



BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

Medford Police Department Prescott Room
219 S. Ivy Street, Medford, Oregon 97501

The regular meeting of the Medford Water Commission was called to order at 12:18 p.m. on the above date at Medford Police Department's Prescott Room, with the following commissioners, staff, and guests present:

Chair Bob Strosser; Commissioners Jason Anderson, John Dailey, and David Wright. Commissioner Mike Smith was absent.

General Manager Brad Taylor, Executive Administrative Assistant Amber Furu, Finance Manager Beau Belikoff, HR Manager Tanya Haakinson, Engineering Manager Brian Runyen, Information Technology Manager Kris Stitt, Water Operations Manager Dan Perkins, Capital & Special Projects Coordinator Andy Huffman, Water Resources & Customer Service Manager Julie Smitherman

Guest(s): Medford Council Liaison Nick Card, Rob Annear*, Shelby Snow* (*Via Zoom)

3. Comments from the Audience

Daniel Ames with Imua Hale Structures brought forward a request for an additional water service to one of two parcels located at 2477 Coker Butte Road. Ames stated that because of DEQ requirements, the lot does not have the space needed to add a well onto the property, and without the additional water service the lot will become unbuildable. Commissioner Strosser confirmed with Ames that the property is not in the Urban Growth Boundary and advised that Commissioners would rely on input from staff before making a decision.

4. Approval or Correction of the Minutes of the Last Regular Meeting of February 21, 2024

Motion: Approve the minutes of the last regular meeting as presented.

Moved by: Mr. Dailey

Seconded by: Mr. Anderson

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

Motion carried and so ordered.

5. Resolution No. 1925, A RESOLUTION Awarding and Authorizing the General Manager to Execute a Contract Amendment in the Amount of Up to \$420,000, Not-to-Exceed a Total of \$535,000, and to Include Three Additional Two-Year Term Options with Milestone Landscape Group for Landscape Maintenance Services

In March of 2022, Medford Water's long term landscape contractor Spencer Dahlgren, who maintained landscaping at our various facilities, retired. Staff issued a formal, public solicitation for multi-year Landscape Maintenance Services at 24 different Medford Water locations. Milestone Landscape Group was identified as the low bidder and staff entered into a two-year contract, not-to-exceed \$115,000 with Milestone Landscape Group and included three two-year options to renew. We have been satisfied with the performance of this contractor and staff now seeks approval to amend the contract amount to include the three two-year options to renew. The estimated cost of the three two-year options, including escalation, is \$420,000. The total cost of the contract amendment exceeds the General Manager's \$150,000 purchasing authority. Commissioner Anderson inquired about the contract terms and questioned if the approval was for all three of the terms or just the first two-year term. Taylor explained the Board isn't approving direction to the contractor, the Board is approving authorization for the organization to renew the contract if staff is satisfied with the services received. The General Manager is authorized for up to \$420,000, and the contract will be adjusted to the first of three two-year terms; the completed quote for the first two years is \$133,000, added Perkins.

Motion: Approve Resolution 1925

Moved by: Mr. Dailey

Seconded by: Mr. Wright

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

Motion carried and so ordered.

6. By Motion, Authorizing the City of Talent to Waive Collection of Medford Water's System Development Charges for a Temporary Irrigation Water Service for Rogue Valley Sewer Service within the City of Talent

Rogue Valley Sewer Service (RVSS) is installing a storm water detention facility at 300 West Valley View Road adjacent to Bear Creek. The facility is being designed to help filter storm water and to clean up the impurities of the water before it enters into Bear Creek. Vegetation will be added to the facility, which will then require watering in the dry months. The water service will be available for a maximum of 3 years through the growing season (March to October). The plants will take up to 3 years to establish, and once established, the service will be disconnected. The City of Talent has chosen to waive their System Development Charge (SDC) fee for the 3/4" service. RVSS and the City of Talent are requesting Medford Water waive their SDC's as well. Commissioner Dailey asked how much the SDC fee is; at this time, it's around \$3,000 to \$4,000. (Actual cost from current rate schedule for system wide SDC for 5/8" x 3/4" meter is \$2,225.62).

Motion: To Waive System Development Charges for Temporary Irrigation Services

Moved by: Mr. Dailey

Seconded by: Mr. Anderson

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

Motion carried and so ordered.

