



BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

Wednesday, November 18, 2020

Via teleconference

The regular meeting of the Medford Water Commission was called to order at 12:21 p.m. on the above date via teleconference with the following commissioners, staff, and guests present:

Chair Daniel Bunn; Commissioners Jason Anderson, John Dailey, Greg Jones, and Michael Smith

General Manager Brad Taylor; Executive Administrative Coordinator Yvette Finstad; Finance & Administration Services Director Tessa DeLine; Information Technology Manager Kris Stitt; Human Resources Manager Tanya Haakinson; Water Maintenance Supervisor Lester McFall; Water Meter & Controls Supervisor Ken Johnson; Water Treatment & Quality Director Ben Klayman; Capital & Special Projects Coordinator Andy Huffman; Int. Engineering Supervisor Brian Runyen

Guest(s): Attorney Mark Bartholomew; Shawn Koorn* of HDR, Inc.; Steve and Cindy Taylor*; Ed Olson; Central Point Parks & Public Works Director Matt Samitore*; Misty Munoz** (*Left early, **Arrived late)

2. Comments from the Audience

Steve and Cindy Taylor, owners of Whispering Pines Mobile Home Park at 93 Northridge Terrace, spoke on the status of water service in the park. Most water facilities were lost in the Almeda Fire, and this along with concerns about water quality in wells has resulted in expensive water deliveries. They have been told that the agreement between Charlotte Ann Water District (CAWD) and MWC does not allow them to accept the park into their district, and CAWD opposed an emergency annexation to Phoenix. They asked the Commission to allow annexation by CAWD.

Commissioner Bunn asked for clarification on CAWD's opposition; Steve Taylor replied that CAWD stated it would increase costs to their customers. Bunn strongly recommended a land use attorney, adding that MWC does not have authority to compel a district to do anything; boundaries of special districts are set by the Board of County Commissioners. Attorney Mark Bartholomew agreed, noting that ORS 198 governs special districts. There are several methods to accomplish this, generally involving petition of landowners in affected territories. General Manager Taylor will provide the Jackson County attorney's information to give an understanding of that process. Commissioners agreed that if Jackson County were to approve expansion of district boundaries, they would have no objection, and authorized the General Manager to communicate this verbally to CAWD.

3. Consent Calendar

- 3.1 Approval or Correction of the Minutes of the Last Regular Meeting of November 4, 2020
- 3.2 Resolution No. 1756, A RESOLUTION Authorizing the Chair and Assistant Clerk of the Commission of the City of Medford, By and Through its Board of Water Commissioners to Execute a Quitclaim Deed Releasing All Right and Title to, and Interest in, a Portion of an Easement to CDT-Barr LLC, That Certain Real Property Situated in Jackson County, Oregon, Described as a 10-Foot Wide Easement Being More Fully Described in Document No. 94-08196 of the Official Records of Jackson County, Oregon

The Chair put forth the question on the approval of the Consent Calendar.
The Consent Calendar was approved by voice vote.

Taylor introduced Interim Engineering Supervisor Brian Runyen; as part of his new role, Runyen had requested the quitclaim deed in Item 3.2.

4. Items Removed from Consent Calendar

None.

5. Review of Vouchers

Commissioner Dailey observed that there was no power bill again for Duff WTP; DeLine will report back on the issue. He also inquired about the difference in timeliness of processing invoices. A/P relies on staff to turn in invoices for timely payment but avoids drawing out terms to retain discounts.

6. Management Reports

6.1 Engineering Report (Capital & Special Projects Coordinator Andy Huffman)

- Engineered Lagoons – Basin #5 is in service, discharge swales have been constructed, and paving is set for next Monday.
- Backup Power at Duff – Slab forming is complete, 2 of 3 generators & switchgear due next week, and the balance is to be delivered in late February.
- Communication Fiber at BBS – The conduit installed and awaiting Hunter to make connection. This will connect with the new Point of Entry and improved communication at the Springs and provide enhanced security and control options.
- Duff 65 MGD Expansion projects
 - Ozone Generators – Direct solicitation documents; continued development of plans.
 - Relocated Entrance – Bid documents will be ready by January, to start work in March/April and be completed in June.
 - Filter Expansion – Pathway forward will come out of filter evaluation workshop scheduled for Thursday of this week.
 - Reservoir Baffle – Will improve CT performance, operational flexibility, and interim capacity while a new reservoir is built.

6.2 Operations Report (Water Meter & Controls Supervisor Ken Johnson and Water Maintenance Supervisor Lester McFall)

- Maintenance
 - Main Line Repairs – 14 breaks have occurred in the first 4 months of FY20-21.
 - 18 service line repairs, 9 of which have been replaced back to the main.
 - Working on main line replacement priority list at this time, for our future replacement program. This program will allow us to replace deteriorating lines to avoid costly damage and disruption later.
- Meters & Controls
 - Update on Charlotte Ann Water District Board Meeting November 12 – Gave overview of system and status and discussed OHA water quality sampling requirements, water quality flushing, and recommended pump station improvements. A future ODOT project (CAWD to Garfield) may have substantial financial impact. The CAWD board approved repair/replacement of 2 pumps/motors and will begin process of working with an engineering firm to modernize pump controls.

6.3 Water Treatment/Quality Report (Water Treatment/Quality Director Ben Klayman)

- Duff is off for the season; de-commissioning is in process. System demand and flow rate, as well as production data was provided.
- Monitoring capabilities have been improved at Little Butte Creek (turbidity and gage height) and the intake (turbidity and raw water quality); recent data was provided.

