

Donala Water and Sanitation District, Oct. 17

# 2014 budget hearing scheduled for Dec. 5

By Jim Kendrick

On Oct. 17, Donala General Manager Kip Petersen gave an overview of the draft 2014 district budget. There was board consensus that the budget was ready for final review at a public

hearing in the district conference room at 1:30 p.m. on Dec. 5.

The Donala Water and Sanitation District board recognized Office Manager Betsy Bray's 20 years of service to the district with a bouquet of roses and a

cake.

### 2014 budget highlights

Petersen briefed the board on the several pages of diverse assumptions he made in preparing the draft 2014 budget. He noted that estimating water sales is the most difficult aspect of the budget because water sales are so heavily dependent on the weather. Some of the items Petersen noted were:

- Property taxes will be used to make bond payments and if there is any amount left over, that money will help pay for services.
- Previously programmed rate increases over the next 10 years will not generate enough revenue to pay the full cost of operations until 2016.
- All tiers of the water rate structure will increase 20 percent and sewer rates will increase \$1 per month.
- Total revenues will be \$9.54 million.
- Total expenses, if there are no contingencies, will be \$9.51 million, a 3 percent decrease.
- Electricity costs will rise by 10 percent.
- The cost of water purchased from Colorado Springs Utilities during the summer irrigation season will increase by 7 percent.
- A prolonged drought in 2014 would greatly increase the cost of even more water that will have to be purchased from Colorado Springs Utilities.
- Willow Creek Ranch produced 290 acre-feet of renewable water in 2013, significantly reducing the amount of water purchased from Colorado Springs Utilities.
- If the Gleneagle Golf Course does not purchase Donala reuse water next year, this water could be sold as exchanged effluent to Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District and the Arkansas Groundwater Users Association.

An acre-foot is 326,851 gallons.

### Manager's report

Petersen reported that the Willow Creek Ranch had been placed in "winter mode" during the final Donala staff visit for the

year. The staff has been working on annual maintenance of facilities now that the higher water demands of irrigation season have ended.

Petersen's planned meeting with the staffs of Colorado Springs Utilities and federal Bureau of Reclamation regarding a long-term storage lease in Pueblo Reservoir had been cancelled due to bureau employees being placed on furlough. Petersen will try to reschedule this meeting by the end of November.

Petersen reported that Gleneagle Golf Course had closed operations. He said there was no firm information available as of this meeting on long-term plans for the golf course. Director Dave Powell said the golf course property is not amenable to housing development due to limited access. He suggested that Donala, Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, and the Town of Monument consider purchasing the course if it becomes available and use it for open space for joint recycling of water for re-use.

Petersen read a note from the Tarno family thanking Donala water operator Ronny Wright for the assistance he provided during their sewer back-up problem. Board President Bill George said this note speaks highly of all the district's employees.

### Triview status

Triview Metropolitan District, a co-owner of the Upper Monument Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility with Donala and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District, issued five new taps in September leading to five \$1,500 payments to Donala. This \$7,500 reduced the balance that Triview owes Donala through a facility management agreement to \$751,725. Donala lent about \$1.3 million so Triview could pay all its share of the Upper Monument Creek facility expansion costs when Triview did not have enough credit to borrow this money from any other source.

Petersen also reported that Triview expects the construction of a Colorado Springs Health Partnership building by the YMCA and a new Goodwill outlet building.

Triview has plans to drill a new Denver aquifer well north of the electrical power substation on the east side of Jackson Creek Parkway adjacent to the new Vistas at Jackson Creek apartment complex. This new well should have less of a negative impact on Donala well production than Triview's heavily used wells that are farther south.

Petersen reported that Triview District Manager Valerie Remington noted at the quarterly Upper Monument Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility operational meeting that the Triview



**Above:** During the Oct. 17 meeting of the Donala Water and Sanitation District board, General Manager Kip Petersen presented a bouquet of roses to Office Manager Betsy Bray to commemorate 20 years of service to the district. Photo by Jim Kendrick.

board had seen the proposed 2014 facility budget and had no questions or concerns about the budget to date.

### Financial reports

Petersen noted that Donala had received \$150,000 for water rights from Randy Scholl, the owner of the Brown Ranch. The ranch was included by Donala in early 2004 and Donala paid the owners of the Ranch, Randal Construction Inc., Randy Scholl, and Margaret E. Scholl \$400,000 for all the groundwater rights for this property.

The board unanimously approved an exclusion agreement for the Brown Ranch property from the district on Dec. 6, 2012 because it drains into Cherry Creek, which is part of the South Platte Basin rather than the Arkansas River Basin. This drainage condition prohibits the use of any Donala Arkansas River Basin renewable water from the district's Willow Creek Ranch near Leadville in the reservoir that Donala had planned to build on the Brown Ranch. The cost of creating a separate ground water supply system to provide potable water service to the housing development that the Scholls had planned to build on this property is prohibitive.

Under the exclusion agreement, Donala retains all rights to ground water in the Arapahoe aquifer underlying the Brown Ranch and the well site. The Scholls paid Donala \$150,000 for the return of all groundwater rights in the Dawson, Denver, and Laramie-Fox Hills aquifers. Donala's well site will be platted as a separate lot when the Brown Ranch is subdivided and conveyed by the Scholls to Donala by a warranty deed.

The board went into executive session to discuss property disposition at 3:48 p.m. No other matters were voted on when the board came out of executive session to adjourn.



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