



**Wednesday, June 1, 2022**

Medford City Hall Council Chambers

411 W. 8th Street – Rm 300, Medford, Oregon 97501

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

Chair Bob Strosser; Commissioners Jason Anderson, and John Dailey; Daniel Bunn and Michael Smith were absent.

General Manager Brad Taylor; Executive Administrative Coordinator Yvette Finstad; HR Director Tanya Haakinson; Water Meter & Controls Manager Ken Johnson; Water Maintenance Manager Lester McFall; Engineering Manager Brian Runyen; Information Technology Manager Kris Stitt; Water Quality & Treatment Manager Ben Klayman; Interim Finance Manager Anna Roeder; Customer Service & Water Efficiency Manager Julie Smitherman

Guest(s): Attorney Mark Bartholomew, City of Central Point Councilor Tanea West Browning\*; Mandy Gunn and Pat Boyle of PayneWest; Phyllis Douglas of St. Vincent de Paul (\*Via Zoom)

**3. Comments from the Audience**

None.

**4. Approval or Correction of the Minutes of the Last Regular Meeting of May 18, 2022**

**The Chair put forth the question on approval of the minutes of the last regular meeting. The minutes were approved by general consent.**

**5. Written Communications**

**5.1 Letters from St. Vincent de Paul and The Salvation Army**

- ACCESS – April 1 LIHWA program funded approximately \$600,000; \$560,000 of this remains. The funds expire September 2023. 44 households have been helped since April for \$5,500. Representatives have stated that they are not getting all cities to sign up so that their customers can access the program. Funds are one-time use per customer, and it takes a while to apply and get through the process.
- St. Vincent de Paul – Depleted \$5,000 grant that was issued by Medford Water in December; 7 customers helped since April for a total of \$1,500. They refer customers to ACCESS when possible.
- The Salvation Army – Current balance is \$589.90; 2 households helped for \$150.10 since April. They also refer customers to ACCESS when possible.

Staff recommends approval of the grant amounts by motion for The Salvation Army and St. Vincent de Paul.

Commissioners and staff discussed the good work done by all three agencies, and the options to put a hold on grants until the LIHWA program has expired or to fund grants for The Salvation Army and St. Vincent de Paul to be used when customers are not eligible or cannot wait for LIHWA funds. They also discussed where the remainder of the \$40,000 may have been used; the program is county-wide, and wastewater bills are also eligible. Commissioners called upon Ms. Douglas of St. Vincent de Paul for comment. She thanked the Board for their generosity, adding that they can respond the same day to their clients, and their current eligibility is once every 12 months. A large number of customers are single parent families. Commissioners had reservations about the process since ACCESS still has funds, but wanted to get the other agencies funded for the time being.

**Motion: Approve \$5,000 grants to The Salvation Army and St. Vincent de Paul for bill payment assistance.**

**Moved by: Mr. Anderson                      Seconded by: Mr. Dailey**

**Roll Call: Commissioners Anderson, Dailey, and Strosser voting yes.**

**Motion carried and so ordered.**

## **6. Workers' Compensation Renewal**

Workers' Compensation Plan Year 2022-2023 – In 2022, we partnered with PayneWest as broker; SAIF continues to provide workers' comp insurance, including retaining all local safety contacts. Renewal amount is \$27,762 (including discounts). Our Experience Mod dropped from 0.65 to 0.58, and we had two recordables: 1 illness (August 2021), and 1 contusion (May 2022). A dividend of \$26,312 was awarded in 2021. The safety committee has done a lot of hard work to help us accomplish this. The information is provided for informational purposes only.

Commissioner Dailey requested that this is reemphasized for the crews as well; they do a dangerous job, and the Board wants them to stay safe.

