

**El Creston Mutual Domestic Water Consumers' Association**  
**Annual Meeting**  
**Saturday, March 9, 2013 2:00 pm Sheridan Fire Station**

Present: Arthur Atencio, Lidia Atencio, Toni Atencio, Alfred Baca, Mitch Barker, Richard Breedlove, Justin Buhrkuhl, Carol Ditmanson, Dennis Ditmanson, Crystal Gallegos, Frank Hager, Eugen Johe, Gertrud Johe, Ken King, Cynthia Lucero, J.M. Lucero, Max Lucero, Ramon M. Lucero Jr., Karyl Lyne, Carol Macomber, Kent Macomber, Les Montoya, Brigido Ortega, Jimmie Ortega, Dakota Quintana, Veronica Quintana, Patrick Rucker, Blanca Surgeon, Cheryl Zebrowski, Joe Zebrowski

**Guests:** Ramon Lucero, Les Montoya, Blanca Surgeon,

- I. Call to order and proof of quorum The meeting was called to order at 2:20 pm and a quorum of 10% of the membership of 52 was established.
- II. Proof of notice of meeting—Flyers were posted in the usual places, numerous email notices were sent to the El Creston MDWCA distribution list, radio announcements were sent and a notice was sent to the Las Vegas Optic.
- III. Approval of Agenda – The agenda was approved unanimously with the addition of comments by Fire Chief Atencio on fire safety. Cheryl Zebrowski/Dennis Ditmanson
  - a. Fire Chief Art Atencio – There is a severe drought and there should be no fires. As summer comes, the danger will increase and we must be very cautious.
- IV. Report of USGS Study - Characterizing the Water Resources of San Miguel County – Les Montoya, San Miguel County Manager

The County does not run any water systems but instead leads efforts for county water planning and development. The County Commissioners are often asked to make decisions regarding the creation of subdivisions and the permitting of various kinds of business and industry in San Miguel County. Frequently a large part of being able to make these decisions is understanding how much water these ventures might require and how much water is available.

So, as a result of the above, three years ago the County started analyzing current and future water resources. The first phase of the analysis was to compile all the information, studies and surveys about SMC water into one document that includes ground water, surface water and water quality. The Commissioners also need to know how the rates of recharging of ground water and surface water relate to water use, which requires metering and regular monitoring.

FEMA funded the first phase of the study (\$450,000) but also required a mitigation study as well. A mitigation study requires considering the various types of disasters

like drought, fire, snow storms, etc., that could occur in our area and how we would respond to those disasters.

The United States Geological Survey Service (USGS) was engaged to do the study and their document identifies all of the studies from the past and correlates the past records with the demand to make projections for the future. The study has also identified gaps in the information that may have to be addressed. The completion of the study – water quantity and quality will require an additional \$250,000.

In the meantime the County Commissioners have to continue to deal with permit requests from industries like oil and gas and try to balance economic development with the protection of water quality and quantity. The Commissioners are also faced with issues relating to the protection of the watershed from catastrophic fire by thinning the forest. Mr. Montoya also introduced a new coalition of seven counties committed to assuring water sustainability in northeastern New Mexico.

- V. Reading and approval of March 3, 2012, El Creston Annual Meeting minutes -- The minutes were unanimously approved as presented. Patrick Rucker/Gertrud Johe
- VI. Reports of officers and committees

- a. President's report – Next steps for Community Water System -- El Creston President Joe Zebrowski covered the basic history of El Creston MDWCA, the PER and the feasibility of creating this water system. Our service area contains 300 homes, 750 people, about 70 dry wells and is 10 miles long and 1½ miles wide. Building a system to provide water service to the entire area would cost about \$7 million.

Phase one of the system is the well, tank, pump, infrastructure and fill station at Mira Sol. El Creston received funding of 1 mill for design and planning, which is done. We will repay pay the \$100,000 loan incurred for planning and design starting in June, 2013, at the rate of \$500 per year for 20 years.

Now we're awaiting the results of our request for \$1 mill to build phase 1. We've also made a request to the legislature for \$150,000 for infrastructure.

We average 10 water deliveries every month, which provides income to the association in addition to joining and assessment fees.

Mr. Montoya volunteered that the County could prepare the paperwork for CDBG grant funds once El Creston has a water source and if we're eligible in terms of the income criteria. We could make the case that we serve more than just the area of El Creston membership through our water hauling service.

- b. Treasurer's Report -- El Creston Treasurer Crystal Montoya reported that she is updating the El Creston books and transferring them to a business accounting

system. She reported checking and savings accounts balance of \$14,668.41. She also reported that budgeting for last year was good because we have ended the year with a bit of a surplus. The Board increased the water hauling truck driver's pay per load and added funds for advertising for the water hauling service. We're spending less on administrative costs than expected.

- c. Secretary's Report (membership) -- The El Creston membership is now 52.
  - d. Fire Dept. drawing -- A winner was selected for a half cord of wood.
- VII. Board Election announcement -- The El Creston Board is seeking nominees for four of the five board positions. Nomination forms will be sent to all El Creston members soon and the election of board members will be completed by April 15, 2013.
- VIII. Old/Unfinished business
- a. Funding applications status
    - i. Water Trust Board – We'll find out in May whether we get the funding for the construction of phase one of our community water system.
    - ii. Legislative Capital Outlay - We have a request in for \$150,000 for infrastructure construction.
    - iii. Board of Reclamation - El Creston submitted a letter of interest to BOR for the Sheridan well. We have received no response.
- IX. New business
- a. Membership assessment and joining fees changes discussion and comment -- Joe recommended a \$60 assessment fee for 2013. People were supportive of the \$60 assessment fee.
  - b. Water Hauling Operations -- 125 loads of water were delivered in 2012. This represents a huge block of time from our driver - 2-3 hours per load, so we're very grateful to Ric Valenzuela for his continuing dedication to this activity.
- X. Public comment – A question was raised about the time required before building would occur if phase one is funded. Ramon Lucero responded that the bids for construction require 60 days and the actual construction requires about 150 days.
- XI. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 3:35 pm. Patrick Rucker/Dennis Ditmanson

Respectfully submitted,  
Karyl Lyne, Secretary  
El Creston Mutual Domestic Water Consumers' Association