

Arnold Irrigation District
Monthly Board Meeting
September 8th, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 pm by Jon Smith. Board members present were Jon Smith, Michael Woll, Walt Warchol and Rob Rastovich via zoom. Staff members present were Chris Webb, Ashley Buckner, Cole Nashem, and Juanita Harvey. Also present was the District's attorney Garrett Chrostek, Watermaster Jeremy Giffin and Carolyn Sufit. Also via zoom was Michael Miller.

1. APPROVAL OF AUGUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES: Mike motioned, and Walt seconded his motion to approve the August board meeting minutes. The vote was unanimous in favor with Jon and Rob voting in favor.

2. GUEST SPEAKER: JEREMY GIFFIN: The Board discussed the frequency and purpose of the District's storage reports. The storage report, which was previously provided monthly, has been changed to a biweekly report to provide a more current assessment of water availability and help determine who can remain on when water supplies are running low. The more frequent reports are intended to provide the District with a better understanding of available storage and projected water supplies.

Jon asked whether the District could turn water on September 15. Jeremy stated that there was sufficient water available to turn on September 15. He explained that Arnold takes a small amount of water from the river and that approximately 30–40 cfs is available for AID.

Jon asked whether additional technology could be incorporated into the storage reporting process. Jeremy explained that the District has telemetry dating back to the mid-1990s; however, measurements still need to be verified for accuracy, and data currently must be physically retrieved. Chris stated that the current two-week shutoff periods are detrimental to farmers.

Jon asked about developing a new, updated storage reporting system and what the process would be to implement it. Jeremy explained that some of the data reconciles while some does not and that the District plans to conduct significant testing over the winter. He noted that the process is complicated and that the District is working to utilize more Excel-based reporting while also determining how much time and effort would be required to bring in an

outside person to assist with developing an improved system. Rob offered to develop a new storage reporting technique that would eliminate the need for Excel.

Rob asked how it was possible for other users to have water available while AID did not. Jeremy explained that other users were operating from their stored water supplies, while AID had already used its approximately 1,600 cfs of storage. He further noted that, due to the drought, the basin is producing approximately one-third of its normal water supply.

The Board agreed that more frequent and accurate storage reports would help the District better determine how much water will be available and improve decision making regarding water deliveries and shutoff periods.

3. MANAGER REPORT:

a. Financial Report: The August checking account ended with \$9,920.94, ending balance for Modernization fund was \$326,562.95, Operations at \$174,362.65, and Reserves at \$186,136.07.

Transferred \$40,000 to checking from LGIP Operations to cover accounts payable.

Chris and Juanita presented the mid-year budget for the Board's consideration. The Board discussed preparing for the upcoming quarterly budget review, with next month's report expected to provide a clear picture of approximately 75% of annual spending.

The balance sheet is currently showing Admin Expenses at 50.64% of the budget and Canal Systems Maintenance at 75.74%. AID is averaging approximately \$75,000 in monthly expenditures. The percentages are artificially inflated by Modernization Projects that were charged against the Operations, these numbers will be corrected when we reimburse the Operations account from Modernization in November.

OWRD will be reimbursing the \$145,000 hold back from the grant. Once these reimbursement funds are received from the State, the funds will be returned to the modernization fund. With the anticipated reimbursements, the modernization budget could potentially return to approximately \$500,000.

Juanita prepared a spreadsheet showing all invoices which were paid out of operations throughout the year until current. These invoices were coded to their specific expense accounts but will be moved to modernization expense. At the end of the year before we finalize the 2027 budget, the total shown under modernization expense will be transferred from the Modernization Fund to the Operations account. Once the total is transferred, the amounts shown on the spreadsheet will be

transferred back into their specific expense accounts in order to show accurate spending in each of the expense accounts.

b. August Storage Report: We will begin turning the water ON September 15th at 12:00 a.m. to begin charging the system. Please be aware that it may take some time for the system to fully charge and for water to reach all service areas. At this time, we anticipate operating the system into October, provided there is sufficient demand from our patrons to support continued operation.

