

only be used for one purpose: paying down debt. Due to the 2011 purchase of the JV Ranch in southern El Paso County, with its associated renewable water rights, the district now holds revenue sponsored debt, he said. Town said that at the current rate, the district's debt will be paid off in 25 years. The May 31 financial report listed total long-term liabilities at \$27.1 million and anticipated 2015 bond interest at \$1.2 million.

Residents commented that the legal letter they received about the ASC was not clear. The letter went to every registered elector in the district whether they owned a vacant lot or not. Some residents took offense that the letter came from an attorney instead of the district and that the letter was "confusing." Town and Shaffer responded that since it was a public hearing item, that specific legal language was required.

The current ASC was \$25 a year. It was \$200 or more in the 1990s, but that general obligation bonded indebted-

ness debt was paid off in 2011, Shaffer said. Based on a series of averages, the maximum amount the state would have allowed the district to charge for ASC would have been \$60.88 a month (\$730.56 a year) for vacant lots with both water and sewer access. The district has 334 full-service vacant lots, 20 with water only, and 20 with sewer only.

Shaffer said the Renewable Water Investment Fee (RWIF) of \$45 a month (\$540 a year) for lots with single-family homes is also going directly to pay off that debt. Vacant lot owners pay the ASC but do not pay the RWIF. Secretary Beth Courrau said she thought vacant lot owners should be paying RWIF also, to help pay down that debt for a guarantee of future water availability.

Dual-use customers (DUC) are those with a home on one lot which is next to an adjacent vacant lot that they have purchased, Shaffer said. They pay the \$45 RWIF fee each month on the main lot and the ASC on the vacant lot. If they have vacated the lot line administratively through either WWSD or El Paso County, then the ASC could be deferred until the vacant lot is sold, when all the back ASC charges would be paid, Shaffer said.

The ASC is primarily assessed to developers, since they own the most vacant lots. Village Center Filing 3, Misty Acres, and Lake Woodmoor developers currently are the top three single ASC payers in the district, contributing about 75 percent of the ASC revenues.

Town said that the single best thing the district has done recently was to buy the JV Ranch and its 3,500 acre-feet of water rights in 2011, since "it assures that the district will have water in the future." Since the district cannot use that water now, it is leasing out the water rights to farmers.

Shaffer explained, in response to residents' questions, that tap fees are about \$24,000 for water and \$8,000 for sewer connections. That money goes toward capital improvement projects such as drilling the next well, which will cost around \$1 million, said Director Jim Taylor. "We build infrastructure in advance of development and collect tap fees in arrears. We have to have everything in

place: water supply, mainline infrastructure, booster stations, water treatment facilities," Shaffer said.

Residents' comments on the ASC included:

- These water issues are serious. Everyone needs to be held accountable.
- If you live in Woodmoor, you pay \$45 a month RWIF before you get any water.
- \$25 a year is too little, but an increase of 2,000 percent is too much, even if it is allowed by the state.
- I am opposed to increasing the ASC. There is already inequality between lot owners and homeowners. Lot owners pay 25 percent more on taxes on vacant lots due to assessed values than they do on their homes.
- I see no reason to accelerate paying the debt payment.
- You've got to pay off the debt, but you've got to do it fairly.

The board consensus was that an increase to the ASC was needed. They discussed a range of options from \$25 a year to \$100 a year, but did not consider the maximum \$720 a year the state would allow based on the average usage data. The board voted 4-1 to raise the ASC to \$75 a year, with Taylor opposed, since he said anything over \$50 was too high.

Town said the board has been determined to pay off debt as quickly and fairly and equitably as it can. He said there are 12 to 14 partners who all face the same issue when it is time to pay for the infrastructure to get the water here. "As long as I am on this board, everything we can do to save a nickel and guarantee we will have water, we will."

Woodmoor Improvement Association President Jim Hale asked "why everyone is stuck on transporting the water here" when it could be traded with other water districts instead. He offered to host a community information session with WWSD representatives this fall at the Woodmoor Barn.

Hydrant permits for construction water

Shaffer said that in the past, the district has sent developers to Donala or Monument to buy construction water, but that was before the district had renewable water from JV Ranch. "Now we don't need to send customers away." After a discussion, the board consensus was to issue hydrant permits to developers.

Agreement with Woodmoor Public Safety approved

Shaffer reported that he and Chief Kevin Nielsen of Woodmoor Public Safety (WPS) had "reasonable give and take on both sides" and came to an agreement for WPS to continue to provide services to WWSD. The agreement was approved unanimously by the board.

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