

WEST SLOPE WATER DISTRICT

Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting & Budget Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 19, 2026

Meeting Summary

CALL TO ORDER

Present: Chair Chris Eppler, Commissioners, Susan Meamber, and Paul Schuler

Management Staff: Ken Ackerman, General Manager; Wendy Irwin, Finance Manager

Absent: Commissioners Andy Smith and Ramesh Krishnamurthy

Guest: None

1.0 – CALL TO ORDER

Chair Eppler called the meeting of the West Slope Water District Board of Commissioners to order at **4:58 PM** on Wednesday, August 19, 2026. The meeting was held both in person and via Zoom virtual meeting technology. The public was notified of the meeting through the District's website, where the meeting agenda and Zoom link were posted.

2.0 - PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

The District did not receive any public comments regarding agenda items or other matters for Board consideration.

3.0 – CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Schuler moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Meamber seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously **(3-0)**.

4.0 – DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

4.1 – General Manager's Report:

Mr. Ackerman highlighted several key items from the General Manager's Report.

Reservoir #4

The Reservoir #4 Project continues to advance through the design phase. Grayling Engineering received the geotechnical report and has developed a preliminary structural design. Based on the geotechnical findings and current code requirements, the proposed reservoir walls will be slightly thicker than originally anticipated. Grayling expects to have the preliminary design ready for District review within the next couple of weeks, prior to submitting the project to the City of Portland for Early Assistance.

SW Sharon Lane / SW Canyon Drive Water Main Replacement Projects

A preliminary contract with Wallis Engineering was included in the Board packet for review. Staff requested that the Board delegate authority to the General Manager to execute the final contract in the amount of \$154,305. The contract amount, including contingency, is slightly above the design budget of \$151,000. The contract has been reviewed by the District's attorney and insurance broker and is ready to be sent to Wallis Engineering for review.

Commissioner Meamber asked about Wallis Engineering's scope of work, specifically the reference under the project planning task stating that public outreach would be performed by the District Project Manager. Mr. Ackerman stated that he would serve in that role. Commissioner Meamber also asked who would be responsible for preparing meeting notes, as this was not clear in the contract. Mr. Ackerman stated that Wallis Engineering would prepare the meeting notes.

Chair Eppler asked whether the District typically consults with an arborist prior to construction or relies on staff and consultant experience to determine whether arborist services are necessary. Mr. Ackerman stated that arborist services had been discussed with Wallis Engineering and, based on the consultant's experience and the anticipated project impacts, they do not currently believe an arborist is necessary. The need for arborist services will be reevaluated after the survey is completed and the proposed location of the new water main is established.

System Mapping

Grayling Engineering continues to work on updates to the District's system maps. There were no significant updates to report.

Green Tank SCADA

The District has started design work with Portland Engineering to add SCADA to the Green Tank. The District's Operations staff has already completed some preparatory work, including installing conduit up the tank ladder. This will be the first time the Green Tank has been connected to the District's SCADA system, an improvement that has been discussed for more than a decade. Mr. Ackerman clarified that Portland Engineering is a private company specializing in SCADA design and is not affiliated with the City of Portland.

In-N-Out Burger Development

The new water main on SW Laurel Avenue is undergoing chlorination testing. The developer is also working through permitting requirements with the City of Beaverton and Washington County, which will require changes to the proposed location of the fire hydrant on SW Laurel Avenue. Permits had previously been obtained for work along the Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway frontage and for building demolition, but additional permits are still required for other portions of the project.

Jesuit High School

The relocated water main has been installed, tested, and placed into service. Jesuit High School has not yet received its building permits. The District performed a fire flow test for the project during the week. The District and Jesuit High School continue to discuss whether the relocated water facilities will remain under District ownership with appropriate easements or be transferred to Jesuit High School ownership.

Oregon Health Authority Sanitary Survey

Staff continues to update the District's Operations and Maintenance Plan in preparation for the upcoming Oregon Health Authority sanitary survey. Approximately six Standard Operating Procedures

(SOPs) have been drafted, and staff is also working on updates to the District's Emergency Response Plan.

TVWD Intertie

The District has had preliminary discussions with Tualatin Valley Water District (TVWD) regarding the intertie between the two systems. TVWD is currently focused on bringing its Willamette River water supply facilities online, and additional discussions regarding the intertie are expected after the first of the year.

Raleigh Water

District staff has a meeting scheduled for the following week to discuss billing matters with Raleigh Water District.

