

WEST SLOPE WATER DISTRICT
Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting
July 17, 2019
Meeting Summary

CALL TO ORDER

Present: Chair Carol Wild; Commissioners Charles Conrad, Michael Hoffman, Noel Reiersen, and Andy Smith

Management Staff: Michael Grimm, General Manager; Lucy Dawes, Finance & Customer Service Manager

Absent: None

Public: None

1.0 – CALL TO ORDER AND OATH OF OFFICE

Chair Wild called to order the regular meeting of the West Slope Water District Board of Commissioners at 5:00 P.M., Wednesday, July 17, 2019. Commissioner Conrad administered the Oath of Office to newly elected Commissioners Wild and Smith.

2.0 - PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Grimm stated there was one comment received by telephone from Mr. Thomas Payne, District customer, who wished to praise both Bart Johnson and Daniel Gridinar for their great customer service. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Gridinar helped Mr. Payne close a water valve that he was unable to close.

3.0 – CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Reiersen asked to remove Agenda Items 3.4 and 3.8 from the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Conrad asked to remove Agenda Item 3.7 from the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Hoffman made a motion to accept Consent Agenda Items 3.1 through 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, and 3.9. Commissioner Reiersen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Reiersen asked about the NSF ACH payments in Item 3.4 and what process the District uses to recover the funds due the District. Ms. Dawes stated the customers whose payments are listed as NSF are contacted again for payment with a \$25 NSF fee. Failure to pay the past due bill and the fee initiates the water turn-off process. From Agenda Item 3.7 - General Manager’s report, Commissioner Conrad asked about the SCADA system’s temporary breakdown. Mr. Grimm stated the issue staff discovered was the lack of communication between the remote display screen and the control valve at the District’s Sylvan Hill Reservoirs. Between working with GC Systems and Portland Engineering, the problem was identified and a solution implemented. The District did adjust the control valve manually on July 3 prior to the

Independence Day Holiday and again July 5 until the programming was updated July 9. Commissioner Reiersen asked about the outstanding check to McClure & Sons, Inc. (MSI) for the retainage balance for the Green Tank Project. Staff stated MSI was issued a second check but still has not cashed the payment from December 2017. Commissioner Hoffman moved to approve Agenda Items 3.4, 3.7, and 3.8, and Commissioner Conrad seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

4.1 – DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

4.1 – Long Term Water Supply / Strategic Outreach Plan.

- Mr. Grimm shared a number of obstacles going forward related to the full participation of all parties in the FCS Group contract to begin work on the new wholesale water sales agreement. The five largest wholesale customers are all on board as paying participants but as noted in past meetings Portland will not be signing the IGA / MOU or contributing funds for the contract. However, Portland staff will be involved in the contract work with the other wholesale customers and the consultants. After a lengthy discussion, the Board agreed it will be important to connect with Portland's elected officials and show strong, united front support from all wholesale customers for a new wholesale water sales agreement that reflects the finding of the final FCS report.
- Commissioner Hoffman expressed concern to make sure Tualatin Valley WD understands the importance to West Slope to have a solid offer on the table to compare to Portland's wholesale water rates (forecast for 2020-21 through 2024-25 available February 2020). Mr. Grimm pointed out Tom Hickman, the new District CEO, starts August 1 and will have many things on his plate at the beginning of his term with TVWD. Mr. Grimm plans on having a brief one-on-one meeting with Mr. Hickman followed with a more detailed meeting later in the fall to discuss issues of mutual interest including the opportunity to purchase wholesale water from TVWD. Commissioner Hoffman also pondered if there is wisdom to include the possibility of merging with a neighboring utility with the two known wholesale water purchase options (Portland or Tualatin Valley WD). Commissioner Smith stated he believed the decision to remain a water district or not is a much larger decision that involves many more issues besides the cost of water. Commissioner Conrad agreed that the immediate due diligence to customers is to evaluate a long-term source of supply not a change in the governance structure. Commissioner Hoffman agreed stating he was not advocating a merger as a viable option but wondered if it should be included in name only as a comparison to the other two immediate options. Mr. Grimm shared that the outreach narrative being developed by Katz and Associates following the outreach workshop yesterday will provide the District the necessary tools to assess what District customers think about their water source options. The narrative will provide not only content but also methodologies to reach District customers. On a separate path, in the future there is wisdom for the District to determine and assess certain triggers or tipping points that should be considered by the Board in addition to the cost of purchasing wholesale water such as a large area District territory withdrawal by a neighboring City.

4.2 – Team Leader Training Recap — Mr. Grimm and Commissioner Hoffman both attended a workshop to build team leadership and cohesiveness through strong communication and relationship skills. Commissioner Hoffman stated he believed the class had very high value to teach communication strategies for both initiating and receiving communication. Mr. Grimm stated he initially thought the seminar was only about communication method improvements but was pleased to discover communication was only part of the seminar's skill set. The overall

goal of the seminar was developing team leadership and “staff buy-in” to be an effective, efficient team.

4.3 – Late Breaking Issues:

- Mr. Grimm informed the Board that Travis McArthur was released from employment by the District. The change was initiated by the District’s Operations Manager and supported by the rest of the management staff. The change is effective immediately, and the search for a new employee to fill the vacant Utility Worker position will begin as soon as possible.
- Mr. Grimm stated both Valley View and Burlington Water Districts have switched their daily operations responsibilities to a contract operations staff. Both districts now employ Hiland Water Company to operate their systems.
- Mr. Grimm related an informal request by a commissioner at Valley View to seek a potential partnership with West Slope if the District were interested in pursuing purchasing water through the Willamette Water Supply Plan.
- Mr. Grimm shared staff’s interest in hosting a CPR/AED class by Red Cross at the District’s office. Citing statistics that show survival rate of a heart attack at 10% using CPR only vs. 70% using CPR and an AED device, Mr. Grimm proposes to have the District purchase an AED device and be trained to use it before an incident occurs. The class is open to staff and District Commissioners for between 8 and 12 students.
- Portland Water Bureau staff is working on an update to their supply system master plan, and the final report will be completed Summer 2020.
- Mr. Grimm noted water demands in the District since the end of June are much lower than anticipated. Daily demands for the first half of July are on average about 0.5 MGD below demands in 2018. The long-term forecast is for more of the same kind of “average” weather through August. Water levels in the region’s rivers (Bull Run, Tualatin, Clackamas, etc.) are running about average for this time of year.

5.0 – COMMISSIONERS COMMUNICATION

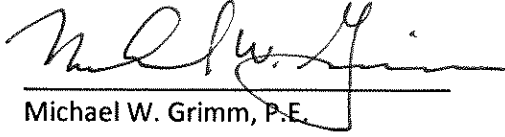
Commissioner Reiersen requested an opportunity at the August meeting to confirm additional compensation to the general manager as agreed upon by the Board in February following his attendance at the communications class. Ms. Dawes stated the August meeting will include information about the September rate hearing. Commissioner Conrad asked about how the District mails information to the public, and Ms. Dawes stated the District uses bulk mailing through Bend Mailing for billing, water quality reports, and notices/information. (Note: Upon further review after the meeting, staff determined the District does use first class mailing not bulk rate mail for mailing fliers and announcements.) Commissioner Hoffman stated he thought the meeting went well, and the Board agreed.

6.0 – ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Reiersen moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Hoffman seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously. Chair Wild adjourned the July 17, 2019 Regular Board of Commissioners meeting at 7:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved:



Michael W. Grimm, P.E.
Acting Secretary

