

**DONALA (Cont. from 18)**

Hodge mentioned that only one bid for the contract was received. He said other potential bidders lacked the staff to do the work.

**Highlights of operational reports**

- Hodge told the board he and one other staff member had received training that qualified them to enter the arsenic removal building.
- Chief Waste Plant Operator Mike Boyett told the board that the UMCRRWTF had a high

mercury result in its last round of testing.

**Executive session**

The meeting ended with an executive session to discuss contract negotiations with Colorado Springs Utilities concerning a long-term water contract and to receive legal advice on questions about the UMCRRWTF contract.

No action was taken following the executive session.

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The next meeting is scheduled for March 16 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](http://www.donalawater.org) to receive up-to-date meeting information. The district office is located at 15850 Holbein Drive, Colorado Springs.

*James Howald can be reached at [jameshowald@ocn.me](mailto:jameshowald@ocn.me). Jackie Burhans can be reached at [jackieburhans@ocn.me](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me).*

**El Paso County Regional Loop Water Authority, Feb. 16****Board adopts budget, awards testing contract**

*By James Howald*

At its second regular meeting, the El Paso County Regional Loop Water Authority (EPCRLWA) held a public meeting on its budget and awarded a contract for the water quality testing needed to establish a baseline for upcoming design work. The board discussed hiring a project planning and workflow manager and a request for proposal for a schematic engineering design report. The board also voted on five resolutions drafted by its attorney that address administrative matters.

**Budget approved and funds appropriated**

EPCRLWA President Jessie Shaffer opened the public hearing on the 2023 budget. On the revenue side, he said the four participating entities—Cherokee Metropolitan District (CMD), Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD), Town of Monument (TOM) and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD)—had each contributed \$250,000. Funding from The American Recovery Program Act (ARPA) added an additional \$800,000, for a total of \$1.8 million. Shaffer anticipated spending a total of \$388,000 on accounting, legal and audit costs, surveying services, water quality and other studies, and two staff positions: a project manager position, discussed below, and a land acquisition specialist. Shaffer estimated engineering work, easements, and land acquisition would total around \$1 million. He told the board he estimated total expenditures for 2023, including contingencies and miscellaneous items, would be about \$1.775 million, leaving a balance of about \$25,000 at the end of the year.

There were no comments from the public and Shaffer closed the hearing.

The board voted unanimously in favor of a resolution to approve the budget and appropriate the required funds.

**Water testing contract awarded**

Three companies—JVA Inc., LRE Water, and Amaruq Environment Services—presented their water testing qualifications and their thoughts on how to handle EPCRLWA's water testing requirements to the board.

Brett Gracely, of LRE Water, focused on his

company's 50 years of experience in Colorado, and said LRE Water would optimize testing by removing analytes whose measurements were stable from the testing protocol to keep costs low. He said a dashboard would be provided to display results.

John McGibbon and Richard Hood, of JVA, said they would provide a certified water technician to collect all samples and would maintain a clear chain of custody of the samples to ensure the most accurate results. Hood said JVA's approach would focus on collecting the data needed to design a water treatment protocol in the future.

Andres Skibo from Amaruq Environmental Services noted his company assisted WWSD with water quality testing of Woodmoor Lake and was familiar with the local issues.

Following the presentations, Shaffer commented that in his opinion all three companies could do the job. He said Amaruq's bid was \$41,000 with no markup on lab fees, JVA's was \$48,000 with no markup on lab fees, and LRE's was \$49,000 with a 5% markup on lab fees. EPCRLWA Assistant Secretary Jeff Hodge, who also serves as the DWSD general manager, said using a certified water technician was important. Kevin Brown, representing CMD, also saw the value in a certified technician. Shaffer pointed out that JVA is made up of water treatment engineers, and that expertise would be valuable when the water quality testing data was used to design a treatment protocol.

The board voted unanimously to award the testing contract to JVA.

**Project manager position and schematic design project discussed**

Shaffer told the board he was working on a draft of a job description for a project planning and workflow manager position. The manager would be responsible for coordinating the activities of the engineers, consultants, and other contractors needed to complete the project. The EPCRLWA board members all have jobs with the participating water districts, which makes a project planning position necessary. The responsibilities would not include construction oversight, which

might require another person when the project reaches that stage, he said.

The board voted unanimously to authorize Shaffer to define and fill the position.

Shaffer said a request for proposal was being developed to have a schematic engineering design report written by an engineering company. The report would integrate the data collected in previous studies and would take the design to the next level of detail, addressing issues such as water treatment design, location of pumping stations, and so forth. The report is needed to increase the precision of cost estimates, Shaffer said. The report will determine exactly what each participating entity owns and what financing will be required. Brown said the report will include a full hydraulic analysis, including pressures in pipelines and pump stations and storage tank design. He added that the report would be required for issuing bonds to finance later stages of the project.

The board decided to proceed with development of the request for proposal.

**Administrative resolutions passed**

The board approved five administrative resolutions:

- A resolution laying out tasks needed to comply with state statutes.
- A resolution detailing compliance with the Colorado Open Records Act.
- A resolution indemnifying the board members for lawful acts taken in performance of their duties.
- A resolution authorizing online notice of meetings.
- A data privacy resolution that protects personal and consumer data.

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The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 16 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 every Thursday at 9 a.m. at rotating venues. Please see [loopwater.org](http://loopwater.org) or call 719-488-3603 to verify meeting times and locations.

*James Howald can be reached at [jameshowald@ocn.me](mailto:jameshowald@ocn.me).*

**El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Feb. 7 and 21****Citizen voices concern with county land development policy**

*By Helen Walklett*

During February, a citizen voiced concerns about land use policy with the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The commissioners also made decisions relating to the Highway 105A project and the Jackson Ranch subdivision.

**Concerns repeatedly raised over county land use policy**

In recent months, El Paso County resident Tom Martin has raised concerns about land use development with the commissioners at both the regular and land use BOCC meetings.

Speaking at the Feb. 7 meeting, Martin said, "It seems that a lot of the developments that are going in, they don't deal with the surrounding

area. Just because I have a million dollars and I buy 20 acres out in Black Forest should never give me the right to put in cluster homes. This whole idea I have the right to do whatever I want with my property needs to go away. Your job is to enforce the master plan and the land code development." He continued, "You're just admitting that it's a free-for-all out there in the Wild West. This isn't good." He added, "You put cluster homes out on Vollmer Road. I'm not against development, folks. I just think we need smart, planned development."

Commissioner Stan VanderWerf responded, "Mr. Martin, I just beg to differ. You're implying that we have no requirements, that we have a wild, Wild West atmosphere with land use.

That is simply not true. There are thousands of requirements on the books that have to be complied with."

Speaking at the land use meeting later the same day, Martin said, "I think there is a considerable amount of work that needs to be done with the way we go about the land use in El Paso County. I think the master plan is much too vague." He continued, "All I can do is continue to try and bring up these issues over and over and over again. The community is screaming, 'Please be more responsible with your land use.'"

Martin spoke again at the Feb. 21 BOCC meeting, telling the commissioners that over the last few months "you've put RV parks next to two-acre ranchettes, you've put dog kennels in one-