

GORE HILL COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
406-761-6528
Minutes of the Public Board Meeting
Public Meeting
February 10, 2026

Board Members present: Dennis Peppenger, Jerry Ulmen, Kristie Blackford, Susan Bersuch
Conducting: Jerry Ulmen
Recording Secretary: Christy Walter / Ashlee Liedle
Operator: Brian Blackford
Bookkeeper: Arny Schandelson
The Public Meeting began at 7:00 pm

Motion to open the meeting: Dennis
Second: Kristie Passed

Motion to accept the minutes of 1/27/2026: Dennis
Second: Kristie Passed

Checks received at meeting: #502 \$300.00 Ck#12454 & #541 \$71.64 Ck#14074

Old Business:

1/13/2026 ~Susan was appointed as a board member. Ashlee was hired as the secretary. 1/27/2026 ~ We will need to have Susan take the oath at the next meeting. Paperwork shows that a form needs to be notarized. Dave will investigate this. 2/10/2026 Dave talked to Susan and administered the oath and Susan filed. CLOSED

The board discussed implementing a late fee for customers who do not make their payment by the end of the month and is doing research on this matter. Under MCA7-13-2301 Paragraph 3 Charges and penalties are authorized for water systems. This will be discussed in more depth during future. 12/10/2025~ Dave supplied the board with more cities and towns policies on late fees. The board needs to review this further and update accordingly. 1/13/2026 - Dave drafted a late fee policy with a 30-day late fee being charged 3% and 60 day late being shut off. Dave provided copies to the board for them to review and discuss further Feb 24 2026. 1/27/2026 ~ Dave suggested a flat rate.

1/13/2026 ~ Dave reviewed the cost involved with pit installation and the fee schedule. He has adjusted our fee schedule for inflation. We have until 2027 to make our website ADA compatible. Everything has to be scanned so it can be accessed by all. 1/27/2026 – This will be followed up on 2/24/2026.

1/27/2026 Motion to include the other 3 employees with an annual cost of living increase of 2.8%: Susan
Second: Kristie 3 yes 1 no Passed CLOSED

New Business:

Dave got message from election office no additional candidates election closed and the current three candidates are re-elected by affirmation.

Need to assign a board member to monitor the email (gmail).

Bookkeepers Report:

10/8/2025 ~ Arny has been in touch with Clayton at Wipfli and most of the audit will be done electronically. Wendy Weissman has agreed to help Arny with some of the new requirements. 10/22/2025 Audit will start April 2026. 2/10/2026 Clayton will send Arny information to upload to the portal.

Arny has talked to Cascade County regarding the delinquent balances. We will have this prepared for the 8/26/2025 meeting so we can have this at the Cascade County by 9/1/2025. 8/26/2025 ~ #691 will be turned over to the county. That property is owned by #645. Christy will get a letter out to #645 for \$1,865.00 9/9/2025~ #645 called Arny questioning the bill. He was told that as the property owner, the bill stops with him if his tenant is not paying. Arny told him to attend tonight's meeting and he did not show up. 9/24/2025 ~ Mercy and Dave signed the letter going to the county tonight. 10/08/2025 ~ Arny needed signatures from all board members. He will submit tomorrow hopefully. 10/22/2025. 11/12/2025 ~ #645 attended the meeting questioning the charge on their taxes. The board will review. 12/10/2025 ~ Homeowners attended and discussed with the board the situation. Homeowner was not aware of the water bill being delinquent since the bill was being mailed the second address. He homeowner has requested that the tap be permanently terminated. Motion was made to remove the request to Cascade County and work with the homeowners to collect the outstanding balance. We will supply a letter to be signed by the homeowners and board stating they will pay \$25.00 until the bill is paid off. 1/13/2026 Homeowners attended tonight's meeting to sign the letter. Arny will contact the

county to remove the delinquent charge of \$ 1,865.00. 1/27/2026~ we need to draft a letter to the county addressing the removal of the delinquent charges.

12/10/2025~ #525 now has a high usage while he was on vacation. We did install a new meter earlier this year. Special Termination we did receive 2 checks from the homeowner. 1/13/2026 ~ The homeowner was here to discuss his bill. We will do an internal audit based on his questions and concerns. 2/10/2026 homeowner does not want to pay any past due balances until internal audit is completed. Arny completed internal audit and notification will be sent to homeowner regarding the balance.

2/10/2026 - QB having difficulties balancing the new wells. Arny is going to make an offsetting entry per Wendy Weissman.

2/10/2026 - #705 had zero usage meter reading. Brian completed a second reading that was not zero. Meter is scheduled to be changed.

2/10/2026 - #556 requested a name change. Arny to verify reason for change.

The following bills were read for approval:

KDS Networks	\$ 54.95	Monthly Service
Wendy Weissman CPA	\$ 165.18	QB & Payroll
Utilities Underground Locate	\$ 7.00	4 locates
Hawkins	\$ 1,153.78	Chlorine and cylinder rental
Northwestern Energy	\$ 1,785.09	Pumphouse #2
Northwest Pipe Fittings	\$ 37.11	Supplies
City of Great Falls	\$ 26.00	Water Samples
IRS	\$ 1,437.65	Federal Taxes
State of MT	\$ 411.00	MT Income Tax
Brian Blackford	\$ 1,214.06	General Mgr/Operator Wage
Kristie Blackford	\$ 138.52	Director's Fee
Arnold Schandelson	\$ 1,044.52	Bookkeeper's Wage
David Schuler	\$ 108.52	Director's Fee
Royce Shipley	\$ 198.04	Wages, Mileage Misc
Edward Taylor	\$ 290.97	Wages, Mileage Misc
Christina M Walter	\$ 379.84	Secretarial Wage
	\$ 8,452.23	
# 5033 Clinton Bersuch	\$ 150.45	Refund of Deposit # 652
# 5034 Gerald Ulmen	\$ 138.52	Director's Fee
# 5035 Casandra Hembree	\$ 5.63	Overpayment of last bill # 636
#	\$ 294.60	

Motion to Pay the Bills as Read: Kristie
Second: Dennis Passed

Delinquents: Payments will be due 2/9/2026, termination will be 2/11/2026
No Terminations

Treasurer's Report: Nothing to report

Operator's Report: Excused

- PH # 1 down due to leak in distribution pump causing the loss of prime and pumping issues. Brian will work with Butch when parts come in.
- Meter was replaced in Western Estates.

Upcoming absences:

Dave Feb 9-16 Jerry Feb 12 - March 6

Motion to adjourn at 7:55: Dennis
Second: Kristie Passed

Gerald Ulmen
President

Ashlee Liedle
Secretary