

**ELEPHANT BUTTE IRRIGATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
March 11, 2026**

A Regular Board of Directors meeting of the Elephant Butte Irrigation District was held at 530 S Melendres, Las Cruces, NM at 9 AM on Wednesday, March 11, 2026. The meeting was called to order by Board President Rafael Roviroso. Board members present were Randy Garay, Greg Daviet, Rafael Roviroso, John Clayshulte Jr., and Henry Ludwig, and Prescott Colquitt III (attended virtually). Directors Casey Crist, Preston Tharp, and James Sloan were absent.

The Invocation was given by Director Clayshulte Jr., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Secretary Garay.

EBID personnel present were: Josh Smith, Treasurer-Manager; Joah Franzoy, Chief Financial Officer; Leah Diaz, Finance Director and CPO (virtual); David Lutz, Legal Counsel; Marilyn Crawford, Executive Assistant; Jorgianna (Jorgi) Ellis, PR Consultant; James Narvaez, Director of Irrigation Systems; Delyce Maciel, Director of HR and Safety (virtual); Scott Gamboa, Land and Licensing Technician, (in-person and virtual); Alex Rubio, Senior Engineering Manager (virtual); Tammie Deon, Administrative Assistant (virtual); DL Sanders, Legal Counsel (virtual); Skye Devore, Lobbyist (virtual); and Dr. Phil King (virtual).

EBID guests present were: Jerry Schickedanz, constituent; Ryan Serrano, NMISC; and Larry Vasquez, BOR. Virtual attendees: JR Hennessey, State of NM; Samantha Stiffler, IBWC; Mike Riley, OSE; Sarah McCartney; Steven Hernandez, CID; and Sheryl Smith, OSE.

Announcements

Director Clayshulte Jr. presented a plaque to Vice President Daviet on behalf of the Board in recognition of his three years of service as Board President and expressed appreciation for his leadership and contributions.

Public Input

Jerry Schickedanz expressed concern about declining political support for production agriculture and the growing public misunderstanding of water rights and agricultural practices. He urged the Board to help educate urban communities about the essential role of agriculture.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes

President Roviroso noted a typo in the Manager's Update section of the minutes. **Vice President Daviet moved, and the motion was seconded by Secretary Garay, to approve the February 11, 2026 Board Meeting minutes. Directors Garay, Daviet, Colquitt III, Clayshulte Jr., and Ludwig voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.**

Committee Reports

Government Affairs Committee - President Roviroso reported that in 2025 EBID significantly increased its visibility at the state level by actively engaging in legislative activities, securing \$580,000 in capital-outlay funding, and successfully influencing two key water-related bills (HB111 and HB247). Looking ahead to 2026, the Committee plans to continue its legislative engagement, pursue additional funding opportunities, strengthen relationships with state and federal lawmakers, organize legislative tours, and expand collaboration with water managers throughout New Mexico.

Skye Devore noted that the legislative session concluded on February 19, with key outcomes still pending on the state budget and tax package. Significant water-related funding was secured, including major appropriations for OSE, the Water Trust Fund, and the Strategic Water Reserve, along with three EBID capital outlay projects; the committee will continue monitoring new legislation, including changes to the Water Project Fund and the passage of HB111, and will maintain engagement with legislators throughout the interim.

Land Use Committee - David Lutz reported that the Committee met on March 5, 2026, regarding updates to the Encroachment Agreement and related Encroachment Policy. The Committee presented recommended revisions to the Encroachment Agreement, including incorporation of the license process, a standard 10-year agreement term, and requirements for Board approval and associated fees. A red-lined agreement was provided for Board consideration. The Committee is still reviewing Section II of the 1999 Encroachment Policy with engineering staff; no policy revisions were presented this month.

Discussion included clarification that EBID holds right-of-way interests but does not own the underlying land in the University Avenue area. Multiple nearby properties appear to have similar encroachments, and the Board discussed the need for consistent enforcement. **Vice President Daviet moved, and the motion was seconded by Secretary Garay, to approve the modifications made to the Encroachment Agreement as presented. Directors Garay, Daviet, Colquitt III, Clayshulte Jr., and Ludwig voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Lutz reported that contact has been made with Zia Gas, and an in-person meeting is being scheduled for the week of March 23rd. The Committee anticipates bringing the Zia Gas Blanket Agreement for Board consideration next month.