7. Resolution No. 1926, Awarding and Authorizing the General Manager to Execute a Contract Amendment in the Amount of \$100,000 and Set the Not-to-Exceed Contract Amount to \$700,000 with Bend Mailing Services for Medford Water's Bill Design, Printing, and Mailing Services

Medford Water originally contracted with Bend Mailing Services for bill design, printing and mailing services in 2009 through a competitive solicitation process. The contract continued to be awarded in 2013, 2017, and again in 2021, as exempt from competitive solicitation. The current contract began in October 2021, and was for one year, with two one-year extensions, and a total contract amount not to exceed \$600,000. Staff has determined that funds under the current contract will be depleted by June 2024, five months before the contract expires in October 2024. Yearly costs were estimated to be close to \$200,000 per year, however rate increases including postage as well as increased communication with our customers have contributed to spending these contract funds more quickly. Staff is requesting approval to add \$100,000 to the existing contract with Bend Mailing to cover the costs needed to get us through to the contract expiration date of October 2024; solicitation for a new contract will be planned for the summer of 2024.

Commissioner Dailey and Smitherman briefly discussed the cost of the mailing inserts being sent out, and Dailey asked if the contract was to go out for bid, would we anticipate many responses. Recently, staff reached out and called other utility companies to inquire who they use for mailing services, and there seems to be multiple options for mailing services.

Motion: Approve Resolution 1926

Moved by: Mr. Dailey

Seconded by: Mr. Wright

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

Motion carried and so ordered.

8. Leadership Team Reports

- Julie Smitherman Water Resources & Customer Service Manager
 - Watershed Update – Precipitation at Big Butte Springs is 99% of normal and 107% of normal in the Upper Rogue Watershed. Mountain snowpack is above average for this time of year at 123% of normal with warmer than average temperatures in February. Springflows are higher than previous years. Willow Lake is 100% full. Rogue River Stream flows at 3,020 cfs and is 164% of normal. Lost Creek Lake is 72% full. Climate predictions for March are showing equal chances for normal temperatures and above average precipitation. Commissioner Strosser remarked that with the cycles of weather we have had, it will take more than one year to recover.

- Dan Perkins Water Operations Manager
 - Big Butte Springs pH Adjustment Update – The first pH adjustment at Big Butte Spring (BBS) to increase pH levels to 7.3 has started; because of the stable chemistry of our water this slight adjustment to pH levels is already on track at 7.3. In the spring, when the Robert A. Duff Water Treatment Plant (Duff WTP) starts back up, they will also increase the pH level of the river source to 7.3, then in the spring-to-early summer, both BBS and Duff WTP will receive a final increase of pH to 7.8.
Commissioner Anderson inquired why the water testing takes place at Coalmine; Big Butte Springs line 1 and 2 briefly come together at Coalmine and is a good representation of pH levels.
 - Julie Smitherman Water Resources & Customer Service Manager gave a recap of the communications efforts for the pH Adjustment.
 - Articles in the November 2023 and February 2024 newsletters
 - Message on all bills December 2023, January 2024, and February 2024
 - Information was shared by General Manager with the Partner Cities in October, November, and February
 - A 2-sided mailer was included with all bills in December 2023
 - That 2-sided mailer was also directly sent to people that don't normally get a water bill
 - On the website, since November 2023 (medfordwater.org/pH), in addition to first round of FAQs completed/posted
 - A list of critical customers was generated and spoken with directly
 - The City of Medford was notified about sending out press releases
 - Press Release went out 02/26, FAQs updated, and information placed on social media
- Brad Taylor General Manager
 - Upcoming Board Schedule – March 20 – Capital Plan Updates 1 year and 10-year review, April Meetings – SDC's/CLA/Fees/Rules & Regulations, May Meetings – Fiscal Year Budget 24/25

9. **Propositions and Remarks from the Commissioners**

Commissioners discussed and considered comments from Mr. Ames requesting consideration for an exception to allow an additional water service at 2477 Coker Butte Road. The parcel does not meet the criteria for extension of water service outside of city boundaries defined by Medford Water Regulations and Resolution 1058. The Board has declined to waive its current policy in order to create an exception to serve this parcel; a memo will be drafted to Mr. Ames by staff.

10. **Adjourn**

There being no further business, this meeting adjourned at 1:11 p.m. The proceedings were recorded and are on file along with the complete agenda of this meeting.

Amber Furu
Assistant Clerk of the Commission