



Above: On Sept. 19, Donala General Manager Kip Petersen introduced two new employees—Waste Plant Operator Aaron Tolman (standing left) and Accountant Sharon Samek (center)—to Donala President Bill George (right.) Seated (left, clockwise) are Directors Dave Powell and Bob Denny, Petersen, Director Bill Nance, and Office Manager Betsy Bray. *Photo by Jim Kendrick.*

Donala donors write checks directly to Tri-Lakes Cares starting on Jan. 1 with a notation on the donor's check that the contribution is for DCAP. Tri-Lakes Cares will ensure that this is the only use allowed for these funds. In the past, Donala would add up to \$1 per month to Donala bills to raise money for this assistance program. Having donors write individual contribution checks directly to Tri-Lakes cares in 2014 will streamline administration of this program.

The board unanimously approved the transfer of DCAP ad-

ministration to Tri-Lakes Cares. The board went into executive session to discuss real estate negotiations at 3:04 p.m. No other matters were voted on when the board came out of executive session to adjourn.

The next meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Oct. 17 in the district conference facility at 15850 Holbein Drive. Meetings are normally held on the third Thursday of the month. Information: 488-3603.

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Monument Sanitation District, Sept. 26

Ready for TABOR waiver election

By Jim Kendrick

On Sept. 26 District Manager Mike Wicklund advised the Monument Sanitation District board that all district preparations and submissions to the county Clerk and Recorder for the Nov. 5 TABOR waiver election had been completed. The district's cost for this election was \$3,500.

Financial reports

Wicklund noted a payment of \$4,983 to J&K Construction for pipe repairs as well as manhole lid repairs on McShane Place, Beacon Lite Road and Mitchell Avenue.

Changes in medical insurance coverage, deductibles, and rates under the Affordable Care Act for the full-time staff and their spouses were discussed at length, but there was no information available on any of these

issues to allow the board to make final decisions regarding the 2014 budget.

No tap fees had been collected since the Aug. 15 meeting.

Wicklund reviewed the current status of the planning grants and the design/construction grants to the three districts that own the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility. The actual procedures for each of the facility's three owner districts—Monument, Palmer Lake Sanitation District, and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District—to approve their separate individual district payment and reimbursement requests have not yet been defined.

There was a lengthy technical discussion about how to negotiate this unprecedented multi-year multi-recipient grant process with the state Water Quality Control Division and implement these procedures once construction begins. The facility cannot directly receive the state grants under state law because the facility is not a municipality or special district and has no constituents or taxing authority. No final decisions on any of these matters can be made by Monument Sanitation District until after Monument's Nov. 5 nutrient grant TABOR waiver election is completed.

Wicklund briefed the board on the current status of the Wakonda Hills lift stations. A repair was made to one of the two lift stations to remove and replace a cracked output pipe for one of the two wet well pumps. Wicklund also made an overnight visit to one of the district's individual residential lift stations at a home in Wakonda Hills. He cleared and reset the pump and the system circuit breakers to restore service. The district's electrician will follow up to confirm that the problem was temporary.

Wicklund gave an interim update on the 2014 budget. He added notes to provide supplementary information regarding the specific amounts of the district's state nutrient planning grant, the district's match to the planning grant, the district's state nutrient design/construction grant, and the district's construction contingency.

Wicklund also included a line for a lease/purchase loan that the district must obtain by the end of 2013 to pay for the cost of construction that is not covered by the grant, about \$350,000. The district recently raised its monthly fee by \$5 to cover this \$350,000 loan.

In 2014, the district will lose its enterprise status, which allows the district to retain all revenues, due to accepting a state grant larger than the state constitution's TABOR limit of 10 percent of the district's annual operating budget. The district's operational budget is currently about \$500,000, and the resulting district annual TABOR limit on state grants is \$50,000. Monument's one-third share of the \$1.08 million in state nutrient grants is \$360,000, which is well above its annual TABOR limit of \$50,000.

In the calendar year after the district has used all the state grant proceeds to help pay for nutrient treatment equipment construction, the district can re-establish its enterprise status and begin rebuilding its capital reserves for the next state-mandated nutrient project for the even tighter restrictions on total nitrogen and total phosphorus that will be imposed by state Regulation 31.17 in 2022.

If the ballot question to accept the two nutrient grants totaling \$360,000 from the state via a nutrient TABOR waiver is not approved by its voters, the \$333,333 construction grant cannot be accepted by the district. The minimum loan required for Monument to finance its share of the phosphorus removal design/construction contract would be \$669,000. A 10 percent contingency would increase this amount to about \$736,000. Financing a revenue bond this large would require another monthly fee increase of at least \$5 for all district customers.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

The next meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Oct. 17 at the district conference room, 130 Second St. Meetings are normally held on the third Thursday of the month. Information: 481-4886.

Jim Kendrick can be reached at jimkendrick@ocn.me.

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