



# BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

**Wednesday, September 21, 2022**

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, Daniel Bunn, John Dailey, and Michael Smith.

General Manager Brad Taylor, Executive Administrative Coordinator Yvette Finstad, Interim Finance Manager Anna Roeder, HR Manager Tanya Haakinson, Water Meter & Controls Manager Ken Johnson, Water Maintenance Manager Lester McFall, Engineering Manager Brian Runyen, Information Technology Manager Kris Stitt, Water Quality & Treatment Manager Ben Klayman, Customer Service & Water Efficiency Manager Julie Smitherman, Senior Engineer Rachel Lanigan

Guest(s): Attorney Mark Bartholomew, City of Central Point Councilor Tanøea West Browning\* (\*Via Zoom)

### **3. Comments from the Audience**

None.

### **4. Consent Calendar**

- 4.1 Approval or Correction of the Minutes of the Last Regular Meeting of September 7, 2022
- 4.2 Quarterly Letter to Mayor and Council

**Motion: Approve the Consent Calendar.**

**Moved by: Mr. Dailey**

**Seconded by: Mr. Bunn**

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

**Motion carried and so ordered.**

### **5. Resolution 1839, A RESOLUTION Awarding and Authorizing the General Manager to Execute a Contract Amendment in the Amount of \$475,887 for "Part D Pre-Design of Capital Hill Reservoir Replacement" to the Contract with RH2 Engineering, Inc. for the "Distribution System Resilient Backbone" Project**

This project is split into five parts; Part A, Planning, confirmed that the Capital Hill Reservoir replacement (Part D is pre-design of that project) can occur before constructing a new River Zone Reservoir (Parts B and C), formerly called the reduced pressure zone project, as land is not available yet. Pre-design will optimize phasing of reservoir replacement, evaluate alternatives of reservoirs, on-site piping, and dechlorination facilities, initiate public engagement and communication, coordinate radio tower relocation, and develop basis of design. A study session on the Distribution System Resilient Backbone Project will be scheduled for a future meeting.

Commissioner Bunn remarked on the history of the tower at the site and the land use constraints involved; this and other issues will necessitate stakeholder meetings and in-depth communication and community involvement. Commissioner Anderson requested a field trip to the site when we get to design.

**Motion: Approve Resolution 1839.**

**Moved by: Mr. Dailey**

**Seconded by: Mr. Bunn**

**Roll Call: Commissioners Anderson, Bunn, Dailey, Smith, and Strosser voting yes.  
Motion carried and so ordered.**

**6. Resolution 1840, 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 September 21, 2022**

Staff has updated the Personnel Manual; a copy of the completed document and a red-lined version was sent to the Board for review. This update will merge prior approved policies—such as the drug screen policy, retiree policy, and compensation model—from the last several years into one completed formal document. There will be a future update related to Paid Leave Oregon later this year.

Commissioners and staff discussed several minor changes (page 16, page 23, Section 3.4, and page 58), and Paid Leave Oregon with regards to the sick leave policy (page 39). We are drug-free; employees using prescription or non-prescription legal drugs while at work must inform HR if the use might impair their ability to perform their job safely. It was also noted that there is a new scale for accruing vacation.

**Motion: Approve Resolution 1840.**

**Moved by: Mr. Dailey**

**Seconded by: Mr. Bunn**

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

**Motion carried and so ordered.**

**7. Resolution 1841, A RESOLUTION Awarding and Authorizing the General Manager to Execute a Contract with Don Hamann, Inc. for Rancheria Logging Services for the Rancheria Timber Sale, Not to Exceed \$350,000**

The Rancheria timber harvest will commercially thin 232 acres treated according to our Forest Management Plan. Staff put forth a competitive solicitation and received one bid from Don Hamann, Inc. based in Butte Falls. The next step will be to get bids from log buyers; the national index has come down about 15%, but we may not experience that decrease.

**Motion: Approve Resolution 1841.**

**Moved by: Mr. Dailey**

**Seconded by: Mr. Bunn**

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

**Motion carried and so ordered.**

**8. Leadership Team Reports**

- Julie Smitherman, Customer Service & Water Efficiency Manager
  - Bend Mailing Services Rate Change – Contract renewal is approaching; this was a one-year contract with the option to renew twice. This is the second year of the contract, and will be the first “Cost of Goods” increase in 12.5 years (effective October 25, 2022). The current rate is \$0.095 per piece (for the statement, two envelopes, and remit coupon); the new rate will be \$0.107 per piece. Bend Mailing handles mailing services such as monthly customer billing, urgent and shut off notices for active accounts, the newsletter, backflow letters, friendly reminders and collections for closed accounts, and special projects as needed.

Commissioner Smith encouraged staff to not transfer the costs to other teams, such as spending more time in another way, and Commissioner Dailey suggested identifying customers that are paying electronically but still getting a bill so that we can encourage them to sign up for paperless billing, or offering advertising to offset the increase.

- Big Butte Springs Bus Tour – Held September 14; 54 people attended, made up of 29 members of the public, staff from 14 public agencies, and 11 from Medford Water. Staff from across the organization helped lead and plan the tour. Next year, we will likely be back to two tours a year, beginning in the spring.

Commissioner Smith attended the tour, he noted that many people were impressed with the ownership and pride that our staff have in their jobs and the system.

- Brad Taylor, General Manager
  - Upcoming Board Schedule – October 5 - Customer Web Site Overview, October 19 - Capital Plan Update-Duff WTP, November 2 - Cost of Service (Rate Setting)-Part A and CM/GC-Early Work Amendment-Duff 65 mgd Expansion, November 16 - Cost of Service (Rate Setting)-Part B.


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

Commissioner Strosser stated that there may be a quorum issue the last meeting of November, as he may be gone. Commissioner Bunn announced that he is selling his home and moving outside of unincorporated Jackson County, which may require him to vacate his position. He has had 12 years of service to the Commission and the City, and the Board acknowledged that he would be missed.

Commissioner Dailey requested an updated comparison of our rates with other cities around the state, as the Cost-of-Service Study is coming up. League of Oregon Cities may have guidance and assistance to share; this will be brought to the Board in November.

**10. Adjourn**

There being no further business, this meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m. The proceedings were recorded and are on file along with the complete agenda of this meeting.

  
Yvette Finstad  
Assistant Clerk of the Commission