

**Newsletter to Property Owners in the
Rim Trail Domestic Water Improvement District**

Greetings!

It's been quite a while since the board of directors has had any direct communication with the property owners, so we'd like to give you an update on happenings at the District.

Financial Issues

1. Property Tax. In July the board voted to request a property tax limited to \$100 per parcel from Gila County. The county responded that since the tax laws do not specifically provide for this type of tax, it could not be levied. The Water District's lawyer suggested a slightly different approach to the County, but that too was unsuccessful. Therefore, there will be no water district property tax on the 2013 tax bills.

Interestingly, in a recent meeting of county representative from all over the state, there was a discussion about sponsoring legislation to allow this type of tax. Perhaps we were ahead of our time and the rules will change in the future.

2. Budget. Speaking of money, we continue to operate well within the budget, and spending on almost every line item is very close to projections made in July. Thanks go to Ray Tanner and Harry Jones for monitoring this and keeping the district financially healthy.

Operational Issues

1. Water District Leaks and Repairs. Some of you may have seen the recent leaks on Belluzzi Road and elsewhere. These are basically due to the old pipes wearing out or being punctured. Repairs were made in a timely way with the help of A Quality Water Company and other contractors. As far as we know, there were no significant interruptions of service. Luckily the costs were also relatively low.
2. Homeowner Leaks. We have had major leaks twice in the last two months on the customer's side of the meter, one at a shallow buried landscape line for 44,000 gallons, and one under or inside a house for 35,000 gallons. It may take days of time spent by the district manager and/or operator to determine the location of abnormal usage like this. It also causes a loss of water resources, and large bills to homeowners. Please be sure to turn off hoses when not in use, monitor what's happening on your property, and be diligent in managing your water and plumbing systems.
3. Water Turbidity. The Salt River Project water being pumped into the stream from the Blue Ridge (aka Cragin) Reservoir has contained some colloidal iron, occasionally causing a slight brownish tint to the water. This is not a health issue, but it's not very appetizing either. A number of tests have been run, and the board obtained several proposals on modifying the treatment plant to eliminate the problem. In the meantime the Cragin water has been turned off until next April and our raw river water is relatively clear again.

The board has approached Salt River Project to obtain help with this. The best and cheapest plan may be to move our intake pipe to a location above SRP's discharge point and avoid the need (and expense) to modify the treatment plant. We are also pursuing discussions with the Forest Service to obtain an easement across their land for the pipe. This is not a fast process, but we will push for action as quickly as possible.

Governance and Administrative Issues

1. Five Member Board. For some time, the board has been trying to file a petition with the County to increase the number of board members to five. During the summer, the county election department told us that since the election laws do not specifically provide for this type of petition, it could not be done. Does this sound familiar? After talking to our lawyer, and because so many property owners have asked us to pursue this, we decided to give it a try anyway and see what happens.

A petition to the County Board of Supervisors is being drafted now, and will be circulated to all property owners as soon as it's finalized.

2. Bylaws. After two years' experience with the current bylaws, it appears that several revisions would be useful, including more details on public meeting notifications, compliance with the state's open meeting law and public records law, clarification of roles and responsibilities, the use of advisory committees or study groups (in case we can't get approval for a five member board), insurance requirements, and other mundane but potentially important matters.

A draft revision of the bylaws will be ready soon, and will be discussed in a public meeting.

3. District Manager's Contract. Last March the board extended Harry Jones' contract through the end of 2013 "or until further notice". There have been discussions recently with Harry about possible revisions to the contract that would benefit everyone. This will also be the subject of a future public meeting.
4. Board Member Vacancy. You may have heard that the Johns family decided, after over 50 years of life at Rim Trail, that it was time to sell the cabin. We recently accepted an offer, and the sale is scheduled to close on November 29th assuming nothing happens to derail it. Since I won't be a Qualified Elector of the district after that, I'll have to resign as a director.

The two items of good news are, first, that the buyers of the property love the area and will undoubtedly be a welcome addition to the Rim Trail community; and second, this will give one of you the opportunity to fill the vacancy and contribute your own expertise and ideas to the water district. I'm sure it will work out just fine.

Dick Johns, Chairman
On Behalf of the Board of Directors