

Manager's report

Petersen noted that on March 12, Donala officially took over the operations of Forest Lakes Metropolitan District's water and wastewater systems on a contract basis in accordance with an intergovernmental agreement the Donala board unanimously approved on Feb. 18. Forest Lakes, located northwest of the west end of Baptist Road, is a co-owner of the Upper Monument Creek wastewater facility, along with Triview Metropolitan District. Donala operates the wastewater facility for all three districts. Forest Lakes Metro already owns all the treatment capacity in the existing Upper Monument wastewater treatment plant it needs for a planned buildout of 457 homes within its service area.

Petersen also noted that his staff was working with Town of Monument drinking water operators as well to coordinate the startup of Forest Lakes' potable water system operations. Housing construction has been initiated in Forest Lakes now that the new West Baptist Road bridge over the railroad tracks has been opened. (www.ocn.me/v16n3.htm#dwsd0218)

Petersen stated that the March 19 Arkansas Basin Roundtable meeting he and Judd had attended was very short and its primary mission now appears to be shifting toward reviews and recommendations on funding of projects contained in its basin implementation plan and an update of the statewide water supply initiative.

Petersen and Director Bob Denny attended the March 2 Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority meeting. Petersen noted the authority's discussion of the 2016 state Legislature's version of the rain barrel bill that would authorize property owners to collect up to 110 gallons of rooftop rain water, but no other precipitation, for outdoor irrigation and gardening use. If passed, he said, this bill will likely create a state of Kansas lawsuit to protect Kansas owners of downstream Arkansas River water rights.

Petersen also discussed another proposed state bill that would require reporting of water losses in district distribution systems, noting that Donala's distribution has an efficiency of 97 to 98 percent, much higher than the Colorado industry average. Donala is represented at legislative sessions by Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority legislative liaison Dick Brown.

Petersen also noted that he would be attending the annual Arkansas River Basin Water Forum meeting in Salida, April 27-28. Director Denny asked Petersen to present, at the April 21 regular Donala board meeting, the briefing he will be making at the Water Forum on behalf of Donala.

Petersen noted that all district infrastructure was oper-

ating well, with higher than average precipitation forecast to continue through the spring. A drier summer and fall than in 2015 is currently forecast.

Willow Creek Ranch update

The average amount of Donala's Willow Creek Ranch renewable surface water being drawn from Donala's renewable surface water storage in the Pueblo Reservoir is about 30 acre-feet per month. Petersen said that as of this board meeting, Donala had about 120 acre-feet of its surface water left in the reservoir. An acre-foot is 325,851 gallons. Snow melt runoff this year is forecast to be so high that the reservoir is still expected to be entirely filled by April 15 due to much higher than average El Niño, and water from other lower priority storage rights would be "spilled" back into the Arkansas River. Donala's annual "if and when available" water storage contracts with the federal Bureau of Reclamation have the lowest priority, so some or all of the remaining Donala water in this reservoir on April 15 may be lost, to make room for other owners with higher priority storage rights.

Donala's water engineering firm, Leonard Rice, is conducting discussions with the bureau on how to model Donala's use of the reservoir as part of Donala's negotiations for a long-term storage contract to replace annual renewals. Donala has 499 acre-feet of the reservoir's total capacity of 250,000 acre-feet. Although Donala is solely a water and wastewater district with no stormwater responsibilities in its service plan, Petersen expects that Pueblo County will try to imply Donala has stormwater obligations during public comments on any new contracts with the bureau as a user of Colorado Springs Utilities' Southern Delivery System (SDS) surface water transport. El Paso County is responsible for stormwater within the Donala service area.

Petersen said he would be exploring what is specifically required for Donala to obtain a higher "fourth priority" water storage contract with the operator of the reservoir, the Southeast Water Conservancy District. He said that if the district now had a fourth priority storage contract, it is likely that it would not have any of its stored water "spilled." After paying its membership fees to the conservancy district, annual unit storage charges could be reduced from \$61 to \$40 per acre-foot, saving about \$10,000 per year. The cost of joining the conservancy district to also have more leverage with both the district and the bureau through "a seat at the table" has not been determined yet, though it will likely be high enough to require a mill levy election, Petersen said.

Petersen noted that the SDS was scheduled to begin

operations at the end of April. Donala's Willow Creek Ranch water from Leadville is to be pumped through the SDS pipeline once it becomes operational. However, SDS operations are being delayed by an ongoing stormwater dispute between Pueblo County and the City of Colorado Springs over the city's stormwater management program.

The meeting adjourned at 2:36 p.m.

The next board meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. on April 21, in the district conference room at 15850 Holbein Drive. Information: 488-3603 or www.donalawater.org. Meetings are normally held on the third Thursday of the month.

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

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Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Board of Directors, March 15

House fire reported; current directors to remain

By Kate Pangelinan

The Donald Wescott Fire Protection District board heard about a structure fire and the fact that no newcomers have filed to run for board seats at the March 15 meeting.

Chairman Greg Gent and Treasurer Joyce Hartung were absent.

Chief's report

Chief Vinny Burns reported on a structure fire that took place the day before this meeting, on March 14. This fire potentially spread from a hot tub, across the side of a house and into the attic area. Burns noted that the firefighters did an excellent job "killing it (the fire) dead in its tracks." The fire had the potential to burn the side of the house off, but was extinguished in time. Firefighters from the Wescott, Black Forest and Tri-Lakes fire departments worked well together, according to Burns.

This fire was within the Wescott district's range, but they do not yet have an estimate on the cost of damages.

No board applications submitted

Because no newcomers submitted applications for positions on the Donald Wescott Fire Protection board, all cur-

rent directors will remain.

Administrative

In discussing the Feb. 16 meeting minutes, John Fredell recommended typo corrections and suggested that the names of guests be listed in full. Fredell motioned to approve these minutes with said corrections, and the motion was seconded by Harland Baker.

The Feb. 25 meeting minutes necessitated fewer comments, with Bo McAllister motioning to accept the minutes with the condition that the wording be changed from saying that a board member "motioned" to specifying whether they motioned to accept or reject whatever was on the table.

The bank balances for the fire department were also read and discussed. It was suggested that a special report

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