Water Supply

Portland Water Bureau does not anticipate needing to use groundwater to supplement its water supply this year, other than its normal maintenance run, which is scheduled to end Friday. This is favorable financially because Portland had budgeted for groundwater use and is expected to be under budget if supplemental groundwater is not required.

Water Usage Reporting

Mr. Ackerman explained that the Operations Report is based on calendar-month water usage, while the Finance Report is based on the District's billing cycle, which generally runs from approximately the middle of one month to the middle of the next. This difference can result in variations between the two reports.

For July, the Operations Report showed water usage below the five-year average, while July billing showed usage above the five-year average. Staff will continue monitoring usage trends and their potential impacts on the District's budget and rates. Overall water usage for the year is approximately **95% of the five-year average**, which is generally consistent with trends being experienced by other utilities in the region.

Six-Month General Manager Performance Review

Judy Clark was unable to attend the meeting as requested but provided proposed survey questions for review by Board members and staff. The proposed schedule was to distribute the survey questions on September 24, request responses by October 14, and provide a summary to the Board by October 19 for discussion at the October Board meeting.

Board members discussed making the questions less generic and more closely tied to the General Manager's 30-60-90 Day Plan and the District's Strategic Plan. The Board requested that the questions be revised and that Ms. Clark attend the September Board meeting to discuss and finalize the review process.

Motion to delegate authority to GM to sign final contract with Wallis Engineering.

Commissioner Meamber moved to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Wallis Engineering in the amount of **\$154,305**. Commissioner Schuler seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously **(3-0)**.

4.2 – Finance Manager's Report

Ms. Irwin reviewed the monthly financial report.

July was the first month of the new budget year. The District's cash position remains strong; however, water revenue was approximately \$50,000 below budget. The budget was based on the five-year average for water sales, which may be higher than current usage trends. Staff has begun evaluating the average revenue received per unit of water sold. The average was approximately \$8.23 per unit in July and \$8.63 in August, which is moving toward the District's target of approximately \$9.00 per unit.

Staff will continue monitoring revenues and expenditures. A more complete evaluation of the new tiered rate structure will be possible in October or November after a full summer of billing data is available.

The Board discussed costs associated with upcoming major capital projects and potential funding options. These issues will be part of the District's financial and budget discussions this fall.

Operating expenses were approximately \$38,000 below budget, with the largest portion of the difference related to personnel expenses. Lower personnel costs were primarily due to the timing of health insurance expenses, merit increases that had not yet taken effect, and an operator being on leave during a portion of the period.

The District had a net operating loss of approximately \$12,000 for July.

Seven leak adjustments were processed during the month, averaging approximately \$600 each. A larger leak adjustment of approximately \$5,000 is anticipated in August, which is the maximum adjustment allowed under District policy.

Ms. Irwin also discussed the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. At an upcoming conference, changes to the award program and budgeting criteria will be presented. Because the program is being revised, the District plans to wait until next year before pursuing the award.

Ms. Irwin is also working on the District's annual audit. Audit fieldwork is scheduled to begin the following Monday and will be conducted remotely, with District staff providing requested documentation. The District also plans to issue an RFP for next year's audit services.

Ms. Irwin discussed proposed changes to the District's collection policy resulting from a review of past-due accounts. The proposed policy changes the District's past practice of pursuing property owners for unpaid tenant bills and instead focuses collection efforts on the tenant responsible for the account. The District currently collects a \$100 deposit when a renter establishes service. Uncollectible tenant accounts represent approximately \$2,000 annually. The proposed policy also allows staff to write off accounts of less than \$500 without individual Board approval.

Commissioner Schuler moved to approve **Resolution 05-2026**. Commissioner Meamber seconded the motion, and the resolution was approved unanimously **(3-0)**.

Ms. Irwin also reported that the Employee Handbook has not previously been presented to the Board for approval. She has reviewed the handbook against SDAO guidelines, and it is currently being reviewed by HR Answers. The handbook will be brought to the Board for review and approval within the next few months.

5.0 – COMMISSIONERS COMMUNICATIONS

5.1 Report of meeting attended: No meetings attended.

5.2 Other topics to be raised by the Commissioners for Board discussion: None

5.3 Agenda items for future meetings: None

5.4 Meeting evaluation: Rated as a good meeting

6.0 – ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Meamber made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Schuler seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously (3-0).

Chair Eppler adjourned the August 19 2026, meeting of the Board of Commissioners at 5:54 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,


Ken Ackerman, P.E.
Acting Secretary

Approved: 

