

Monument Sanitation District, Sept. 21

District receives \$684,000 American Recovery grant

By Jackie Burhans and James Howald

At its September meeting, the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board heard from District Manager Mark Parker that the district received a grant from the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA). The board voted on the inclusion into its service area of a property on Front Street and opted out of Colorado's recently passed Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program (FAMLI). The board also heard a report on a pipeline repair project from GMS Engineering LLC.

ARPA grant funds sewer line repair

Parker told the board that the district has been awarded an ARPA grant for \$684,025 to repair the wastewater collection line running between the Synthes Commercial area and the Willow Springs Ranch development. The line has high and low spots, known as heaves and bellies, that keep the line from

draining properly. The district will replace 1,300 feet of 8-inch pipe using the grant funds, and the rebuilt line will be enlarged to 10-inch pipe to handle increased flows from customers in Wagons West, Trails End, and others adjacent to Old Denver Highway.

Parker said ARPA grants are awarded only for "shovel ready" projects. The award is reimbursement-based and should be completed by 2023.

Petition to include Front Street development approved

The board held a public hearing on the inclusion of the property at 231 Front Street in the district's service area. There were no public comments at the hearing, but Parker explained that developers planned to build a combination of commercial and residential units at the property. A portion of the property lies outside of MSD's service area. The developer has petitioned for

that portion to be included in MSD's service area.

After the hearing was closed, the board voted unanimously in favor of the petition for inclusion.

Board says no to FAMLI
Attorney Allison Ulmer, of Collins Cole Flynn Winn and Ulmer, the district's legal advisors, told the board that the FAMLI act, passed in 2020, created a state-run family and medical leave program that provides up to 12 weeks of paid job-protected leave. The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment created a division to oversee the program. The program operates as an insurance program, with premiums that are equally divided between the employee and the employer. All private businesses must participate, Ulmer said, but governmental agencies, such as MSD, may opt out. If an agency opts out, employees may join the program on their own.

Ulmer emphasized that the details of the program are still in flux. If MSD opts out now, it can decide to join later. If MSD joins now, it must remain in the program for a minimum of three years, she said.

The consensus of the board was that opting out was the most flexible position the board could take, and it asked Ulmer to draft a resolution to that effect to be voted on at the October meeting.

Raspberry Lane pipeline due for repair

Dave Frisch, of GMS Engineering LLC, told the board that he recommended using Cured In Place Pipe (CIPP) lining technology to repair 525 feet of the clay sewer line on Raspberry Lane. The line has root intrusions and is beginning to collapse. CIPP uses a liner that is unrolled inside the existing pipe and then cured in place using steam. The liner lasts 40 to 50 years, he said, and is half the

cost of excavating and replacing the existing pipe.

Parker said the road had recently been repaved, and this method would not require that to be redone. The work is out to bid now, should be done by the end of the year and would be paid for using capital contingency funds already in the budget, he said.

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. 19. See <https://colorado.gov/msd>. For a district service map, see <https://colorado.gov/pacific/msd/district-map-0>. Information: 719-481-4886.

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Donala Water and Sanitation District, Sept. 22

Good news on the radium front

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

At the September meeting of the Donala Water and Sanitation

District (DWSD), General Manager Jeff Hodge reported positive results on the district's efforts to reduce the radium in water de-

livered to customers. The board discussed the district's position on the recently passed Colorado Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program (FAMLI) and expanded the scope of the water tank maintenance project. In his Manager's Report, Hodge provided operational details

The regular meeting adjourned to an executive session to discuss the formation of a Loop Water Authority, the Upper Monument Water Reclamation Authority, and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment regulations.

Radium reduced at Holbein Treatment Plant

Hodge told the board that DWSD would receive \$1.6 million in American Recovery Project Act (ARPA) funds to spend on its efforts to reduce radium.

Hodge said he had just received lab results that indicated the recently completed upgrades to the Holbein Treatment Plant, which included replacing the filter media, had reduced the radium level in its treated water to an "undetectable" level. State standards require water districts to notify their customers if treated water exceeds 5 picocuries per liter. The water treated at the Holbein plant is far beneath that level even if the sensitivity of the lab test has a standard deviation of 2 picocuries per liter, Hodge said.

Director Bill George pointed out that DWSD can't officially communicate the improved results of the radium test until one more test shows improved results. Board President Wayne Vanderschuere agreed that a second test would be needed to verify the results, but that the results were "good news all around."

Board delays decision on FAMLI

DWSD's legal counsel, Linda Glesne, gave the board an overview of the FAMLI act, and laid out three strategies for the board to consider.

FAMLI creates a state-run family and medical leave program that provides up to 12 weeks of paid, job-protected leave for employees who experience a qualifying event, with a contribution of 0.45% of the employee's salary and a matching amount from the employer. Private sector businesses must participate, Glesne said, but governmental bodies like DWSD can opt out. If DWSD opts out, its employees can still join the program on their own, she said.

DWSD can opt into the program, Glesne said, in which case the district would have to remain in the program for three years. Or the district can opt out, in which case the district would need renew the option not to participate every eight years, and employees could submit their own paperwork to join the program and would be responsible for making their monthly contribution. Finally, Glesne said there was a "hybrid" option, where the district would opt out but would take on the administrative tasks on behalf of any employees who chose to opt in.

Hodge said COVID leave had been absorbed by the district, that after electricity employees are the district's largest expense but that retaining employees was key. He estimated it would cost the district \$60,000 per year to join the program.

Glesne said she thought the program was aimed at employers who provided no benefits to their employees, which is not the case with DWSD.

Vanderschuere said he was wavering between opting out or using the hybrid approach. Director Ken Judd said DWSD's benefits are already generous, and he was inclined to opt out until some of the program details were better defined. Vanderschuere asked Hodge to get input from the district's employees and clarify the administrative costs. He proposed

voting on a resolution to decide the issue at the Nov. 17 meeting.

Two more water tanks added to rehab contract

At the August meeting, the board voted to award a contract to Swedish Industrial Coatings LLC to rehabilitate the Latrobe storage tank. Hodge told the board that the two tanks near the Holbein Treatment Plant had been inspected since that contract was awarded and both tanks needed work as well, and were, in fact, in worse shape than the Latrobe tank. He asked the board to add the two tanks to the contract, which would bring the total for the project to \$772,940. The board authorized Hodge to add the tanks to the contract.

Manager's report

Hodge told the board that the Loop water re-use project, in which DWSD is participating, has been awarded \$4 million in ARPA funds by El Paso County. He said Well 16A has been drilled, and tests have shown it will produce 500 gallons per minute if needed in an emergency. However, the pump and the variable-frequency drive for the well will take seven to eight months to arrive. He told the board that the staff was still considering whether to transition to the Tri-Lakes Waste Water Treatment Facility owned by Monument Sanitation District, Palmer Lake Sanitation District, and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District or to continue to use the treatment facility DWSD currently shares with Triview Metropolitan District and Forest Lake Metropolitan District. All options were open, he said.

Executive session

The regular meeting adjourned to an executive session to consider a contract to form a Loop Water Authority, the district's contract with the Upper Monument Water Reclamation Facility, and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment regulations.

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