

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF JOINT COMMITTEE
OF THE OWYHEE PROJECT**

May 29, 2019

A special meeting of the Joint Committee of the Owyhee Project to discuss water releases from the Owyhee Dam was held at the offices of Stunz, Fonda, Kiyuna & Horton, LLP, 106 Main Street, Nyssa Oregon, at 1:00 p.m., on May 29, 2019, Eric White, Chairman, presiding.

The following members of the Joint Committee were present:

Eric White	Bruce Corn
Frank Ausman	Jerry Nagaki (OID Alternate)
Brett Nielsen	

Also present were: Jay Chamberlin, Manager of the Hydro Projects; John Eells, South Board Manager; Harvey Manser, OID Assistant Manager; Michael W. Horton, Secretary; Dillon Mitchell, Monty Culbertson, Andy Peutz, and Rod Frahm, Old Owyhee Ditch; and Larry Meyer, *Argus Observer* Reporter.

MEETING NOTICE. Mr. Chamberlin said that public notice of the meeting was given.

WATER SITUATION. Mr. Chamberlin said that current conditions are as follows: 699,291 acre feet in storage in the reservoir, 2,468 cfs at Rome, 1,500 cfs being released from the Dam, 1,000 cfs being released through the tunnel.

Mr. Chamberlin said that he and Mr. Manser spent the morning along the Owyhee River below the Dam assessing water level reference points. He said that the National Weather Service has put out an alert for heavy rains with a flash flood warning in the Owyhee Mountains from 10:00 a.m., this morning through tonight. He said he has spoken to Reclamation staff. If the current releases are held as is, the reservoir will top off in five days. He said the Rome gauge cannot solely be relied upon as there are other places where water comes in to the river below Rome. He said that if things start to drop off, the releases can be turned down or if Rome starts to jump up, then the releases will need to be increased.

Mr. Chamberlin said the river is full all the way to Nevada. He said estimates are that it takes 18 to 24 hours for the water at Rome to reach the Dam. He said there is a full week's worth of water in the river right now. Mr. Manser said that he heard that this is the second wettest year on record to date. Mr. Chamberlin said that the National Weather Service is saying that the ground in the watershed is saturated.

Mr. Chamberlin said that during their tour of the lower river, the levels are not up on anybody yet. Mr. Corn said that as the weather warms up the demand will also pick up.

Mr. Manser reported on the river stage measurements which he and Mr. Chamberlin took. Mr. Chamberlin made a recommendation that the Joint Committee meet on Friday and that in the meantime, Dam staff attempt to manage the releases through the jet flows. He said the ring gate may have to be used slightly for the releases.

The Joint Committee members discussed the need to have the river channel cleaned.

Rod Frahm speaking on behalf of Old Owyhee Ditch Company said that it is difficult to order water two days in advance. Mr. Chamberlin said the drip and sprinkler systems coming in are creating drainage challenges for the system, but that the water ordering system can be worked out. The Committee members discussed the matter.

At 1:40 p.m., Mr. Chamberlin received a phone call from staff at the Dam updating him on current conditions. Currently 1,470 cfs is being released from the Dam with 1,010 cfs being released through the tunnel. The Rome gauge is heading back up and is now at 3,500 cfs.

Mr. Chamberlin made a recommendation that the releases at the Dam remain at 1,500 cfs with 1,000 cfs being released through the tunnel with such releases being maintained while keeping an eye on Rome and the Idaho/Nevada bridge gauge and if the flows increase to 4,000 cfs, that releases be increased to 2,000 to 2,500 cfs with the releases being increased proportionally as the Rome flows increase and if the flows at Rome exceed 4,000 cfs before tomorrow that the Joint Committee meet again tomorrow at 10:30 a.m., or otherwise, meet at 10:30 a.m., on Friday. The Joint Committee members discussed Mr. Chamberlin's recommendation at length. He said that the Jet flows max out at 2,200 cfs. He said the maximum allowed storage level in the reservoir is 715,000 acre feet. He explained the standard operating procedure for the Dam which Dam staff and the Joint Committee must operate under. Following a lengthy discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Corn, seconded by Mr. Nielsen, and unanimously carried authorizing Mr. Chamberlin to make releases as set out in his proposal.

Mr. Chamberlin said that he will be sending out notices on the releases to the proper agencies and persons with interests along the lower river.

B2-H MEETING. Mr. Horton said that he received a notice that there is a Department of Energy meeting on the B2-H power line scheduled for June 18 from 4:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. He said this interferes with the regularly scheduled Joint Committee meeting on that night. The matter was discussed and the Committee determined that the Joint Committee meeting for that night will be canceled and only OID will have its regularly scheduled meeting at 8:00 p.m., that evening.

ADJOURNMENT. There being no further business to come before the meeting, the same was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Secretary

APPROVED: _____