



**BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, January 15, 2025**

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 12:23 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 Manager Beau Belikoff, HR Manager Tanya Haakinson, Engineering Manager Brian Runyen, Information Technology Manager Kris Stitt, Water Operations Manager Dan Perkins, Water Resources & Customer Service Manager Julie Smitherman, Watershed Coordinator Arlo Todd, Watershed Specialist Katie Baker, Water Efficiency Technician Richard Chowning

Guest(s): Attorney Mark Bartholomew, Rob Annear\*, John Smith\* (\*Via Zoom)

**3. Comments from the Audiences**

None.

**4. Written Communications**

**4.1 Letter from City of Medford requesting a Special Report in Accordance with Medford Charter Section 19.6**

Commissioners, staff, and City Council Liaison Nick Card discussed the upcoming Special Report emphasizing the need for effectiveness, clear communication and focusing on specifics in the report to better understand the challenges being addressed. City Council Liaison Nick Card commented on the evolving relationship between Medford Water (MW) and the city, noting it has shifted from a partnership to more of a third-party service provider. Commissioner Strosser reflected on the evolving relationship between the city and MW, noting the importance of streamlining communication and closing the loop to improve effectiveness. He added that while trust exists between parties, it is critical to ensure everyone is on the same page to avoid taxing resources and concluded by stating that the charter provides a simpler charge for the Board compared to the city, and the upcoming report is progressing well.

**5. Approval or Correction of the Minutes of the Last Regular Meeting of December 18, 2024**

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

**Moved by: Mr. Dailey**

**Seconded by: Mr. Wright**

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

**Motion carried and so ordered.**

**6. Resolution No. 1969, A RESOLUTION Awarding and Authorizing the General Manager to Execute a Contract in the Amount of \$27,701,743 with S+B James Construction for the Construction of the Medford Water Operation Center Project**

Medford Water prepared and publicly bid the Medford Water Operation Center Project, which includes a 36,000-square-foot Administration and Operations building, a 6,000-square-foot Decant building, a 12,000-square-foot Storage building, a 14,000-square-foot Vehicle Building and Maintenance Shop, a Fuel Island with associated tanks and a 1,300-square-foot canopy, and a 60-foot-tall communications tower. All buildings are designed to meet Risk Category IV structural requirements. Bids for the project were opened on December 19, 2024, with S+B James Construction submitting the lowest responsive bid of \$27,701,743, followed by Outlier Construction at \$28,866,000. The engineer's cost estimate for the project ranged from \$35 to \$40 million. After reviewing the bids, Medford Water staff issued a Notice of Intent to Award the contract to S+B James Construction on December 23, 2024. No protests were received by the December 31, 2024, deadline. Commissioner Anderson asked if there is currently a communications tower at Duff WTP. Not at this time but all locations will have a tower. Commissioner Dailey inquired why other bidders did not participate. Taylor acknowledged

uncertainty, noting that market conditions and contractor availability may have been factors. He added that contractors are eager for work, which has led to significant cost savings. Commissioner Wright inquired about the owner-provided items, which include furniture and moving costs.

**Motion: Approve Resolution 1969**

**Moved by: Mr. Smith**

**Seconded by: Mr. Dailey**

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

**Motion carried and so ordered.**

**7. Leadership Team Reports**


- Water Resources and Customer Service Manager Julie Smitherman
  - Forest Management Update – The 2024 Fourbit Commercial Thinning and Harvest is part of the 2020 Forest Management Plan to improve forest health across 3,500 acres in the Big Butte Springs Watershed. Stands 103 and 104, covering 100 acres, underwent non-commercial thinning, commercial thinning, and fuels reduction in 2024. Contracts were awarded to Don Hamman for logging services, with log sales going to Swanson Group and Boise Cascade. The harvest yielded 598 MBF of commercial logs, slightly below the estimated 673 MBF, due to defects in pine trees, which also produced 2,064.5 tons (216 MBF) of chip logs sold to Roseburg Forest Products. The total yield, including chip logs, was 814 MBF. Post-treatment monitoring is ongoing, and the Forest Management Plan will be reviewed as preparations for future harvests continue. Smitherman also noted the completion of Grayback burn piles from prior harvests in 2023.
- IT Manager Kris Stitt
  - An update was provided on the use of iPads by board members. Current iPads issued to board members in 2019 are nearing the end of their lifespan and may require replacement. These devices provide access to Medford Water email, remote meeting tools, board materials, and the Microsoft Office suite, keeping work documents separate from personal devices. Commissioners expressed support for continuing to use iPads, with appreciation for the IT team's efforts to enhance accessibility. Stitt highlighted the development of a Document Library, offering quick access to key documents like agendas, master plans, and policies, as well as facilitating the sharing of large files. Commissioner Dailey and others expressed enthusiasm for the library's functionality, and staff will continue refining the system based on feedback.
- HR Manager Tanya Haakinson
  - This is Commissioner Smith's last meeting; his term expires January 31, 2025. Staff thanked Commissioner Smith for his dedicated service, highlighting his support for key initiatives, leadership, and lasting impact on the organization. Chair Strosser and General Manager Taylor concluded by recognizing Smith's lasting impact and service to the community.
- General Manager Brad Taylor
  - Upcoming Board Schedule – February 5 – Water Efficiency; February 19 – TBD.

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

Commissioner Dailey proposed a study session on capital investments and resiliency, emphasizing the need for proactive planning to safeguard resources and infrastructure. Commissioner Smith expressed gratitude and thanked the Board for emphasizing the importance of training new commissioners, fostering collaboration, and ensuring leadership continuity in managing the region's water resources.

**9. Adjourn**

There being no further business, this meeting adjourned at 1:21 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