

Monument Board of Trustees, June 5

Staff advises against rushing into water solutions

By Lisa Hatfield

On June 5, the Monument Board of Trustees discussed the proposed town emergency water interconnection and the proposed town potable water reuse plant. The board appointed two regular and two alternate Planning Commission members.

Emergency water interconnection, reuse, and the bigger risk picture

Public Works Director Tom Tharnish and engineers Will Koger and Jonathan Moore of Forsgren Associates addressed the "Town of Monument Water System – Risk Analysis" technical memo and answered trustees' questions regarding risks to the town's water system, and Town Manager Chris Lowe discussed his "Review and Analysis of Emergency Interconnection" memo.

The memos emphasized that while the authors understand that people want to guarantee that the town's water system west of I-25 does not suffer a catastrophic leak like the one experienced by Triview Metropolitan District's separate water system east of I-25 last summer, the town staff believes that the chance of a major supply loss is extremely low. That is because the town's infrastructure technology (including sensors), management, maintenance, redundancy in the system, and staff training, are superior to Triview's, according to the memos.

Because of that, instead of hurrying to get an emergency-only water connection with another district done in a year or two, staff recommended some other options:

1. Emergency raw water interconnection in conjunction with the proposed indirect water reuse plant interconnection: The town could create such an emergency interconnection with Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) to take WWSD's raw water from Monument Creek in case of emergency, if WWSD had water available to share. Three to five years to complete. Estimated cost very minimal since no additional infrastructure would be needed beyond the unspecified construction cost of the proposed potable water reuse plant.
2. Emergency potable water interconnection with WWSD: The town could build a pipeline that could take treated drinking water from Woodmoor under I-25 to the town. Estimated cost is \$737,000 to \$1 million, and the timeframe is 1 to

1-1/2 years.

3. Donala Water and Sanitation District emergency treated water interconnection: This would include building a longer pipeline, but Donala already has access to renewable (but expensive) "gold-plated" (this is the town staff's adjective) water. Estimated cost is \$3.3 million with a timetable of 1 to 1-1/2 years after an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) is signed.
4. Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) treated water interconnection: This would include building an even longer pipeline all the way to Gleneagle, but the advantage is that CSU has access to renewable "gold-plated" water. It would be harder to get

an intergovernmental agreement with CSU. Estimated cost is \$5.1 million with a timetable of 2 to 2-1/2 years after an IGA is signed.

The staff's overall recommendation to the board was that it would be better to spend money on a second water storage tank and then create an emergency water interconnection as part of the proposed potable water reuse plant project instead of wasting money on rushing to a solution in the next year to build an interconnection that could only be used for emergency water. See www.ocn.me/v17n1.htm#mbot and www.ocn.me/v17n5.htm#mbot0417.

The June 5 board packet included a memo from WWSD District Manager Jessie Shaffer dated Feb. 7, 2017 to Tharnish,

Koger, and WWSD Assistant District Manager Randy Gillette that summarized some of the assumptions and discussions Tharnish and Shaffer had up to that point about options for both potable and raw water interconnections. It also reiterated that WWSD could not guarantee water to the town even in a declared state of water emergency. Lowe said Shaffer had a fairly comprehensive discussion with the WWSD board, and it supports partnering with the town.

Trustee Jeff Bornstein said regional solutions were a good idea, but he wondered if WWSD would be absorbing a larger percentage of the cost of construction and operations of a reuse plant since the town has 1,800 water customers and WWSD has over 10,000. Lowe said the details were yet

to be worked out on operating costs but that they would come to an agreement where each side paid its proportion, and that there would also be fixed costs. Lowe did not discuss construction cost-sharing ratios. Overall, "It would be cheaper than doing it on our own," Lowe said.

Koger said that a water reuse system would essentially double the use of the water that goes through the system.

Separate from the emergency interconnection question, Trustee Dennis Murphy asked again about the town's access to new connections with renewable water that the town could use for its water supplies as the aquifer water is being depleted. Trustee Greg Coopman emphasized the importance of a regional system too, asking, "Who are we con-

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