

Press Release

Recall Signatures Certified by K.I.D.

Irrigation district board member recall will occur

**Klamath Falls, Oregon
September 6, 2016**



Recall petitioner Ed Bair delivers signatures to KID staff on August 23, which officially started the clock on the historic recall process.

On the eve of a long holiday weekend, Klamath Irrigation District (KID) staff officially verified that the necessary number of signatures have been secured to set a formal election to vote on recalling two board members – Brent Cheyne and Ken Smith.

New attorneys representing KID have opined that another petition to recall a third board member – Grant Knoll - did not contain a sufficient number of valid signatures from KID electors to warrant a special recall election.

“There are differing legal opinions as to whether or not the conclusion reached by the KID attorneys is correct,” said Mika Blain, a Klamath Falls attorney

representing the recall effort. “However, we are confident that we will secure the necessary signatures in the coming days that will allow Zone 3 electors to participate in a recall election.”

The recall will take place October 12, 2016, per the letters of verification sent to the petitioners from KID. Board members Cheyne and Smith now have until September 7 to resign or issue a statement of justification.

Now that the signatures have been certified, voters in Zones 1 and 2 will be allowed to participate in an election that many KID patrons believe is necessary to bring stability back to the district. A Zone 3 election is expected to be verified shortly.

“There is an election that is going to happen,” said recall petitioner Ed Bair. “This is a critically important election, and it’s about much more than removing three individuals who apparently have no regard for following public meeting law, who carelessly spend the public’s money, and who feel compelled to hire attorneys and staff from faraway places like New York City and Texas.”

At the time of the recall election, if a majority of the patrons (for each KID board zone) vote in favor of the recall, that director would be terminated from the board, and the remaining board members would select a replacement from the division to serve in his place.

KID board members Ken Smith, Grant Knoll and Brent Cheyne are each targeted for recall, driven by concerns over escalating legal fees being paid to a new out-of-town team of attorneys, the alarming departure of several long-time district employees, and the secretive nature of decision-making being employed by the KID board majority.

Last November, KID's constituents elected Smith to KID's board of directors. Along with newly elected Board Chairman Cheyne and Director Knoll, the election resulted in a dramatic change in the makeup of the board members.

"These new board members have taken the district in a direction that radically departs from KID's previous priorities and the board's fiduciary responsibilities," said Mr. Chapman.

Many KID patrons are becoming increasingly concerned that the current board majority appears to be more interested in advancing agendas driven by interests who have traditionally opposed Klamath Project irrigators.

The Oregon State Bar is reviewing the circumstance behind the hiring of extra legal counsel in the form of out-of-town attorneys Nathan Rietmann (Salem) and Lawrence Kogan (New York City). Mr. Rietmann also represents Tom Mallams, an off-project irrigator who opposes much of the Klamath Reclamation Project's claim for a water right, creating a possible conflict of interest that Cheyne, Knoll and Smith have been willing to overlook.

"I'm voting to recall these three board members, and I urge others to do the same," said KID irrigator Luther Horsley. "It's time get our district into the hands of those who understand its purpose and will not yield to outside special interests who appear to have hijacked it for their own political ends."

For more information on the recall, please visit the joint website that incorporates the concerns of all three recall actions: kidrecall.org. If you have any questions about perceived technicalities associated with upcoming election, please do not hesitate to contact Ed Bair.