Water Resource Committee - Secretary Garay reported that the Committee met on March 6, 2026, to review 2026 water supply conditions and allocation estimates. The Allocation Committee set initial Rio Grande Project allocations using a diversion ratio of 0.64. EBID's initial allocation is 63,855 acre-feet (AF), with 18,274 AF in carryover; EPCWID's allocation is 69,234 AF, with 34,530 AF in carryover. Due to the low current-year supply of 139,880 AF, allocations between the Districts will follow a 57% EBID / 43% EPCWID split rather than the standard D2 curve. Mexico's allocation is 9,239 AF. A seasonal release of 222,386 AF from Caballo is anticipated.

Using standard conveyance efficiency assumptions, the expected allotment would be 4.6 inches; however, due to uncertainty in diversion and efficiency estimates, **the Committee recommends a 4-inch initial allotment for the 2026 irrigation season.**

Water Resources Update

Dr. King provided a water resources update. As of March 9, 2026, total project storage stands at 259,639 acre-feet (AF), with 243,409 AF in Elephant Butte and 16,230 AF in Caballo. Usable project storage was 245,737 AF; 18,089 AF was not releasable. Rio Grande Compact credit was 10,000 AF, and San Juan-Chama was 3,902 AF. Zero AF have been released from Caballo in 2026. Total seasonal supply was at 227,639 AF. Net inflow into Elephant Butte was at approximately 650 AF per day. This information will be finalized at the Rio Grande Compact Commission meeting next month and will remain constant for the entire year.

Dr. King reviewed NRCS data for the Rio Grande Basin as of March 9, 2026: the Rio Grande Headwaters was at 87% of average precipitation, the Upper Rio Grande at 65%, Rio Grande–Elephant Butte at 68%, and Rio Grande–Caballo at 77%. Total precipitation is down from last month and we continue to be below average on the snow water equivalent.

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Update

March 11, 2026

The NOAA Climate Prediction Center projects below-average precipitation and above-average temperatures from March through May 2026 across the Rio Grande watershed. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, the region remains in conditions ranging from drought persists to drought development likely.

Dr. King provided a summary of the Rio Grande Project Initial Allocation for 2026:

March 1, 2026 Allocation
DR = 0.64, Drought Factor = 0.88

Component	AF	
Seasonal Supply	222,386	
Mexico Allocation	9,239	
2026 Water for Allocation	139,880	
EPCWID Carryover	34,530	
EPCWID 2026 Allocation	34,704	43.2%
EPCWID Total Allocation	69,234	
EBID Carryover	18,274	
EBID 2026 Allocation	45,581	56.8%
EBID Total Allocation	63,855	
Acreage	90,640	acres
Conveyance	55%	

Dr. King confirmed that while initial calculations suggested 4.6 inches, both system-level and operational review, along with Water Resources Committee input support a four (4) inch allotment. This is the Committee's recommendation.

Discussion moved to the release date. EP1 supports a May 29 release, which would allow water to reach the system by early June. Directors noted recurring requests from growers to consider an earlier mid-May release; however, staff confirmed that maintenance work will still be underway at that time, making an earlier start unfeasible this year

Dr. King explained that releasing earlier than EP1 could significantly harm EBID's water supply due to high

hydrologic losses, especially if Mexico has not yet begun diverting. Early release under release accounting would impose substantial startup losses on EBID.

Discussion focused on crop specific impacts, noting that an early start with only four inches available would create large conveyance losses, insufficient demand, and inefficiencies, particularly affecting cotton growers and limiting system performance. Maintaining a May 29 release was viewed as the most balanced approach.

