

WEST SLOPE WATER DISTRICT
Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting
November 15, 2023
Meeting Summary

CALL TO ORDER

Present: Chair Susan Meamber; Commissioners Chris Eppler, Ramesh Krishnamurthy, and Andy Smith

Management Staff: Michael Grimm, General Manager; Wendy Irwin, Finance Manager

Absent: Commissioner Paul Schuler

Public: Nancy Pe Benito, District customer

1.0 – CALL TO ORDER

Chair Meamber called to order the meeting of the West Slope Water District Board of Commissioners at 5:02 P.M., Wednesday, November 15, 2023. The meeting was held as a hybrid meeting – in person and virtually. The public was made aware of the meeting through the District’s website (the meeting agenda and Zoom meeting link were posted on the website). District customer Nancy Pe Benito was welcomed to the meeting by the Board and staff as she attended via the Zoom meeting link.

2.0 - PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

The District had not received any public comments regarding agenda items or other issues for the Board to consider.

3.0 – CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Krishnamurthy made a motion to accept the entire Consent Agenda Items 3.1 through 3.7. Commissioner Eppler seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously (4-0).

4.0 – DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

4.1 – General Manager’s Report: Mr. Grimm highlighted three key issues from the General Manager’s report:

Long term source of supply – Mr. Grimm stated the City of Portland City Council will hear the approval of the Wholesale Water Sales Agreement on Wednesday, December 6. The Water Bureau has asked the General Manager to attend the Council Meeting and perhaps be available to testify in support of the Agreement. Chair Meamber asked if the District’s attorney who reviewed the Agreement had any substantial legal opinions about the Agreement. Mr. Grimm stated the attorneys from Jordan Ramis verified the Agreement has no pitfalls that would be

harmful to the District and reminded the District that the terms of the Agreement is for 30 years.

Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy water main project – Mr. Grimm informed the Board that work is continuing along schedule with all pipe work, tie ins, and abandonments to be completed by the end of December. The biggest remaining task is the abandonment of the old 8-inch main from SW 91st eastward back to SW Scholls Ferry Road. The abandonment will be accomplished on Wednesday, December 27. The District will be adding more pipe on SW Dogwood because the existing line that the District needs to tie into located in public right-of-way is actually in an area that has been “claimed” by Parr Lumber. Rather than wait for ODOT and Washington County to enforce and police their right-of-way, the District will install new pipe in the roadway to the west of the existing line and join up with the existing water main further north than anticipated.

RFPs for Future Projects – In December, the District will be receiving proposals for both the SW Garden View Drive water main project (December 14) and the Water System Master Plan / Water Rate Study (December 19). Mr. Grimm reported that one consulting firm out of the ten has informed the District that they will not be submitting a proposal for the Water System Master Plan. Chair Member asked if it were important for both design projects to be awarded to the same consulting firm. Mr. Grimm responded both RFPs reflect different and “stand alone” projects, so there is no advantage to the District to award both RFPs to the same consultant.

Chair Member asked about the Effective Utility Management (EUM) stakeholder’s meeting and what is EUM. Mr. Grimm explained that EUM is a framework to help utilities make informed decisions and practical, systematic changes to achieve excellence throughout the utility. The District Board adopted the EUM approach in 2020, and Commissioners Schuler and Smith were on the Board at the time District staff surveyed Board members and staff on the rating of the Ten Attributes of Effectively Managed Utilities.

4.2 – Finance Manager’s Report: Ms. Irwin discussed the water leak adjustment request from the Canyon Creek Homeowners Association (SW Sheridan Street) represented by Jean Reinhardt. The appeal to the District Board of Commissioners is related to a request for a second leak adjustment inside the rolling 24-month period from the previous leak adjustment awarded. Based on the documentation on both leak adjustment requests (\$452.03 in September 2022 and \$1,033.80 in August 2023), staff recommended the Board follow the past practice of exceptions to the Board’s policy and grant an award of \$581.77 (the difference between the August 2023 and September 2022 requests). Commissioner Krishnamurthy asked if requests like this one are common. Mr. Grimm stated it is not common and probably only occurs once or twice a year at the most. Commissioner Eppler made a motion to approve the exception to the Board’s leak adjustment policy following the procedure presented by staff. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Eppler stated it would be beneficial for the homeowners association to diligently check the integrity of the irrigation system to be proactive to look for potential weak spots in their irrigation system.

Ms. Irwin stated the District is updating the online payment system that will bring added value to the District and its customers. The emphasis behind the change is a software change by Springbrook who purchased the bill pay portal company Xpress Bill Pay. The change affects customers who use auto-pay features through their ACH, debit, or credit card. Ms. Irwin informed the Board the change will take place in time for January billing payments, and the District will have multiple communications with customers over the next two-three months.

Ms. Irwin informed the Board the District's financial audit has been completed with high praise from the Grove Mueller auditing staff. The Board thanked Ms. Irwin for a comprehensive, accurate, and clean audit.

4.3 – Budget Committee – Member Selection Process – Mr. Grimm stated the District's request for budget committee members did not generate any willing volunteers. There are two potential vacancies on the Budget Committee – one that is currently occupied by Andrew Marsch and the other that was vacated by Commissioner Eppler when he successfully ran for election the Board of Commissioners. There is one year left on Commissioner Eppler's former Budget Committee position. The other position is for a full three-year term. Mr. Grimm stated he contacted members on the list of potential volunteers from 2021 who were not selected to the Budget Committee in 2021 with some favorable response. Commissioner Eppler stated he supported appointing a candidate from the 2021 list. Commissioner Krishnamurthy asked if the West Sylan / West Slope NAC has been contacted about the Budget Committee vacancies. Mr. Grimm stated he would contact the NAC chair.

4.4 – General Manager's Performance Evaluation Process – Mr. Grimm asked the Board if they desired to have Judy Clarke from Team HR, LLC facilitate the General Manager's performance evaluation process in a similar fashion to what Ms. Clarke has done the last two years or do something else. The Board stated they have been very pleased with Ms. Clarke's work and agreed to have another contract with Team HR, LLC. Commissioners Eppler and Smith stated they supported using Team HR, LLC, and Commissioner Smith further added the professional service from Team HR, LLC has been an improvement over the ad hoc process performed by the Board in previous years. Commissioner Krishnamurthy agreed and supports using Team HR, LLC. Mr. Grimm stated he will work with Team HR, LLC to put a new contract in place and scope of work for the Board to follow.

5.0 – COMMISSIONERS COMMUNICATIONS

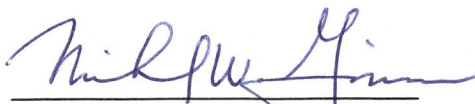
No commissioners attended any outside meetings. There were no additional agenda items brought by the Board to the meeting. There were no other agenda items presented for future meetings. The consensus of the Board was the meeting went well tonight.

6.0 – ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Krishnamurthy moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Eppler seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously (4-0). Chair Member adjourned the November 15, 2023 Board of Commissioners regular meeting at 5:56 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved:



Michael W. Grimm, P.E.
Acting Secretary

