General Meeting****9.01 General Manager Presentation****9.02 Questions to Irrigators**

**2025-03-058 Moved by R. Hiebert that the meeting be reconvened. Seconded by J. Ketchmark. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

***DIRECTION ARISING FROM THE IN CAMERA PORTION OF THE MEETING*****6.03 Lands, Oil & Gas****6.03.1 Private Boat Docks**

The Lake Newell Reservoir Land Use Policy will be brought to a future Board Meeting for review.

**7.0 Silver Sage Ag Society – Pt NW 20-18-14 W4M**

A motion was carried was reconvened.

**8.0 591155 Alberta Ltd (Doerksen) Irrigation Development Application**

Further to motion 2025-02-047, it was directed that the drafted response letter be emailed and mailed to Doerksen following the meeting.

**9.0 Annual General Meeting****9.01 General Manager Presentation**

A few minor revisions will be made to the General Manager's presentation.

**9.02 Questions to Irrigators**

Questions to Irrigators were reviewed; there were no requests for revisions.

CONTINUATION OF THE AGENDA**7.0 Silver Sage Ag Society – Pt NW 20-18-14 W4M cont'd**

N. Fontaine updated the Board as to key discussion points from a recent meeting with representatives of the Silver Sage Ag Society (SSAS) and their grant writer. Conversations with the SSAS have been occurring over the past year as they have kept the EID, as lessor, informed of tentative proposals for the leased lands. Continued Board discussion was held in regards to the SSAS strategic development plans, motion 2025-01-031, anticipated local and regional impact, and the District's opportunity for community investment.

**2025-03-059 Moved by B. Deschamps that the District is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement to donate and transfer to the Silver Sage Agricultural Society a portion of NW Section 20-18-14-W4M, being approximately 106.3 acres (the "Lands") by way of transfer of land for consideration of \$1.00 and subject to the District retaining a right of first refusal to repurchase the Lands, and to further execute and deliver all necessary documents and instruments required to finalize the transaction. Silver Sage will be responsible for payment of all related survey, subdivision, legal and land titles charges incurred by the District. Seconded by R. Hiebert. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Once remaining matters have been investigated, further discussion will be held at the April Board Meeting to confirm direction to move forward.

**10.0 Upcoming Events**

- |       |   |  |
|-------|---|--|
| 10.01 | Annual General Meeting                      | - Tuesday, March 4 <sup>th</sup> , 1:30 p.m., Heritage Inn       |
| 10.02 | Nominations Close                           | - Wednesday, March 5 <sup>th</sup> , 5:00 p.m.                   |
| 10.03 | JBS Lunch Meeting                           | - Tuesday, April 1 <sup>st</sup> , 12:00 noon, JBS Facility      |
| 10.04 | AIDA AGM & Board of Directors Mtg           | - Thursday, April 3 <sup>rd</sup> , Lethbridge Lodge, 10:00 a.m. |
| 10.05 | Election <i>[if required – Div 2, 4, 7]</i> | - Tuesday, April 8 <sup>th</sup>                                 |
| 10.06 | Aggie Days – AIDA Booth                     | - April 11 <sup>th</sup> , Calgary Stampede Grounds              |
| 10.07 | Organizational & Regular Board Mtgs         | - Tuesday, April 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 9:00 a.m.                    |
| 10.08 | Regular Board Meeting                       | - Tuesday, May 27 <sup>th</sup> , 9:00 a.m.                      |





**B. Schmidt moved adjournment of the meeting at 12:13 p.m.**

A black ink signature, appearing to be 'B. Schmidt', written over a horizontal line.

Chairman

A blue ink signature, appearing to be 'J. Johnson', written over a horizontal line.

General Manager