

*Monument Sanitation District, Nov. 15***Board approves budget, leaves rates unchanged**

By Jackie Burhans and James Howald
At its November meeting, the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board held a public hearing on its 2024 budget and voted on two related resolutions.

Budget approved; funds appropriated

District Manager Mark Parker opened a public hearing in consideration of the 2024 budget and told the board that he had made only minor changes since the last board meeting. The amount budgeted for contingencies had been increased, he said. He made a conservative estimate of the revenue the district would receive from sewer tap fees, pointing out that phase two of the Willow Springs development would require 32 new taps. Parker explained the tap fees could only be used to fund infrastructure maintenance and improvement. User fees fund ad-

ministrative and operational costs, he said. The 2024 budget anticipates \$945,000 in user fees, an increase of \$80,000 over the amount budgeted in 2023.

Parker said he anticipated two more years of substantial revenue from tap fees, as the Monument Ridge North development along Beacon Lite Road and the RAO Investment's development on Rickenbacker Avenue proceed.

Parker closed the hearing on the 2024 budget and the board voted unanimously in favor of Resolution 11152023-2, which adopts the budget and appropriates \$2.27 million from the General Fund to operate the district.

Rates remain unchanged

The board voted unanimously in favor of Resolution 11152023-1, which adopts wastewater service and tap fees for 2024. The monthly resi-

dential use fee remains unchanged at \$40 per month. Parker said rates and fees have not been increased since 2020.

The complete schedule of fees can be found on the MSD web page here: <https://monumentsd.colorado.gov/schedule-of-fees>.

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 Dec. 20. 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, Nov. 16***District ends 2023 under budget**

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans
At its November meeting, the Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) board heard a financial report from General Manager Jeff Hodge and operational reports from Water Operator Ronny Wright and Waste Plant Operator Aaron Tolman. 2023 finances in the black

Hodge told the board that at the end of October, the district was about \$400,000 under budget. Lower than usual water sales due to the rainy weather were offset by the fact that DWSD spent less than expected—about \$300,000—on having Colorado Springs Utilities convey, treat, and deliver water from the district's Willow Creek Ranch to DWSD customers. Hodge said the district would not need to spend more this year on "The Loop" water re-use project, in which it participates with the Cherokee Metro District, the Town of Monument, and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District. The Loop may refund \$100,000 to DWSD, Hodge said. Higher interest rates benefited the district in 2023, Hodge said.

Hodge said the proposed budget for 2024

would be voted on at the Dec. 7 board meeting and a public hearing on rates would also be held. The December meeting will be held a week earlier than usual so that the budget can be submitted to the state by Dec. 15.

Highlights of operational reports

In his report on water delivery, Wright told the board about electrical problems at the R. Hull treatment plant. Motor starters failed, he said, requiring the replacement of a circuit board. The age of the circuit board made it difficult to find a replacement. Hodge asked whether the district should upgrade it or instead convey the water to the Holbein plant for treatment. There were no comments from the board, and no action was taken.

Wright also updated the board on the district's test study of hydrous manganese oxide (HMO) technology to reduce radium in water delivered to customers. Three days of water samples treated with HMO have been sent to the state for evaluation, he said. Wright said the study is going well and he expected results from

the state in April.

On the wastewater side, Tolman told the board that cracks in the walls of one of the sequential batch reactors at the Upper Monument Creek Waste Water Treatment Plant had been repaired. Board President Wayne Vanderschuere commented on the high efficiency of the plant, and Hodge said the effluent from the plant was cleaner than Monument Creek, into which the effluent is discharged.

The next meeting is scheduled for Dec. 7 at 1:30 p.m. Generally, board meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 1:30 p.m. and include online access; call (719) 488-3603 or access www.donalawater.org to receive up-to-date meeting information. The district office is located at 15850 Holbein Drive, Colorado Springs.

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*El Paso County Regional Loop Water Authority, Nov. 16***Board expands contract with consultants**

By James Howald

At its November meeting, the El Paso County Regional Loop Water Authority (EPCRLWA) board added to the range of services to be provided by specialized consulting companies. It also discussed the proposed 2024 budget.

