

GORE HILL COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
406-761-6528
Minutes of the Public Board Meeting
Public Meeting
March 24, 2026

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

Motion to open the meeting: Jerry
Second: Dennis Passed

Motion to accept the minutes of 3/24/2026: Jerry
Second: Dennis Passed

Checks received at meeting: #559 \$86.51

Old Business:

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. 1/27/2026 ~ Dave suggested a flat rate. 2/24/2026 – Discussion about add a flat rate vs percentage. Kristi suggests holding until accounting software is running smoothly. Motion to set a flat \$10.00 late fee to be applied to past due balances on the last day of the month.

This will be effective June 1, 2026. This will be included in the March newsletter. This will also be included in monthly statements. Arny requested clarification on deadlines for billing and late fee being applied. 3/10/26 Dave wanted to place mitigating circumstances clause for special circumstances regarding late fees. 3/24/2026 Dave Posted updated bylaws on the website. District Property fines have been updated on the website. Identified typos have also been updated. Website is almost completed to be ADA compliant.

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. 2/24/2026 – Dave still working on ADA compliance for the website. Fee schedule inflation updates recommended pit install \$3,000 from \$2,000 other fees will also be increase based on inflation. Dennis recommended updating to cost will be based on estimates at the time of a request. 2/24/2026 – Dennis questions if district should charge customers for requested meter changes. Brian recommended that if change proves defective meter that fee is not applied to customer billing.

CLOSED

3/10/2026 – Kristi to complete the Quarterly newsletter. Dave sent to items to add updating contact information, and...

3/10/2026 – Jerry requested that we put the generator for sale on Facebook market place, Dave agreed and will post. 3/24/2026 – Dave confirmed that the listing had been created on Facebook market place.

3/10/2026 – Received a quote from Black Mountain software to add additional services for accounting to remove QuickBooks. Service would add \$277 monthly. Arny to confirm payroll, and online payments are services included in additional cost. 3/24/2026 – New Quote to include bill pay and payroll services. These new services would add another \$6,270.00 to the annual service fees. Arny recommended to move Customer bill pay service to Black Mountain software this would cost \$100 and would eliminate the pay star service. Board will review and discuss further in April

New Business:

3/24/2026 – Christy Walter recommended that a board member train with Arny (Bookkeeper) to learn end to end process so ensure there is a backup as needed. Dave and Krisy

3/24/2026 – Board would like to meet with Arny regarding 2-month performance review. Meeting will be Monday 3/30/2026 at 9:30AM

3/24/2026 – Updated CCR will be updated to website. Christy to send updated report to Dave for posting.

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. 3/10/2026 We received 2025 audit contract for approximately \$40,000.00 Dave signed. 3/24/2026 – Audit starts April 6, 2026. Arny is awaiting response from the auditors. Arny worked with Wendy to prepare for audit for 2 hours last week.

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. 2/24/2026 – Arny completed a complete audit and did not identify any billing discrepancies. Kristie to complete a second review. 3/10/26 Dave to meet with customer and review with Arny next week. Dave and Kristie reviewed account billing issues with customer and have been resolved. Customer paid billing Ck#6876 \$277.05

CLOSED

2/10/2026 - #705 had zero usage meter reading. Brian completed a second reading that was not zero. Meter is scheduled to be changed. Brian waiting to see if the meter reading this month shows a reading prior to change. Will discuss at next meeting

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

3/10/2026 - #706 & #716 saying that there was water usage and he has no tap. He will send in monthly service fees. Meter reading was incorrect. Brian will complete a new reading. 3/24/2026 – Meter reading error water billing was for #716. Meters will be read in 3 days and will resolve issue.

3/24/2026 – Arny to send PDF file of Financials to Dave via email so that it can be posted to the website.

The following bills were read for approval:

NW Pipe Fittings	\$ 271.70	Supplies
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MT Workers Compensation Policy	\$ 619.12	Workers Comp Policy
AT&T Wireless	\$ 102.11	Monthly Service
Hawkins	\$ 40.00	Chlorine Cylinder
Associated Business Systems	\$ 439.00	Envelopes & Statement paper
Arnold Schandelson	\$ 32.68	HP Printer Ink
	\$ 1,618.73	

Transfer Main Checking – To Bond Repayment \$6,000.00 – Funds to pay June payment

Check #5033, 5034, 5035 will be reported next week.

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

Delinquents: Payments will be due 4/13/2026, termination will be 4/14/2026.

# 507 \$ 84.00	# 534 \$ 107.00	# 561 \$ 175.01	# 561 \$ 90.00
# 612 \$ 86.00	# 636 \$ 91.00	# 646 \$ 89.00	# 650 \$ 159.00
# 660 \$ 195.00	# 665 \$ 653.00	# 683 \$ 126.00	# 686 \$ 66.00
# 719 \$ 79.00	# \$	# \$	# \$

Treasurer’s Report: Kristie to connect with black mountain to get access this week. We need to review finance software and decide system that will be used for billing. Kristie reviewed customer accounts and verified errors with Arny. 3/24/2026 – Kristie has access to Black Mountain. Starting account review #665.

Operator’s Report:

- 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. 2/24/2026 Still waiting on parts. 2/24/2026 – Butch has gaskets and working to get on schedule.
 - New Pump \$20k Board Approved
- #635 contacted Brian to discuss meter access with dogs. Customer offered to introduce dogs to meter reader. Waiting on decision from meter reader.
- #593 Letter to be sent to property owner to have gravel removed covering curb stop
- Contacted Ferguson Rep to get pricing on new meter wands. Digital download all meter reads.
- #514 Final meter reading completed 3/24/2026
- #556 Customer contacted by letter to remove tree branch obstructing access to curb stop.

Motion to adjourn at 8:00: Jerry
Second: Susan Passed

Dave Schuler
President

Ashlee Liedle
Secretary