

# **CORBETT WATER DISTRICT**

## ***DRAFT MINUTES***

Special Meeting and Rate Hearing

**Tuesday, July 15, 2003**  
Corbett, Oregon

**Commissioners present:** Gordon Fulks, Ken Blanc, Doug Geller, Steve Wilson, and Malcolm Freund.

Mark Caldwell, Interim Manager also present.

**Audience members present:** Arnold & Joan DuFresne (joand2@cascadeaccess.com), Don & Joanne Stubbs, David Mysinger, Vera Robbins, Jim Tarpley, Robert L. Colclessner & Donna Colclessner, Kay Finney (kaydy439@aol.com), Ron Baird, Frank Windust Jr., John Windust, Barb Adams.

### **Steel Tank:**

Chairman Gordon Fulks called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. He related that Brian Lee called him to see if we wanted to consider constructing a steel tank instead of pre-stressed concrete one at the Treatment Plant. The life span is the same but the steel will have to be painted mid-way through its life span. The savings may amount to 50 percent. A berm will be needed to keep the ground away from the steel. Commissioner Wilson said that he had suggested steel before and was still in favor of it now. Commissioner Blanc also favored the less expensive steel tank. Commissioner Wilson made a motion to accept the recommendation for a steel tank. Commissioner Blanc seconded. All Commissioners voted in favor of steel.

### **Office:**

Chairman Fulks reviewed the cash on hand situation and the current office situation. Bobbie Kirkham, Zee Marsh, and Commissioner Freund are handling the office work. Chairman Fulks is dealing with larger concerns such as insurance, worker's compensation, problems with our old checking account, and setting up a new checking account with U.S. Bank.

Chairman Fulks reported that the Front Office is now functioning in a normal fashion two weeks after the old office staff abruptly left. The water system was never threatened by the departures because Marc Caldwell, Torey Redfern and Gene Hubbard (the employees who did not resign) are fully able to take care of all water related systems.

Chairman Fulks noted that the present office computers are far outdated and suggested that the District needs to look at getting two "crackerjack" new ones. He also said that the office has six

phone lines (probably more than are needed) and a phone bill that is correspondingly high.

On other matters Chairman Fulks pointed out that we are currently saving \$1,800 in health care costs due to fewer employees. As we reorganize to part-time office staff, a working manager, and temporary help, he said that the savings will be considerable.

#### **WATER RATE HEARING: Price Decrease:**

Commissioner Fulks proposed that we use the savings that we have realized in the 2003-2004 budget from employee departures to lay pipe and to give customers a small decrease in their water rates. Commissioner Wilson questioned financial changes so quickly after adopting a new budget and felt the size of the decrease would not benefit anyone especially himself.

Commissioner Blanc was in favor of staying with the current rate and paying off the reservoir debt faster. Commissioner Geller felt the savings for customers were important even though they will be small.

Commissioner Freund made the motion for adoption of Resolution 2003.07.02 (reducing water rates from \$3.91/thousand gallons to \$3.65/thousand gallons retroactive to July 1, 2003), and Commissioner Geller seconded. Commissioner Geller noted that we are currently spending less on personnel now than we were two years ago when the budget was 25 percent less. Commissioner Wilson suggested that the District consider rebates. Dave Mysinger was interested in lower rates for fixed and low income customers. Commissioner Fulks thought it was fairest to treat everyone the same. Bob Colclessor remembered that the Board may have had a hardship policy at one time. Barb Adams felt we needed to consider lower rates for farmers. Commissioner Wilson suggested we look at other districts. Commissioner Geller thought that it was impossible to please everyone, but if we lost our large customers we might have to raise rates for everyone else. Ron Baird will retire soon and was concerned about being able to afford to continue living in Corbett. He offered to help with advice on budgeting. John Windust noted that the once-beautiful lawn at Dorothy Larson's home is now brown due to the price of water. He also thought that if we go to reading meters less often, we will no longer catch leaks in a timely fashion. And with many old homes in Corbett he thought that leaks must be rather common.

When the question was called on Resolution 2003.07.02 to decrease rates, Commissioners Freund, Fulks, and Geller voted "Yes", Commissioners Blanc and Wilson voted "No". This was a roll call vote.

Chairman Fulks reviewed a number of informational items.

Other comments:

Kay Finney suggested that the District get the books audited in light of the abrupt departure of three staff members.

Joann Stubbs was concerned about the possibility of being penalized for not participating in

some sort of automatic payments system if the District chooses to go that direction.

Commissioner Wilson made the motion to adjourn seconded by Commissioner Blanc. Adjournment passed unanimously.

(These minutes were prepared by Barb Adams and Gordon Fulks.)