



BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

Wednesday, April 7, 2021

Via teleconference

The regular meeting of the Medford Water Commission was called to order at 12:11 p.m. on the above date via teleconference with the following commissioners, staff, and guests present:

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

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 Meter & Controls Supervisor Ken Johnson; Water Maintenance Supervisor Lester McFall; Capital & Special Projects Coordinator Andy Huffman; Water Treatment & Quality Director Ben Klayman; Information Technology Administrator Chad Glass

Guest(s): Attorney Mark Bartholomew; Medford Council Liaison Tim D'Alessandro; Robert Annear

2. Comments from the Audience

None.

3. Consent Calendar

3.1 Approval or Correction of the Minutes of the Last Regular Meeting of March 17, 2021

3.2 Quarterly Letter to Mayor and Council

3.3 Resolution No. 1764, A RESOLUTION Awarding and Authorizing the General Manager to Execute a Contract Amendment in the Amount of \$23,570.23 with LTM, Inc. dba Knife River Materials for Construction of the Robert A. Duff Water Treatment Plant Engineered Lagoons 5-8 Expansion Project

3.4 Resolution No. 1765, A RESOLUTION Awarding and Authorizing the General Manager to Execute a Contract in the Amount of \$1,938,000 with SUEZ Treatment Solutions, Inc. for the Robert A. Duff Water Treatment Plant Ozone Equipment & Start Up Project

Motion: Approve Consent Calendar

Moved by: Mr. Bunn Seconded by: Mr. Strosser

Roll Call: Commissioners Anderson, Bunn, Smith, and Strosser voting yes.

Motion carried and so ordered.

4. Items Removed from Consent Calendar

None.

5. Review of Vouchers

Commissioners reviewed the vouchers; no questions were received.

6. Management Reports

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

- Upcoming contract milestones
 - Duff 65 MGD – Ozone equipment procurement award today; installation construction will be Design/Bid/Build, advertising in mid-June. Pre-bid meeting today for the Relocated Entrance project; bid opening is April 20. Scope and Fee was received from Jacobs for the Transmission Mains and is under review by staff.

- Coker Butte Reservoir – RFP for Design under development.
- Duff Backup Power – Genset 1 has been delivered, a 7800-gallon fuel tank and a 65,000-pound generator portion. The hook up to utility power was completed over 3 days and through coordination between MWC, PP&L, PEC, and Taurus testing. Gensets 2 & 3 worked flawlessly during this outage. Completion of this project provides 23 MGD (equal to capacity/wintertime max demand) and is a critical piece of the resilient backbone of our system.

6.2 Operations Report (Water Meters & Controls Supervisor Ken Johnson/Water Maintenance Supervisor Lester McFall)

- Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Update
 - Full build out of AMI communication base stations will be complete by the end of May 2021. Existing Sites: Capital Hill Reservoir and Justice Road. New Sites: Southwest and Highland Reservoir.
 - Reduction in meter reading walking routes to vehicle read to future AMI transition; and eliminated all days that had 3 separate walking meter read routes. There are 15 days with 2 walking routes, 1 day with 1 route, 4 days with no walking routes. Days without walking routes create opportunities to complete service orders, install additional meters, and provide assistance to the large meter testing program. A breakdown of meter by read type was provided.
 - Project on schedule to have all meters radio read capable by 2026. Over 70% of meter read by vehicle and AMI; meter boxes need to be visually checked annually.
 - New Program-System Wide Individual Meter Box Evaluation – Develop and test electronic service order template for tablet use and data collection of meter box status, and hire budgeted temporary labor in May 2021 to find every meter box and collect data such as: meter box lid size and type, radio position, leaks, trim, and hand-valve status. Will assist customers with locating hand-valves and MWC staff during service order completions, planned maintenance, and main breaks.

Commissioner Anderson requested confirmation that the temporary labor is budgeted; Johnson confirmed it was. Commissioner Smith asked if this program would help customers find leaks on their side; per Johnson, it will utilize technology to identify possible leaks that can be brought to their attention. This is a big benefit to our customers, and helps us save water. The conservation department also plays a big part in identifying and managing leaks.