Consultants take on larger role

The board heard an update from John Kuosman, a water practice leader with Merrick and Co. serving as the authority's Project Planning and Workflow manager, regarding the role of consulting engineers. JVA Inc. was initially hired to test water quality and to design water treatment processes when it was assumed that the EPCRLWA would be responsible for all aspects of the project. In recent months, however, Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) has opened the door to partnering with EPCRLWA by providing water treatment at its Edward Bailey Water Treatment Plant (EBWTP), which would lower the cost of the loop water reuse project significantly by eliminating the need for EPCRLWA to build its own treatment facility. The EBWTP currently treats water for CSU's Southern Delivery System (SDS) and has about 35 million gallons per day of excess treatment capacity, Kuosman said.

Kuosman told the board that the next step for the loop was a conceptual treatment evaluation for water diverted from Fountain Creek through the Chilcott Ditch to the EBWTP. Most of the tasks required for that evaluation are already included in EPCRLWA's contract with Merrick. He proposed that the EPCRLWA's contract with JVA be expanded to cover some of the tasks required to develop this evaluation.

Kuosman outlined the six tasks required by

the evaluation:

- General project management.
- A request for technical data such as process flow diagrams, operating and maintenance manuals, and water quality treatment data from CSU.
- From JVA, an interim summary memo assessing Chilcott Ditch current raw water quality, development of water quality targets for Chilcott Ditch water, and an additional three months of water quality testing. Kuosman estimated this step would add \$58,500 to JVA's current contract costs.
- A decision on whether it is necessary to separate water from Fountain Creek from SDS water at the EBWTP. Kuosman recommended the EPCRLWA contract with Carollo Engineers to assist with this decision, at a cost not to exceed \$10,000.
- Development of conceptual treatment alternatives at the EBWTP. Alternatives that assume separation of Chilcott Ditch water from SDS water include: pre-treatment of Chilcott Ditch water by the EPCRLWA; pre-treatment done by the EBWTP and post-treatment done by the EPCRLWA; and both pre- and post-treatment done by EPCRLWA. A fourth option involves blending raw water.
- A final report and memorandum that will be used by CSU to determine pricing for the services it will provide.

Kuosman said he thought tasks three through six could be completed in three months.

Kuosman added he was also working on the easement issues required by the project and recommended hiring Kimley-Horn to help with

easements in the northern part of the project and Western States Land Services for easements to the south.

Following Kuosman's presentation, the board voted unanimously to amend its contract with JVA as requested and to authorize Kuosman to continue negotiations with Carollo Engineering.

Budget discussion

Board President Jessie Shaffer said he had made some minor adjustments to the proposed 2024 budget following the October board meeting. Reimbursements to participating agencies were reduced to \$100,000. Shaffer asked the board if the amount budgeted for professional fees should be increased. Kuosman recommended an increase from \$350,000 to \$500,000 and the board concurred. Shaffer estimated the project would have a fund balance of \$444,000 at the end of 2024.

A public hearing on the budget will be held at the next board meeting on Dec. 12.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tue., Dec. 12 at 9 a.m. Regular meetings are usually held on the third Thursday of each month at 9 a.m. at the Monument Town Hall at 645 Beacon Lite Road. Workshop meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 9 a.m. at the Cherokee Metropolitan District offices at 6250 Palmer Park Blvd., Colorado Springs. Please see loop-water.org or call 719-488-3603 to verify meeting times and locations.

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*Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO), Nov. 11***County Commissioners and staff visit NEPCO**

By Marlene Brown

The Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO) annual membership meeting was held Nov. 11 for general elections of board members. The purpose of NEPCO is to promote an economic, ecological, and sociological community environment in which a high quality of life can be sustained for member homeowners associations (HOAs)

There was a quorum present, and the board

was voted in by acclamation, an overwhelming affirmative vote by cheers and applause rather than by ballot. The board was affirmed for another year. The decision of who would hold each office will be decided at the next board meeting. Several board positions are available to members of member HOAs. Those who are interested can email board members at position@nepco.org.

The Treasurer's report was given by the President Mike Aspenson, who reported that mem-

bership included 51 active HOAs representing 10,000-plus homes and 20,000-plus registered voters. Reports were given by committee chairs: retiring Bob Mooney (West Oak Ridge HOA), Transportation, and Beth Lonnquist (Red Rock Ranch HOA), Land Use.

Guest speakers

Several people from El Paso County spoke to the membership, including Holly Williams, District 1 county commissioner; Kevin Mastin, Depart-