4. OPERATIONS REPORT:

a. On August 11th, there was an emergency call from a patron on the Rickard pipe calling about an underground leak. After assessing the situation, the Rickard Pipe was shut off and the pipe repair was made the following day.

b. On Monday, August 17th, at 10:00 am, the district headgate was closed. Water was fully off by the following morning 8:00am.

c. Once water was off, work on projects throughout the District began. Some of the projects were:

- Removing debris from pipes at the inlet and various screens to reduce the risk of fire.
- Replacing batteries on three of the automatic gates as well as reprogramming and adjusting them to close properly.
- Installing "Automatic Equipment" signs by the river intake to warn personnel to be cautious entering this area.
- Installing "No Trucks Over 5000lbs Empty WT" signs on the main pipeline.
- Repairing a delivery valve on the main canal that had broken off. The surrounding area was excavated, and the PVC casing and the internal valve extension were replaced.

d. After finishing minor projects that needed to be addressed, 3 flume sheets which were in dire need of repair were replaced. All three were leaking heavily and rusted through at the seams. Once this was addressed, sealant was applied to the flume starting at the end and working up. This is not an alternative to our flume liner sheets. It does however, prolong the life of the flume sheets and saves costs accordingly.

5. OFFICE REPORT: Ashley attended the SDIS Regional training at Eagle Crest on August 19th where HR, Legal, and Risk Management topics for managers and staff were discussed.

August safety meeting was on Maintenance Safety that focused on mobilizing equipment, hand tool use, tool transportation, power & hydraulic tool safety, conveyors, line breaking and shop maintenance.

It was discussed Cole will be taking over Safety meetings as part of his Operations Manager role.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. Invasive Vegetation Control: AID is developing a policy regarding invasive and noxious weeds. As part of the policy, AID will need to determine which areas are within the County's responsibility and which areas fall within AID easements. AID staff will need to inspect and mark the areas to clarify the boundaries.

The County currently treats only the road shoulders. The Board discussed whether AID should similarly limit treatment to the shoulders or whether AID should also treat areas where weeds have been disturbed by AID activities. The County has requested that AID mitigate and control weeds in areas disturbed by AID. The Board discussed and approved moving forward with the invasive weed policy.

The Board discussed the fire policy and the treatment of road shoulders for fire prevention. AID would treat up to 20 feet from the shoulder to establish a fire break along approximately 12 miles from China Hat Road to Horse Butte Road. The applicable law requires a minimum of six feet from the shoulder.

After the initial treatment has been completed for one to two years, maintenance would transition to spot spraying as needed.

The cost to treat the entire road was estimated at \$600, while treating both the road and shoulder was estimated at \$1,800.

Mike motioned to approve the Resolution #2026-004 Vegetation Management Opt-Out (No Spray) Program which will allow landowners adjacent to the canal to opt out of spraying along their properties. Walt seconded his motion. Rob abstained, and Jon voted in favor.

b. Intergovernmental Agreement/ County: Need Board approval for IGA.

c. Fleet Vehicle Purchase Update: The purchase of two new pickup trucks will cost approximately \$60,000. AID is waiting to hear back from the bank regarding

financing at an anticipated interest rate of 5.95%. The purchase will not be finalized until the financing terms are received and reviewed.

The two existing pickups will be cleaned and prepared for sale, with the proceeds from the sale to be applied toward the purchase of the new pickups. A \$22,000 down payment will be applied.

The new pickups are expected to take approximately three to four months to build and will be delivered to AID upon completion.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Vote by Mail Resolution: If an election is needed, the Board will need to adopt a resolution determining whether voting will be conducted by mail or in person. Mike motioned to continue to vote by mail and Rob seconded his motion. The vote was unanimous in favor with Jon also voting in favor.

b. Adding District Temporary Transfer Fee to Fee Schedule: Juanita discussed the possibility of adding a District Temporary Transfer Fee to the Fee Schedule for all temporary transfers. Mike motioned in favor of a \$100 transfer fee. Walt and Rob voted against. Jon made a motion to make the fee \$50 per transfer. Walt seconded the motion with Walt voting in favor and Rob voting against.

8. OPEN FORUM: Garrett discussed the new state rule regarding bulges in the system and the regulation of ponds. The state is expected to move forward with the rule, with implementation officially beginning in 2027.

Chris discussed the possibility of scheduling stock runs for December 1st through the 5th and February 1st through the 5th. He will provide the proposed dates to the state before the other districts select their dates.

9. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE: Walt motioned, and Mike seconded his motion to approve the accounts payable. The vote was unanimous in favor with Jon and Rob voting in favor.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION: An executive session was not required at this meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55pm.