

Monument Sanitation District, Sept. 12 and 16

# Interim manager terminated; working to fill the gaps

By Lisa Hatfield

The Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board met twice in September, once at a special meeting to terminate its new interim district manager and then for its regular meeting to keep MSD operating with contracted leadership. Upcoming tasks include beginning 2021 budget planning, ramping up construction in the Willow Springs development, winding down MSD's contribution to Wagons West, and planning around the North Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) project.

The board members present for both on Sept. 12 and on Sept. 16 in person in the MSD conference room were President Dan Hamilton, Treasurer John Howe, Secretary Marylee Reisig, and Directors Laura Kronick and Katie Saucedo.

MSD Special District Attorney Joan Fritsche of Fritsche Law attended via Zoom on Sept. 12 and in person on Sept. 16. Jim Kendrick, MSD's Environmental/Regulatory Compliance advisor, attended via Zoom on Sept. 16.

## Interim manager terminated

**Background:** Minutes from the regular July 15 meeting show District Manager Mike Wicklund and the board conducting regular business. They also stated that the new assistant district manager position had been posted, and Accounts Administrator Erin Krueger had applied for it.

According to minutes from the July 22 emergency board meeting, Wicklund, MSD's manager for 26 years, was "let go" as of July 20. On July 22, the board appointed Krueger to a six-month term as MSD's interim district manager.

The board's plan as of July 22 was that in mid-November, an advertisement for the district manager would be posted for one month, and the board would hire a permanent manager to start on Feb. 1, 2021.

At the regular Aug. 19 meeting, Krueger and the board conducted business as usual, noting Wicklund's departure. See [www.ocn.me/v20n9.htm#msd](http://www.ocn.me/v20n9.htm#msd).

Minutes for the Sept. 12 special meeting were included in the board

packet for Sept. 16, so OCN can include this information.

On Sept. 12, the one-hour special meeting included an executive session to receive legal advice and discuss personnel matters concerning the employment of Krueger. When the board returned to open session, it unanimously approved Hamilton's motion to approve and ratify the "termination" of Krueger.

The board directed Fritsche to contact consulting engineer Dave Frisch of GMS Inc. asking him to "cover district utility 'locate' requests, regional sanitation meetings, and operations meetings with developers and other entities at least on a temporary basis."

They directed Fritsche to ask Frisch for recommendations for sanitation operators with the requisite certifications to comply with Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) requirements for an Operator in Responsible Charge (ORC).

The board appointed Howe and Reisig to ask MSD Accounts Administrator Cheran Allsup for contacts related to district business.

The board discussed updating district banking and financial accounts, business accounts and credit card authorizations to ensure at least two board members have access to and are authorized signers on all district financial accounts.

## Temporary leadership in planning phase

On Sept. 16, in the legal report, Fritsche said that in September she had focused on district management and operation since Wicklund's departure.

Hamilton said MSD had not made any specific decisions yet on changing the timeline for posting and hiring a district manager. "We are looking at what our options are now."

Hamilton said GMS has the capability to fill in on operations and management tasks, and they are already familiar with MSD's system. The board directed Fritsche to add GMS to MSD's insurance.

Hamilton said he, Kronick, attorney Fritsche, and engineer Frisch were going to interview a licensed operator candidate as the possible temporary ORC for MSD immediately after the Sept. 16 meeting. Note: As of Sept. 18,

Fritsche told OCN that the board had nothing further to report after Wednesday's meeting.

Other actions taken by the board on Sept. 16 included:

- Approval of the minutes from the Sept. 12 special meeting.
- Termination vote for Krueger was approved and ratified a second time.
- Discussion and approval of the treasurer's report.
- Scheduling a public workshop on the 2021 budget for 8 a.m. on Oct. 21 before the regular board meeting. Haynie & Co., MSD's CPA, will attend via Zoom.

## Manager's report

Hamilton summarized the September engineering report provided to the MSD Board by Frisch of GMS. Points included:

- The Wagons West development is substantially complete, accepted, and under warranty.
- The Willow Springs development collection system construction drawings have been accepted.
- Frisch and Hamilton attended a preconstruction conference with the Willow Springs developer on Sept. 15 that went well.
- GIS mapping of the district has been completed by GMS for both MSD and GMS staff to use in providing utility "locate" services to developers.

NMCI project discussions are primarily focusing on return of surface water flows which significantly impact the northern water purveyor participants in these NMCI negotiations. These complications do not directly affect MSD because it does not own any water rights.

**Background:** In November 2018, MSD was the first of six potential boards in northwestern El Paso County to vote to pursue the NMCI project. If NMCI is built, it has the potential of saving money for customers by connecting smaller wastewater districts with Colorado Springs Utilities' (CSU) wastewater treatment system. See [www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#msd](http://www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#msd).

Fritsche said she would follow up with CSU on NMCI contract negotiations. Design services contract comments were due last week, and there is a new red-line draft version of this contract, she said.

## Executive session

The board voted unanimously to go into executive session under CRS 24-6-402(b), conference with an attorney for the district to receive legal advice on specific legal questions. Fritsche told OCN that no action or discussion happened after executive session.

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Monument Sanitation District meetings are normally held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month in the district conference room at 130 Second St., Monument. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Oct. 21 at 9 a.m., preceded by a public budget workshop at 8 a.m. See <https://colorado.gov/msd>. For a district service map, see <https://colorado.gov/pacific/msd/district-map-0>. Information: 481-4886.

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