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STATE ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON IRRIGATION DISTRICTS

Report on the Fifth Annual Meeting held in Spokane, Washington, on November 14, 1950 -

REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE - Fred J. Cunningham, Chairman

Interest Rate and Time of Payment of Assessments: The question was brought up as to whether or not we should propose legislation changing the interest rate on delinquent assessments and the dates of payment to conform with the general tax law. In 1949 the general tax law was amended to provide that taxes of \$10.00 or more could be paid one-half by April 30th and the second half by October 31st. If the first half is not paid on time, the entire tax becomes delinquent and draws interest at the rate of 8%. If the first half is paid on time, the second half is payable by October 31st and draws interest at 8% from then on.

There was discussion concerning the advisability of retaining the present interest rate on irrigation district assessments as an inducement for landowners to pay assessments on time, of the difficulties which would be encountered by districts using the toll system, and of the possibility of reducing the interest rate on irrigation assessments to 8% with no change in the dates of payment. Mr. Cunningham stated that it was generally felt the penalty for non-payment should be rather severe in order to get in money necessary for the operation of a district.

Descriptions of Land on Assessment Rolls: Questioned about using the same designations as used by the County Assessor on assessment rolls rather than write out long land descriptions, Mr. Cunningham stated that this could be done now under the present law.

Changes in the Election Law: Mr. Cunningham stated: "We are still uncertain as to the application of the general election law to irrigation districts. It might be well for us to present an amendment providing that regardless of any general election law the irrigation law would apply and then watch any amendments to the general election law and try to have them put in specific exemptions for irrigation districts."

A motion was made "That the Legislative Committee prepare legislation along whatever lines are necessary to keep the election law covering irrigation district elections separate from the general election law, to keep the same dates as heretofore, and to leave the district Board of Directors to handle irrigation district elections". This motion was seconded and carried.

Payment of Assessment Against State Lands: The present difficulty is that because of the necessary certifications by County Treasurers and State Auditors and the delay in appropriations by the State Legislature, districts have to wait, sometimes for two years or more, for payment of assessments against state lands. Mr. Kail reported that he had received notice of an appropriation of \$50,000. by the last legislature to pay assessments on drainage and dyking districts, etc., and that at the next session it was intended that irrigation districts be included. He had promised the support of this Association for such legislation.

Segregation of Land Descriptions: Mr. Cunningham: "We have no legal authority as a district to modify the roll after it is turned over to the County Treasurer for collection. Our irrigation district law does not provide for segregation. I thought that perhaps we could get some amendments to our

PROJECT OPERATION & MAINTENANCE - Mr. H. E. Alexander.

After discussion by Mr. Alexander regarding labor and the State Retirement Plan, it was brought out that Mr. Zediker had planned to bring up the matter of the unionizing of labor of irrigation districts. Mr. Weber stated he had understood Mr. Zediker wanted to forestall any attempt during the legislative session to make it mandatory that districts unionize their labor.

Mr. Cunningham brought up the matter of the possibility of the freezing of wages and stated that some districts had already set their 1951 wage scales in anticipation of such action. He said it was questionable as to whether this would be considered legal.

Mr. Alexander spoke on the substitution of pipe lines for ditches and flumes, the comparative cost of cement and steel pipe, erosion at the bottom of pipe under high velocity, and the blowing up of pipe, for which no cure had been discovered after considerable research.

PUBLIC RELATIONSHIPS - J. A. Weber

Mr. Weber presided over a panel discussion on public relationships, during which Mr. Barney Monahan of the Bureau of Reclamation spoke on Bureau-District relationships, Mr. David Brooks on Farmer-District relationships in operation districts, and Mr. Jerome D'Euart on Farmer District in non-operating districts.

COLUMBIA BASIN INTERSTATE COMPACT & COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - Mr. Hube Waters

Mr. Waters of the Columbia Basin Commission gave a review of the interstate compact, comprehensive plan and interest component which covered much more detailed explanations of these subjects than can be included in a short report of the meeting.

REPORT OF ACCOUNTING COMMITTEE

Miss Pauline Osterhout had made a collection of accounting forms which she had at the meeting for inspection. She called particular attention to the variety of forms used in making up assessment rolls, and the fact that the Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District uses a form which provides for a ten-year ownership record, which they find quite a convenience.

Mr. Thorp reported on the matter of classification of irrigation districts and the action taken by the Board of Directors at a meeting held in September 1950 at which time "it was voted to table the matter pending an examination of the irrigation code to see if a few legislative changes, or amendments, could not be made that would clarify the duties of county officials and irrigation district officials with respect to collections and disbursements, and erase any friction now existing between the two".

The Treasurer's report was approved by an Auditing Committee appointed by Mr. Kail.

The following officials of the Association were elected:

President	E. J. Brand, Kennewick Irrigation District
Vice-Presidents	J. A. Weber, Quincy-Columbia Basin Irrigation Dist. Kenneth C. DeMerchant, Oroville-Tonasket Irrig. Dist.
Director, Division 5	Paul E. Becker, East Columbia Basin Irrigation Dist.
Directors at Large	Claude Zediker, Teale Irrigation District