Recommendation is for a four (4) inch allotment and a May 29, 2026, release date. **Vice President Daviet moved, and the motion was seconded by Secretary Garay, to set a four-inch allotment and set the release date to correspond with EP1. Directors Garay, Daviet, Colquitt III, Clayshulte Jr., and Ludwig voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.**

Approval of 2026 Allotment & Release Date

Financial Report

Joah Franzoy presented the financial report, noting a total of \$ 13,156,892 held across investments and cash in the bank as of February 28, 2026. Uncommon large payments included \$246,950 for WRRRI grant reimbursement. A payment of \$73,232 was received from WRRRI grant proceeds. Proceeds from the most recent auction totaled \$35,134. The interest rate for February was 3.66%. To date, 88% of assessments have been collected.

Financial Report

Approval of Delegation of Authority for Contract for Automated Water Control Infrastructure & Software

Joah Franzoy presented a proposed contract to support two major automation initiatives: automating all check structures, gates, and wasteways from Leasburg to the Leasburg Extension, and retrofitting Mesilla Dam and automating the West Side Main with modern telemetry, torque motors, automatic gates, and etc. The selected RFP awardee will prepare cost estimates needed for DRE/IRA funding applications, with total project costs anticipated at \$7-8 million. Because funding estimates are due March 23 and the contractor must begin work immediately, staff requested delegated authority to approve the awardee and delegated signatory authority for the Manager to execute the contract without further Board action. The contract carries no cost to the District unless grant funding is awarded, at which point materials and services would be engaged. **Vice President Daviet moved, and the motion was seconded by Secretary Garay to delegate approval and signature authority with the same level of security to the Manager of the District for RFP 2026-01. Directors Garay, Daviet, Colquitt III, Clayshulte Jr., and Ludwig voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.**

Approval for Signature Delegation

Manager's Update

Josh Smith thanked the Board for setting the allotment early, noting it will aid coordination of the Growers' Meetings, tentatively planned for May 1, 4, and 5. He reported on a trip with Mr. Franzoy to tour Evans Equipment in Missouri to evaluate options for refurbished heavy equipment, and described ongoing efforts with other irrigation districts to strengthen statewide coordination through the New Mexico Water Resources Association. He also updated the Board on recent meetings, including the Lower San Acacia Reach Improvement meeting and a presentation on the Texas v. New Mexico settlement in Roswell. Staff continue preparing designs and estimates for multiple funding proposals, as the District works to secure support for infrastructure improvements.

Manger's Update

Calendar of Events

Josh Smith presented the calendar of events:

- Irrigation Water Management Training: March 18-20, 2026, NMSU Campus, Las Cruces, NM
- Next Board Meeting: April 8, 2026
- Bureau of Reclamation Army Corps Engineers Operation Meeting: April 16, 2026, in Albuquerque, NM
- Rio Grande Compact Commission Meeting: April 17, 2026, in Santa Fe, NM
- 2026 Water Leaders Workshop: April 20-22, 2026, Ruidoso, NM
- NWRA Federal Water Issues Conference: April 27-29, 2026, Washington, DC

Calendar of Events

HR/Safety Update

Delyce Maciel provided an HR and Safety update and reported that one employee had resigned, bringing the total staff count to 84 and creating a pending opening in Maintenance Central. Ms. Maciel noted several March anniversaries across departments, including long-term employees such as Joseph Karpac and Chuy Morales at 27 years and Leah Diaz at 21 years. She also reported that one employee was on FMLA. Four employees had completed defensive driving training during the week, with approximately 40 more scheduled for sessions on March 17-18 as part of the district's three-year insurance requirement. No office closures were scheduled for March.

HR/ Upd y

Maintenance/Project Update

Joah Franzoy provided an Engineering and Maintenance update, reporting that the Engineering Department, in coordination with the Office of the State Engineer, completed 13 dam inspections in three days. Maintenance continued work at the Lucero Dam, expected to finish in about two weeks, and carried out ISC drain cleaning and other general maintenance. Engineering remained heavily involved in DRE proposals, estimates, GIS work, and preparation for upcoming LiDAR flights. Additional updates included completion of the Las Cruces Lateral and the Laguna Heading, progress on the Hatch Yard extension, and material procurement for the California Extension project, which is nearing completion. A detailed maintenance and drain-cleaning report will be presented at the April 8, 2026, meeting.

Maint/Proj Update

