



BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, December 4, 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 12:22 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, Mike Smith, and David Wright.

General Manager Brad Taylor, Executive Administrative Assistant Amber Furu, Finance Manger Beau Belikoff, HR Manager Tanya Haakinson, Engineering Manager Brian Runyen, Information Technology Manager Kris Stitt, Water Operations Manager Dan Perkins, Senior Capital & Special Project Manager Andy Huffman, Water Resources & Customer Service Manager Julie Smitherman, SCADA Systems Administrator John Crowley, Water Distribution Operations Supervisor Scott Allis, Special Projects Manager Ken Johnson, Customer Service & Billing Supervisor Esmeralda Cortez

Guest(s): Attorney Mark Bartholomew

3. Comments from the Audience

None.

4. Public Hearings

- 4.1 Consider Resolution No. 1963, A RESOLUTION Prescribing and Establishing Rates for the Use and Sale of Water from the Municipal Water System of the City of Medford, Oregon, Within and Without Said City, to Intermittent Users, and to Special Outside Customers, Repealing All Prior Rates in Conflict Herewith and Providing That the Modifications as Set Forth in the 2024 Cost of Service Study Shall Become Effective on March 1, 2025, and Thereafter

Finance Manager Belikoff presented information on the rate study and proposed modifications, which are based on the cost-of-service results (the average difference between retail customers, districts, and Partner Cities is 15%). The current customer classes will be maintained, and the rate structure was adjusted based on the cost-of-service results; specific rate components are updated based on actual costs.

City of Central Point City Manager Chris Clayton submitted by email a written comment regarding Medford Water's efforts on future rate adjustments. His letter is attached in its entirety.

Public hearing was opened; no one spoke. The public hearing was closed.

Motion: Approve Resolution 1963.

Moved by: Mr. Dailey Seconded by: Mr. Wright

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

Motion carried and so ordered.

5. Approval or Correction of the Minutes of the Last Regular Meeting of November 20, 2024

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

Moved by: Mr. Dailey Seconded by: Mr. Smith

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

Motion carried and so ordered.

6. Resolution No. 1964, A RESOLUTION Awarding and Authorizing the General Manager to Execute a Contract with Pacific Electrical Contractors in the Amount of \$91,000 for Distribution System SCADA & Communication System Replacement CM/GC Pre-Construction Services

The Distribution SCADA project is progressing, with Pacific Electrical Contractors (PEC) selected as the Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) following a qualifications-based RFP process. PEC's expertise aligns well with the project's needs, which involve phased construction over 4-5 years while maintaining operational facilities. The initial contract for pre-construction services is \$91,000, with the total project cost estimated at \$2.9 to \$3.5 million. Future construction phases and costs will be brought to the Board for approval.

Commissioner Dailey questioned receiving only one proposal. Huffman explained that PEC's proposal not only met but exceeded all RFP criteria, demonstrating their qualifications and ability to successfully complete the project. Staff highlighted the benefits of using the CM/GC delivery method, which allows contractor input during the design phase, improves cost estimating for budgeting, and ensures consistent project delivery across all facilities. Staff also confirmed that all contracting milestones, including Early Work Amendments (EWAs), would be brought to the Board for review and approval.

Motion: Approve Resolution 1964.

Moved by: Mr. Dailey

Seconded by: Mr. Anderson

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

Motion carried and so ordered.

7. Resolution No. 1965, A RESOLUTION Incorporating All Previous Amendments and Adopting the Consolidated Personnel Rules and Policies (Personnel Manual) For Employees of the Board of Water Commissioners, Effective December 4, 2024

The Personnel Manual was updated for Sections 2 and 4, which includes updates to Retiree Temporary Work Assignment Policy and Cash Out of Sick Leave to HRA/VEBA.

Motion: Approve Resolution 1965.

Moved by: Mr. Dailey

Seconded by: Mr. Wright

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

Motion carried and so ordered.

8. Leadership Team Reports

- Beau Belikoff Finance Manager
 - Accounts Receivable Collection Update – Customer Service and Billing Supervisor Esmeralda Cortez outlined key practices for maintaining financial stability and supporting customers. These include accurate invoicing with clear payment terms, flexible payment options such as online and automatic payments, and proactive communication through reminders and personal outreach. To assist customers facing financial difficulties, staff can offer payment plans, partial payment options, and incentives like a 3.5% annual credit for early payments. Customers are encouraged to communicate with staff for support, including accessing agency assistance if needed. Technology enhances efficiency through automated tools, while ongoing efforts focus on improving the customer experience, such as educating users on portal features and exploring additional communication methods. Finance Manager Beau Belikoff explained the allowance for bad debt is a financial tool used to manage unpaid bills. At the start of the year, an estimate is made based on past experiences to predict the amount of uncollected payments. Funds are set aside in an "Allowance for Bad Debts" account to serve as a financial cushion for these anticipated losses. As the year progresses, the allowance is adjusted to reflect actual unpaid amounts.

- Tanya Haakinson HR Manager
 - Retirees – Ken Johnson Former Water Distribution Operations Supervisor, currently Special Projects Manager - 18 years of service. Tim Lewis Utility Person III/Meters - 30 years of Service.
- Julie Smitherman Water Resources & Customer Service Manager
 - Watershed update – We are at 100% of normal precipitation with above average mountain snowpack for this time of year. Springflows are still higher than in previous years. Willow lake is 45% full, average for this time of year. Rogue River stream flow is at 1,550 cfs, which is 76% of normal. Due to the recent rainfall, river flows over the past 10 days have ranged between 1,550 to 3,390 cfs. Lost Creek is 43% full. Climate predictions are showing above average temperatures and below average precipitation.
- Brad Taylor, General Manager
 - MWOC – An update was provided on the Medford Water Operation Center project. The bid was advertised on November 7, and the prequalification process for general contractors has been completed. Seven contractors were approved based on their experience and qualifications. The approved contractors are: Adroit (Ashland), Battle Creek (Eagle Point), Bremik (Portland), JB Steel (Medford), Ordell (Eugene), Outlier (Medford), and S&B James (Medford). Four of the contractors are actively engaged, and staff is hopeful to receive at least four bids. The bid opening is scheduled for December 19, barring any changes.
 - Upcoming Board Schedule – December 18 - Annual Audit; January 3 – No Meeting

9. Propositions and Remarks from the Commissioners

None.

10. Adjourn

There being no further business, this meeting was adjourned at 1:22 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