

WEST SLOPE WATER DISTRICT
Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting
July 19, 2023
Meeting Summary

CALL TO ORDER

Present: Chair Susan Meamber; Commissioners Chris Eppler and Paul Schuler

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

Absent: Commissioners Ramesh Krishnamurthy and 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 4:58 P.M., Wednesday, July 19, 2023. The meeting was held as a hybrid meeting – in person and virtual. 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).

1.1 – Commissioner Oath of Office Administered by Chair Meamber for Chris Eppler: Chair Meamber delivered the Oath of Office to newly elected Commissioner Eppler for the term July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2027.

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 Eppler made a motion to accept the entire Consent Agenda Items 3.1 through 3.7. Commissioner Schuler seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously (3-0).

4.0 – DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

4.1 – General Manager’s Report: Mr. Grimm highlighted several key issues from the General Manager’s report:

- Long Term Source of Supply: Mr. Grimm stated the new wholesale water sales agreement has been sent to the District’s attorney for review, so the process for creating the agreement is nearing completion. Multnomah County began the land use approval process for the new Bull Run WTP on Carpenter Lane with an open public hearing. West Slope testified in support of the project while many local residents testified against the project mainly because they did not want to live near a water

treatment facility. Chair Member asked if it were likely the decision may be appealed to LUBA, and Mr. Grimm stated most likely the project will be approved by Multnomah County and the attorneys representing the objectors will consider an appeal, but that is speculation.

- **Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy Water Main Project:** Mr. Grimm stated the project is going well. Emery & Sons is doing a great job managing the construction project and installing the pipe according to the plans. On average, about 120 ft of pipe is being installed daily. The project schedule continues to be 9 AM to 3 PM daily until the night-time intersection work starts. The construction area is cleaned and swept daily, and the temporary trench patch pavement is in excellent condition. Chair Member asked if the District has received any complaints about the project. Mr. Grimm explained some area residents have commented on the neatness and the efficiency of the construction contractors. Completed sections include the area between the intersections at SW Dogwood and SW 78th Avenue, and between the intersections at SW White Pine and SW 91st Avenues. The contractor will complete the work in front of Jesuit High School prior to the start of school. The District continues to keep Oregon Episcopal School, the Beaverton School District, and Jesuit High School informed about the contractor's schedule.
- Mr. Grimm stated the District has met with 8 engineering consulting firms with interest in the District's capital improvement projects in the next 1-5 years. Two more consultants will be meeting with District staff before the end of July. The Board confirmed their interest in seeing the RFP for the Water Master Plan (including the water rate study) prior to the RFP being released to the consultant group.
- **Engaging with TVWD & City of Beaverton:** Mr. Grimm provided a brief summary of the dialogues between TVWD and West Slope including the false rumor spread across the Portland metro area by TVWD that West Slope is pursuing a merger agreement with TVWD. Similar false rumors about mergers have involved North Plains and Cornelius. Mr. Grimm stated he and TVWD CEO Tom Hickmann will continue to work on an agenda for a meeting of the two boards. Topics of interest to West Slope include a wholesale water purchase rate from TVWD for comparison to the Portland wholesale water rate and working with the City of Beaverton on an urban services agreement (USA). TVWD is interested in discussing the future of the Washington County Supply Line and other large regional capital investment projects. Commissioner Schuler stated if West Slope can get the water rate information and cooperation from TVWD on a USA with the City of Beaverton, the Board can simply listen to the merger pitch from TVWD even though the District has no interest in any form of a merger agreement. The other two Commissioners agreed.

4.2 – Finance Manager's Report: Ms. Irwin stated she is currently working on the District's audit report as well as the final version of the District's Employee Manual. Ms. Irwin also gave a summary review of the customer account write-off list. The FYE 2023 write off total amounted to \$1,219.66, the budgeted amount set aside for write-offs was roughly \$7,000. Commissioner Eppler made a motion to write-off the \$1,219.66 and charge the write-off against the General Fund Material & Services appropriation. Commissioner Schuler seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously (3-0).

5.0 – COMMISSIONERS COMMUNICATIONS

No commissioners attended any other outside meetings representing the District. Chair Member stated TVWD Chair Todd Sanders contacted her about hiring an independent financial consultant who would work for both Districts and split the cost of the consultant. Chair Member questioned whether the District would want its own consultant to provide the District

with counsel that would be in the District's best interest. Chair Member thought the consultant would be hired to determine a wholesale rate, but Mr. Grimm stated TVWD would not need a consultant to determine a wholesale water sales rate as TVWD staff could determine that rate on their own. Mr. Grimm shared that from a meeting with Mr. Hickmann TVWD is interested in hiring a financial consultant to guide the financial merger of the two districts. The Board voice unanimous agreement that there is no desire by West Slope to entertain a merger with or without a consultant, but out of respect to TVWD, the Board would be willing to listen to TVWD's ideas anyway. Commissioner Eppler stated having a trusted ally in a consultant has value to the Board who represents the fiduciary citizen oversight of the District and its management staff, but the Board relies on the insight of staff to guide the Board in its policy making tasks. Mr. Grimm stated in his professional opinion as the GM of this District that there is no value to the District and its customers at this time to consider any type of merger agreement with another water utility or contract management corporation. The Board is welcome to listen to the plans and offers of other utilities if it so chooses, but acting upon any offer proposed as a merger is a mammoth-sized mistake, in Mr. Grimm's professional opinion. Chair Member stated West Slope would like to explore a wholesale water rate from TVWD for emergency water (at Camelot Court) and cooperation with TVWD to establish a USA with the City of Beaverton, and Mr. Grimm agreed. Chair Member stated that she would circle back with Todd Sanders for clarification on the purpose of an outside consultant. The Commissioners agreed that there should be one message moving forward, and getting clarification from TVWD has value.

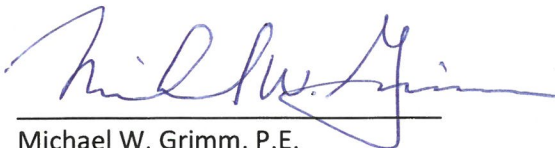
Chair Member asked if the District has set upon a date to honor past Commissioner Wild with a lunch. Mr. Grimm stated that we have been trying to reach Ms. Wild with no success. Once we are able to have a conversation, we can set up a lunch date. Chair Member reminded Mr. Grimm to bring back information learned from the AWWA Utility Management Conference and the AWWA Annual Conference for either the September or October meeting. The Board agreed the meeting was very effective and went well.

6.0 – ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Eppler moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Schuler seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously (3-0). Chair Member adjourned the July 19, 2023 Board of Commissioners regular meeting at 6:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved:



Michael W. Grimm, P.E.
Acting Secretary

