

WEST SLOPE WATER DISTRICT
Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting
March 20, 2024
Meeting Summary

CALL TO ORDER

Present: Chair Susan Meamber; Commissioners Chris Eppler, Ramesh Krishnamurthy (who joined virtually), and Paul Schuler

Management Staff: Michael Grimm, General Manager; Wendy Irwin, Finance Manager

Absent: Commissioner Andy Smith

Public: None

1.0 – CALL TO ORDER

Chair Meamber called to order the meeting of the West Slope Water District Board of Commissioners at 5:01 P.M., Wednesday, March 20, 2024. The meeting was held as a hybrid meeting both in person at the District office and through Zoom virtual meeting technology. The public was made aware of the meeting through the District’s website (the meeting agenda and Zoom meeting link were posted on the website).

2.0 - PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

The District had not received any public comments regarding agenda items or other issues for the Board to consider.

3.0 – CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Krishnamurthy asked for Agenda Item 3.3 to be pulled from the Consent Agenda for discussion. Commissioner Krishnamurthy noted that two vendors were paid twice in the same month. Ms. Irwin explained that in both cases there was an A/P process error resulting in two checks being issued in one month but being posted to a different month than when the check was written. Commissioner Schuler made a motion to accept the entire Consent Agenda Items 3.1 through 3.8. Commissioner Eppler seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously (4-0).

4.0 – DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

4.1 – General Manager’s Report: Mr. Grimm highlighted some key issues from the General Manager’s report:
Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy Project: Paving started this week as the final steps in the District’s project. The paving involves a grind & lay of the full lane (mostly the center turning lane) to a 3-inch depth for the full length of the project. Commissioner Schuler asked if there were any change orders on the project. Mr. Grimm replied there have been no change orders to date.

Some quantities in the bid tabulation exceeded the amount projected in the contract and others have been less than the original contract.

SW Garden View and Water System Master Plan Projects: The District has a signed contract with AKS Engineering for the SW Garden View design, and the District is still waiting on Grayling for a signed contract to complete the Water System Master Plan and water rate study project. Commissioner Krishnamurthy asked if Grayling will be sending the District some kind of final report for this project and if the District really needs a water master plan. Mr. Grimm stated the District last completed a brief update to a 2007 Water Master Plan in 2014. The District is required by regulation from the Oregon Health Authority to have a current (viable) water master plan in place that is being followed. Commissioner Krishnamurthy asked if the consultant has any special expertise to complete the water master plan, and Mr. Grimm replied that both Grayling Engineering and their sub-consultant HDR have a lot of expertise and experience with composing water master plans for drinking water utilities. Commissioner Krishnamurthy asked when the District would need another water master plan after this one is completed. Mr. Grimm stated in general a water master plan is relevant for 20 years for capital projects and population & water demand projections.

Washington County Right of Way (R-O-W) conflicts: Recently, the District has had three separate issues with gaining clear access to the District's infrastructure in the County R-O-W. All of the incidents have occurred because private homeowners/District customers have been allowed by Washington County to encroach on the public R-O-W. The issue is not whether or not the encroachment has damaged the District's assets (pipe) but rather the encroachment is impeding access by the District to the pipe. Mr. Grimm stated the District desires to have a strategic conversation with Washington County transportation on how to identify areas of concern to the District where there are access issues in an effort to give the County time to regain R-O-W access. The District will be asking the County to preserve and protect clear access to the District's asset inventory.

4.2 – Finance Manager's Report: Ms. Irwin stated that District expenses for the fiscal year to date are running a little under the budget as adopted June 2023. For the next fiscal year, Ms. Irwin stated she is looking at several scenarios based on current assumptions for Fiscal Year ending in 2025 (FYE 2025) and projecting a rate increase of 3% on the fixed portion of the District water bill and 6% on the consumptive portion would be adequate for meeting budget. Chair Member asked what was the rate increase in 2023, and Ms. Irwin replied the Board approved a 14% increase on the consumptive portion of the bill. The District has been able to transfer just over \$1.3 million to the capital improvement reserve this year. The District has navigated through the difficult part of the change to Xpress Bill Pay. Ms. Irwin also reported there have been 37 leak adjustment requests totaling roughly \$14,000 that will be processed and presented to the Board in April. Commissioner Eppler asked if there were any possibilities for West Slope to qualify for Federal funding such as Congressional discretionary funding. Mr. Grimm responded that the District will approach Senator Merkley's office and Congresswoman Bonamici's office after we get the preliminary engineer's estimate from the Water Master Plan project. Mr. Irwin also briefly shared a document recently received from WHA Insurance about the reasons behind the increasing cost of insurance for water utilities.

4.3 – Two-Year (2024-2026) Work Plan Discussion: Mr. Grimm demonstrated for the Board a Gantt chart program in table form that will track activities, key progress milestones, and anticipated completion dates. Some of the projects included in the table are the two current capital projects, the proposed 3.0 MG reservoir project, the District's strategic plan, a DEIB (diversity, equitability, inclusivity, and belonging / communication plan), the Lead & Copper Rule

customer service line inventory, the risk & resilience assessment / emergency response plan, and the transition/succession plan for the General Managers position for 2026. Commissioner Eppler mentioned that SDAO offers a benefit to member Boards for the recruitment & selection process of a General Manager. Mr. Grimm stated the benefit of the Gantt table chart is for the Board to follow progress on roughly fifteen different tasks/projects currently on the General Manager's "to do" list. Commissioner Schuler asked why the list is labeled as a two-year work plan, and Mr. Grimm stated this plan is really his work plan prior to his retirement in 2026. It is likely some projects like a 3.0 MG reservoir construction will carry on past 2026. Chair Meamber suggested another project that could be added to the work plan is updating the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Tualatin Valley WD for emergency back-up water at the Camelot Court intertie, and Mr. Grimm agreed to add the MOU to the work plan with subtasks to complete the update.

The general consensus of the Board was they found the Gantt chart table very helpful and informative.

5.0 – COMMISSIONERS COMMUNICATIONS

No commissioners attended any outside meetings. Chair Member asked if staff could provide more detail on the Lead & Copper Rule requirements including the customer service line inventory requirement. The consensus of the Board was the meeting went well tonight.

6.0 – EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:46 PM, the Board suspended the regular meeting and entered into Executive Session at 6:47 PM in accordance with ORS 192.660(2)(i) to conclude the performance review process for the District's General Manager. Commissioner Krishanmurthy left the meeting during the Executive Session. At 7:14 PM, the Board concluded the Executive Session and returned to the regular meeting at 7:15 PM. There were no decisions made during the Executive Session.

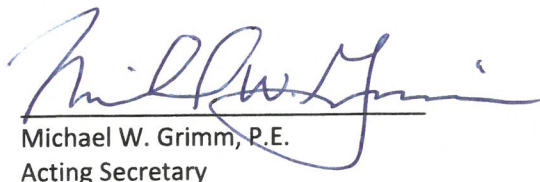
Back in regular session, Commissioner Eppler made a motion to provide the General Manager a 3.5% monthly salary merit increase effective March 1, 2024. Commissioner Schuler seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously (3-0).

7.0 – ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Schuler made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Eppler seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously (3-0). Chair Meamber adjourned the March 20, 2024 Board of Commissioners regular meeting at 7:26 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved:


Michael W. Grimm, P.E.
Acting Secretary