Commissioner Bunn questioned what the maximum treatment capacity would be at peak turbidity; Klayman responded that there is a scale between the amount of time and turbidity. If the plant was operating, the intake could be shut down for a few hours during the peak, although the plant can treat higher turbidity events, but it would be limited to 10 or 20 MGD.

- Watershed – Post-fire watershed sampling took place Sunday on the Rogue River, Little Butte Creek, and tributaries of Little Butte Creek. Staff is providing support for several

grants that will benefit water quality in the region.

- Water Quality – Ongoing post-fire activity, including development of a region-wide monitoring plan. Compliance with water quality regulations is 100%.

Commissioner Dailey queried Klayman on precipitation levels, who responded that 4.2 inches have been received. He will share monthly data again during the winter months.

6.4 Finance Report (Finance & Administration Services Director Tessa DeLine)

DeLine addressed the power bill for Duff WTP, noting that it had been paid on credit card.

- Collection agency overview – MWC is currently under contract with Southern Oregon Credit Service. Only closed delinquent accounts are sent to collections, on a monthly basis, averaging about \$50,000 per year. Collection agency fees were provided.
 - DeLine proposed participation in the Department of Revenue Tax Intercept Program. It allows the Commission to take advantage of HB0079 and is effective January 1, 2020. Southern Oregon Credit manages the data transfers and reconciles weekly. ODR charges the debtor 10% for their part, and Southern Oregon Credits charges 15%, but remits 100% of debt to MWC, including interest.
 - DeLine requested direction in form of a motion on whether or not MWC will participate in the program and authorizing the placement of existing inventory (post January 1, 2020) with Southern Oregon Credit into the program.

Commissioner Jones queried where MWC would fall with repayment priority and other creditors/liens; it is presumed that ODR parcels out money pursuant to statute and priority of liens.

Motion: Approve participation in the Oregon Department of Revenue Tax Intercept Program.

Moved by: Mr. Jones

Seconded by: Mr. Dailey

Commissioner Bunn requested clarification from Commissioner Jones whether or not the motion included retroactive inclusion to January 1, 2020. Commissioner Jones affirmed that it did.

The adoption of the motion was approved by voice vote.

- Per Southern Oregon Credit Service, the number of eligible accounts varies from 10% to 30%. Accounts not eligible for the Tax Intercept Program will be subject to the original agreed upon fees.

Commissioner Bunn asked if the agency continues to try to collect on accounts placed into the program; DeLine will report back with an answer at a later date.

- Bond Counsel – Staff requested participation of a board member in the selection of counsel; Commissioner Dailey volunteered.
- The process of soliciting a municipal advisor will begin later this week.
- Continuing work with FEMA and Oregon Coronavirus Relief Fund for possible reimbursements for Alameda Fire, Obenchain Fire and COVID-19 related expenses.
- Water accounts receivable data was provided; staff will continue to monitor the situation.

Commissioner Bunn inquired at what point collection of aging open accounts should be looked at with relation to the events of the year. Taylor replied that we are not at the point of over scrutinizing yet; information from OWUC regarding how utilities are managing the issue is being explored.

6.5 I.T. Report (Information Technology Manager Kris Stitt)

- Projects moving forward
 - Asset Management – Review meeting with consultant and staff December 9th.

- Fiber Internet project at BBS is moving ahead, as is FortiGate Enterprise Management Server (EMS) rollout and LastPass rollout (about 75% complete).
 - Coming Up Next – Customer Service payment website replacement, document management, and asset management phase II.
- 6.6 HR Report (Human Resources Manager Tanya Haakinson)
- Turnover Rate History and Projection data was provided.
 - Customer Feedback – A letter of appreciation was received for Conservation Coordinator Dave Searcy.
 - COVID Related Actions – 2-week freeze starts today; working with different departments to ensure MWC will be able to achieve as much remote work as possible (based on business needs), per Gov's guidelines. OR-OSHA Temporary Rule (11/2020) partially implemented new temporary rule provisions (vehicles/masks, remote work, etc.); developing other OR-OSHA related procedures from this temporary rule (ex: physical temperature taking at locations, training, signage, etc.).
 - Employee Movement – Brian Runyen, PE has been promoted to Interim Engineering Supervisor, and Juston Menteer was promoted from Interim Engineering Tech III – Inspector to regular status.

Commissioner Bunn reported that following discussion from the executive session, the Board has asked the General Manager to bring back a resolution related to labor negotiations at the next meeting.

- 6.7 General Manager's Report (General Manager Brad Taylor)
- AWWA Membership for Board Members – Seeking input moving forward. Currently practice is to provide membership to Chair; membership is around \$240 per year/person. It offers direct access to materials and conferences. Utility membership allows discount to all Board members for purchasing materials and going to conferences.

Commissioner Dailey stated that it is money well spent if one has the time to go through the information available. Commissioner Bunn agreed, adding that it is a good idea for new members. Staff will proceed with offering memberships to the Chair as well as new members during the onboarding process.

- Upcoming Board Schedule – 12/2-No scheduled Study Session, 12/16-Tentative Jackson County and MWC Bulk Water Sales Update.

Motion: Authorize the General Manager to rebate water rate increases for the cities of Phoenix and Talent, and Charlotte Ann Water District per the earlier Study Session proposal.

Moved by: Mr. Bunn

Seconded by: Mr. Dailey

The adoption of the motion was approved by voice vote.

7. Propositions and Remarks from the Commissioners

None.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business, this Commission meeting adjourned at 1:26 p.m. The proceedings of the Medford Water Commission meeting were recorded and are on file along with the complete agenda of this meeting.