



# BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

**Wednesday, October 18, 2023**

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 12:16 p.m. on the above date at the Medford Police Department Prescott Room, with the following commissioners, staff, and guests present:

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

General Manager Brad Taylor, Executive Administrative Assistant Amber Furu, Finance Manager Anna Roeder\*, 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, Senior Accountant Jamie Look, SCADA Administrator John Crowley

Guest(s): Attorney Mark Bartholomew, City of Central Point City Manager Chris Clayton, City of Eagle Point Mayor Kathy Sell, City of Central Point Councilor Tanea Browning\*, Jacobs Engineering Group Josh Kennedy (\*Via Zoom)

### 3. Comments from the Audience

### 4. Approval or Correction of the Minutes of the Last Regular Meeting of October 4, 2023

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

**Moved by: Mr. Anderson**

**Seconded by: Mr. Dailey**

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

**Motion carried and so ordered.**

\*\*OUT OF SEQUENCE\*\*

### 6. Resolution No. 1911, A RESOLUTION Awarding and Authorizing the General Manager to Execute a Contract with Northstar Chemical Inc. in the Amount of \$1,520,000.00 to Purchase Sodium Hydroxide (Caustic) for Medford Water's Robert A. Duff Water Treatment Plant and Big Butte Springs Treatment Facility

In September 2023, Medford Water issued a public solicitation for the supply of sodium hydroxide needed to operate the pH control treatment system at the Big Butte Springs Facility and Robert A. Duff Water Treatment Plant. The intent is to award a one-year contract with four annual options to renew to the lowest responsive bidder, Northstar Chemical Inc. The anticipated cost of sodium hydroxide in the 2024/2025 operating season is \$275,000 with an estimated 5% escalation per year.

Commissioner Anderson asked how long this supply would last and because there was only a nominal difference between the two bidders, did we look at distribution and supply chain issues, being we had problems in the past. Perkins stated it will cost \$275,000 to increase the pH at both facilities for one year; the specs for the product are the same between the two companies, and we have confidence in both as a supplier.

Commissioner Smith inquired if it is possible to have a secondary supplier as back-up to help with any future supply chain issues. Perkins agreed it is a good idea to have a secondary supplier, the problem we had in the past was the secondary supplier is not able to have trucks and drivers and the product ready to go on demand.

**Motion: Approve Resolution 1911**

**Moved by: Mr. Anderson**

**Seconded by: Mr. Dailey**

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

**Motion carried and so ordered.**

- Kris Stitt, IT Manager
  - Security Updates - IT Staff has recently completed a network redesign project. Prior to this project, most of our IT infrastructure was part of a large flat network tied in with the City of Medford (City). Both the City and Medford Water staff have been working to create separate secured networks between sites. We are in the process of consolidating our various third-party security software applications over to Microsoft 365. Microsoft 365 rolls most of our Microsoft licensing into a single product. A few reasons we are making these changes are to standardize security software between IT (business) and OT (SCADA) systems, simplified management and monitoring, trusted software, additional Microsoft Office access and consolidated software licensing.

Commissioner Smith questioned if we have timeout screens that are required and can anyone load software onto a computer. Screens do timeout after 10 minutes and an administrator is required to download all software.

- Julie Smitherman, Water Resources & Customer Service Manager
  - Spoofing Calls – The Customer Service team fielded 100 phone calls between October 12 to October 16 from customers who had received a spoofing call. Spoofing is when a caller deliberately falsifies the information transmitted to your caller ID to disguise their identity. Scammers often use a number from a local company or government agency that you might know or trust. Customers who answered the call were asked “survey” questions such as, “Do you live in Medford?” and “What are your pets' names?” When the scammer was questioned about who they were, they would hang up. Customers who did not answer saw they had a missed call from “Medford Water” on their caller ID and called us to find out what was wrong. We posted information to our website and social media, and we notified the City of Medford Utility Billing Department.
- Brad Taylor, General Manager
  - Carey Pond Updates – A site inspection of the Carey Pond was done back on November 1, 2022. At that time Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) instructed the Carey’s to remove the pond. Compliance was not fully achieved, and a follow-up visit was scheduled by OWRD. Medford Water had reached out to OWRD to remind them of that visit. OWRD confirmed compliance had not been fully achieved as of the follow-up visit that occurred a few weeks ago. OWRD is asking for a plan from the property owner to get them into compliance (due this week); civil penalties could be assessed if they do not comply.
  - Upcoming Board Schedule - November 1 and 15, COSA. December 6, JC/MW Bulk Water Sales Update and Intermediate Water User Update. December 20, Annual Audit.

**8. Propositions and Remarks from the Commissioners**  
None.

**9. Adjourn**  
There being no further business, this meeting adjourned at 1:26 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