## **7. Leadership Team Reports**

- Engineering Manager Brian Runyen
  - Construction Plan Review Process – Implemented new plan submittal application packet; review fees are determined and due by the second plan review. Staff is encouraging submittal to us at same time as submittal to City/County, and is exploring opportunities for joint review in City of Medford review process.
  - Next Steps – Partnering with the Land Development Community, building stronger relationships through open communications, such as roundtable meetings with engineers, developers, and contractors, and expanding coordination with City of Medford.
  - Goals of Development Review – To safeguard public health by providing a reliable, high-quality water supply at the best value, efficiently use resources and capital, improve predictability of review and construction process, streamline review time, and minimize issues during construction. These are guided by our Vision, Mission, and Values. Staff will report back to the Board on progress.

Commissioner Strosser thanked staff for coordination of the stakeholders on this topic.

- Water Meter & Controls Manager Ken Johnson
  - Reservoir Access Hatch and Safety Improvements – Barneburg Reservoir: hatch replacement, installation of safety railing, and improvements to safety climb ladder. Stanford Reservoir: hatch replacement, installation of safety railing, and safety tie-off Point. The self-retracting lifeline attaches to tie-off and provides fall protection. Medford Fabrication designed and fabricated the hatches, which are easy to open, while meeting OHA requirements for tight seal against the elements, insects, etc. More training is coming for fall protection.
- Water Quality & Treatment Manager Ben Klayman
  - Watershed Precipitation – Above average precipitation in April and May; over the water year it is still a little short, but the late snow (we are at average snowpack) gives us a late influx to our reservoirs. We have seen an uptick in springflow from the April/May precipitation also. Proposed improvements would capture 3 or 4 additional cfs (a project to do this is just getting started). Willow Lake and Lost Creek Lake have filled.
  - Duff Water Treatment Plant in Daily Production – Average production is currently 10 mgd with hot weather coming; we expect to get to around 30mgd over the next few weeks.
  - Joint System Canal Piping Project – Project will pipe 13.6 miles of RRVID/MID canal and is estimated to save 2,500 ac-ft/yr, in addition to improving

streamflow and water quality in Little Butte Creek. A project tour took place May 24, led by Farmers Conservation Alliance. This will be a good model for future projects moving forward.

Commissioner Dailey inquired where the money for the project comes from; \$5M comes from the infrastructure funding bill, in addition to some state funding. Klayman will follow up with the total project cost.


- Kris Stitt, IT Manager
  - Annex Server Upgrades – 4 New Cisco blade servers have been installed at the Annex; the primary servers are running on a Cisco UCS blade server system that was installed in 2015. The systems consist of a chassis with 4 servers, built-in redundant 10gb networking modules, and multiple redundant power supplies. The 4 existing servers are now underpowered to meet current requirements and are no longer eligible for support. The existing chassis and network components are still current, but 4 new servers were ordered about 6 months ago as part of a planned upgrade, and installed and brought online about a week ago. Through virtualization, these 4 servers currently support about 50 running virtual servers. They have nearly twice the processing power and memory giving us room to grow into the future. The upgrade did take a couple of nights but went smoothly.
- Customer Service & Water Efficiency Manager Julie Smitherman
  - Regulations Governing Water Service Update – Full review approved and made effective November 1, 2021, updated rates effective March 1, 2022, bulk water and district rates approved in April, effective June 6, 2022, and Special Charges and Charges in Lieu updated May 18, effective July 1, 2022. No proposed changes at this time, but staff will work with each department to continue to review sections.
- General Manager Brad Taylor
  - Taylor provided context of a meeting that occurred between himself, Chair Strosser, and Mayor Sparacino on the topic of the Plan Review Process. The purpose of the meeting was to make sure our two organizations are on the same page. The pandemic has challenged our organizations and caused them to grow apart to an extent. Commissioner Strosser added that it was constructive, and we want to make sure we are coordinating when there is an opportunity to do so. The Mayor inquired about watershed fire protection and risk mitigation efforts; information provided at the last meeting can be shared with him.

## 8. Propositions and Remarks from the Commissioners

None.

## 9. Adjourn

There being no further business, this Commission meeting adjourned at 1:09 p.m. The proceedings of the Medford Water Commission meeting were recorded and are on file along with the complete agenda of this meeting.

  
Yvette Finstad  
Assistant Clerk of the Commission