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

- Treatment plant commissioned and operating as of April 1; this is the earliest start on record. About 15M gallons produced in the last week.
- Watershed Report – Precipitation is at 75% of average at Big Butte Springs; snowpack 88% of average. Not enough springflow to go to 2 full pipes. Willow Lake is full.

Commissioner Anderson inquired if Rancheria Springs is up and running; Klayman replied that it is available, but there is not enough flow to fill up both pipes. It will be used as needed. Staff is working with a consultant to evaluate parts of the system, such as pump sizes and motor sizes, to potentially identify ways to find more water that historically we have not leveraged, added Taylor. This work is scheduled to be completed by June.

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

- Insurance Agent of Record – We received two responses to the Agent of Record RFP; we are reviewing them and will be making selections soon.

Commissioner Anderson asked if Brown & Brown had responded; DeLine affirmed they did respond. Commissioner Bunn will participate in the review process.

- Auditing Services – RFP is nearly complete and will be available likely later this week.

When queried by Commissioner Bunn, DeLine stated that the RFP had been sent to KDP, Moss Adams, Isler, and Merina in Portland, which are similar to firms that have been interviewed in the past. Commissioner Smith will be assisting in the review of those responses.

- Payroll Services – Human resources, IT, and Finance are participating in payroll services demonstrations this week.
- Water accounts receivable data was provided; the 120-day category has dropped since the last meeting. Staff is looking forward to providing additional data on customers that reside in this category by the next meeting.

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

- Project Updates
 - BBS Fiber/Point of Entry Connection – Working with Hunter Communications to run fiber internet from Butte Falls to the Springs. Adding an additional fiber connection as it will pass by the Point of Entry building. Goal is to have connectivity before our deadline of June 30. Easements have been a challenge; working on a backup plan and meeting with Hunter Communications later this week.

6.6 HR Report (Human Resources Manager Tanya Haakinson)

- Recruitment
 - Water Treatment Plant Operator I – Bryan Goodwin job offered; starts April 12.
 - Conservation Intern – SOU candidate chosen; start date June 21.
 - Utility Person I – 30 completed application packets received; review completed today. 6 candidates selected for interviews taking place this week.

Taylor noted that the use of interns is part of a concerted effort to continue work that needs to be done while freeing up staff to do other tasks, with the benefit of a lower labor cost, and generating interest in our utility from future employment seekers.

6.7 General Manager's Report (General Manager Brad Taylor)

- 2021 Legislative Session Update
 - HB 2616 (Carey Pond) – Bill received bipartisan support to move from committee to House; developing strategy on Senate side in case it passes.

Commissioner Strosser remarked that a reply from Representative Pam Marsh has been received, although it was delayed. At the heart of this issue is that this is water that would eventually flow into streams, yet is impounded on a property with a dam over ten feet high. With recent articles in the media about historic lows at local lakes and the County's drought declaration, it brings concern as to why they would support the ability for pond impoundment in a closed basin. They did not consult or invite WRD into a meeting on the issue. The bill will open it up to others seeking the same. He has asked for information on other ponds in the area that were approved and dedicated for firefighting reasons, and will continue to try to reach Senator Jeff Golden, as water is vital to the health of our valley. Taylor thanked Commissioner Strosser for his involvement.

- HB 2310 (Plastic Pipe Bill) – Dead for this session.
- WIFIA Application Update – Requires \$100K check to cover EPA Administrative costs. S&P Preliminary Rating Letter expected by April 15, and targeting submitting application between April 15 and end of the month.

- Biden Infrastructure Plan – Still very preliminary; \$111 billion for water infrastructure. \$56 billion in grants and low interest loans, \$45 billion to replace lead service lines, and \$10 billion related to polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and rural water systems. Low risk for PFAS in our watershed as there is not a lot of development upstream.
- Upcoming Board Schedule – 4/21 SDC/Fees, 5/5 Annual Budget Part 1, 5/19 Annual Budget Part 2.

7. Propositions and Remarks from the Commissioners

None.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business, this Commission meeting adjourned at 12:50 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