

MEETING REPORT
DITCH COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2009
2:15 pm

Directors: Ralph Retherford
Delbert Rotelli

Public: Ron Ringen
Sasha Farkas

District Staff: Tom Scesa, District Engineer
Sheri Barnett, Human Resources Director

Meeting called to order at 2:15 pm

Review of Proposal by the Tuolumne County Farm Bureau for Inclusion in the Water Rules and Regulations

Tom Scesa reported that the District's capacity charges were revised a few years ago to include a supply component. Connection fee for agricultural use is currently about \$53,000, which is argued by the farm bureau to be unaffordable. With Sasha Farkas's guidance, basic principles were created to establish a more affordable agricultural rate.

The proposed rate applies to agricultural use only. Item #3 of the proposal equates the fee of one miner's inch to one acre foot of supply. Although this rate may not be defensible if challenged, the possibility of a challenge is minimal. Per Ralph, other agencies have special ag rates.

The water is sold in one miner's inch blocks, and water use is available only during agricultural irrigation season. It cannot be converted for any other use.

Delbert wanted to confirm that we could stop water supply to agricultural customers for draughts or other emergencies. Our water rules and regulations protect the district in those situations.

The issue of perpetuity was discussed. If an inch is sold for agricultural water, and that property is sold, the contract can remain with that property.

No PG&E power fees apply for water purchased by customer during spill period.

This proposal supports the goal to make available as much water as possible for agricultural use.

Committee Recommendation

Ralph Retherford and Delbert Rotelli approve in concept the Farm Bureau water contract.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.