

Academy Water and Sanitation District, May 15

Grant money would go toward protecting wellhead

By Susan Hindman

District Manager Anthony Pastorello has a plan for how to use the remaining \$1,500 of a \$5,000 grant that the Academy Water and Sanitation District received last year. At the district's May meeting, he told the board that he had met with Paul Hempel from the Colorado Rural Water Association to discuss the grant money, which was awarded through the Source Water Protection Plan. Hempel helped the district set up the plan in 2011. Pastorello said he would like to better shield a wellhead at the Spring Valley Drive plant.

The wellhead is set on a steep plateau on the road and lacks any protection from vehicles that might accidentally clip it if a driver lost control. He would like to surround it with

large boulders, and then wrap 8-by-8-foot fencing around all of it.

Pastorello said that if the entire job bid out for more than \$1,500, Hempel said he could write out a new \$5,000 grant request. Any excess could be put toward a second phase of well protection: installing fencing around the other two wellheads farther down Spring Valley Drive.

The board authorized Pastorello to obtain bids and submit them to Hempel.

One step closer to a website

Director Ron Curry attended training in Denver for building a website for the district. The session was conducted by the Statewide Internet Portal Authority (SIPA), which provides

free assistance to Colorado governmental entities wanting to set up websites. Curry had already submitted text to SIPA, which input that material onto the site; Curry will now be able to fine-tune it.

He plans to be able to post emergency notices, as needed, on the site as well as regular updates about district issues (including the anticipated bond issue), other information, and even a picture of the directors. There is no email capability on the website, but he said he can arrange for that through Go Daddy.

Possible stricter effluent regulations

On June 10, the state Water Quality Control Commission will hear a proposal to change the Arkansas River Basin from Use Protected status to Antideg-

radation Designation—a move that would impose stricter regulations on the effluent that all treatment facilities release into the waters that eventually drain into the Arkansas. Academy discharges its effluent into Jimmy Smith Creek, which drains into Monument Creek, which winds its way to the Arkansas River. Changing the designation would have a profound effect on the district.

The district's engineer, Roger Sams of GMS, earlier prepared a letter from the district directed to the commission, asking that Use Protected status be retained. By sending the letter, Academy would join most of the treatment facilities along the river basin protesting the change.

The commission's meeting will be held in Alamosa.

Sludge slowdown

Pastorello said that the lagoons have been accumulating sludge at a rate of 3 inches per year since they were cleaned in 2009. He said the lagoons have about 4 inches to go before they must be cleaned again, so the district may be able to save money and postpone the planned 2014 cleaning until the following year.

The Academy Water and Sanitation District board meets at 6 p.m. the third Wednesday of every month at the Wescott fire station, 15415 Gleneagle Drive. The next meeting is June 19.

Susan Hindman can be reached at susanhindman@ocn.me.

Donala Water and Sanitation District, May 16

General manager's upcoming retirement honored

By Jim Kendrick

At the May 16 Donala Water and Sanitation District board meeting, Assistant Manager Kip Petersen introduced two new employees, Water Operator Matt Tracy and Waste Plant Operator Ronny Wright, to the directors. Petersen also took a moment to celebrate the retirement of General Manager Dana Duthie on June 14. Duthie will have served in this position for 20 years.

Petersen carefully presented a very heavy sheet cake, laden with very large chocolate-coated strawberries precariously placed around the perimeter, bearing the words "Fighter pilot to Water General Manager." Duthie is a retired Air Force F-16 fighter pilot. Petersen called for a recess to serve slices of this cake to Duthie, the board directors, and staff members in attendance.

All of Donala's board members were "present for duty" at Duthie's last board meeting.

Community meeting summarized

Duthie praised Petersen for his presentation on issues facing the district, the district's response to each of them, and future challenges at a special community meeting held on May 15 at Antelope Trails Elementary School. This meeting was attended by 47 customers. In response to a question during this community meeting, the board unanimously approved a motion to post minutes of board meetings and budget executive summaries on the district website after the board has formally approved them at a board meeting.

The board also considered a question raised at this community meeting about Donala join-

ing the Southeast Conservancy District, which would require an election in both El Paso County and Pueblo County and back payment of all property taxes for Donala properties back to 1962, amounting to very roughly \$180,000. Although the cost of storage of Donala's Willow Creek Ranch renewable water in Pueblo Reservoir might be slightly less if Donala becomes a member, the board decided to defer a decision at this time.

Willow Creek Ranch update

Petersen said that Donala's one-year renewal of Donala's Pueblo Reservoir storage contract with the Bureau of Reclamation in 2013 was finally signed on May 1 by both parties through the use of couriers. The effective date of the renewal is May 1, the first day of the year that Donala can start use of its decreed Willow


Springs renewable water each year. This storage contract renewal will run through Dec. 31. Also, the district added \$15,000 to its account that the bureau draws on for incurred expenses from time to time.

Flows from Donala's Willow Creek Ranch property, near Leadville, are being remotely reported to the state as of May 1, following the spring thaw of the ice in the flume. Flows have been high enough for Donala to be in priority for exchanging or storing water since May 8. Petersen said the proposed sale of the ranch would be discussed in executive session.


Duthie briefed the board on how the district's water flows are measured and stored, using a map of the region. He noted that the 2012 paper water exchange of some Willow Creek water with Aurora from the Twin Lakes

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